

The World's Leading Art Magazine Vol. XLI No.260 May - June 2008 US \$8.00 €7,00 International

Flash Art



Gino De Dominicis
"Untitled"
Mixed media



ISSN 0394-1493

CLÉMENT RODZIELSKI

Cardenas Bellanger, Paris



CLÉMENT RODZIELSKI, installation view at Cardenas Bellanger, Paris 2008.

MDF boards geometrically cut, abstract shapes covering photographs of architecture, sketches on large paper sheets hung loosely with adhesive tape — at first sight, Clément Rodzielski's exhibition at Cardenas Bellanger gallery could look like many tedious neo-modernist works. Yet, the forms he uses are not naïve allusions to minimalism; for such elementary, somewhat raw frameworks are actually already part of our everyday world. These are less historical and authoritarian signs to be quoted than they are mundane, abandoned then found pre-structures with which Rodzielski tries to rebuild a world, along with other kinds of pictures: some derived from the Internet, others from fashion magazines or

Hollywood movies. Copying, displacing and misplacing images on panels and in quasi-tableaux, Rodzielski subtly charges 'straight' forms with unexpected fantasy: a black shaped board reveals a colored tattoo, like girls bear on the small of their backs, drawn on the white wall with a sort of a troubling indifference: a movie poster bearing the usual 'true story' line is partially obscured by several standard sheets of paper framed with glass, printed with an incomplete parchment pattern. Significantly, the walls of the gallery are doubled with panels laying against them. The question of the frame is at the core of Rodzielski's work, as an existential and actual issue rather than a formalist one. Layer upon layer, picture after picture, the frame is at the same time necessary and impossible, accumulative and already bypassed, to-be-destroyed. The title of the show puts it clear: "Grands A" sounds like an unfinished call for 'high art' ending up in a lament. The structure is never enough for all that we contain; hence the elegiac tone in Rodzielski's work.

(Translated from French by Joanna Fiduccia)

Benjamin Thorel

MARIA ANTELMAN

The Apartment, Athens



MARIA ANTELMAN, Untitled #2 (Tah Pah Tahbe), 2006. C-print, 109 x 145 cm. Courtesy The Apartment, Athens.

Since March, Maria Antelman is officially "the first visual artist to have a solo exhibition at the War Museum in Athens" and, interestingly enough, the first female artist who exhibits in such a stereotypically 'masculine' context. In this mini retrospective, the Greek artist presents six videos she made during her six-year stay in the United States. Her elegant, lingering and technically immaculate work revolves around three major topics: Utopia (the phrase 'archaeology of the future,' used to describe her oeuvre, is referring to Fredric Jameson's

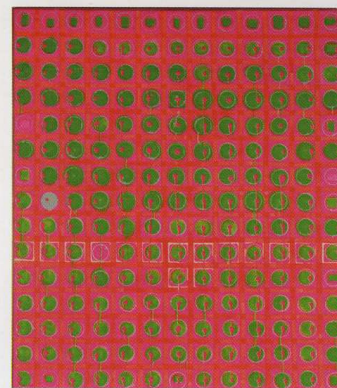
study on the Science Fiction genre); Mythologies (at times, her videos are reminiscent of Roland Barthes's musings on the origins of the image); the staging of non-synchronous forms (Hal Foster's description of hybrid works produced in the condition of coming-after).

Though Antelman's imagery fits well in a museum of this kind, the 'cinematic' viewing experience — the videos were screened at the museum's vast auditorium — reduces the expected impact. The most effective works, such as *The Gift* (2004), are those that move away from a cinematic or semi-cinematic style. However, the empathy Antelman feels towards her subject matter ("Every time I make a work I find myself lost in these worlds," she once admitted) is truly problematic. Instead of reacting to the materialistic American landscape with skeptical, if not conflicting means — one thinks of Daria from *Zabriskie Point* — she prefers to confine her gaze to a rather passive role.

Christopher Marinos

MANFRED KUTTNER

Johann König, Berlin



MANFRED KUTTNER, *Tombola*, 1962. Tempera, fluorescent paint on canvas, 151 x 131 cm. Courtesy Johann König, Berlin.

The second exhibition of a small body of work by the late Manfred Kuttner at Johann König is a testament to enduring interest in aesthetic positions from the '60s among Berlin's gallery scene. Kuttner's work mobilizes Op-Art's visual effects on vibrating surfaces that ply the illusions of depth and movement. Yet intense or fluorescent colors counteract these effects by drawing attention to themselves. The application of paint is decidedly casual, dribbling across the surface of

Achterbahn (Rollercoaster), 1964, a red canvas populated with a regular pattern of blue circles containing irregularly arranged pink squares. Elsewhere, the grid that structures the green circular forms of *Tombola* (1962) is slightly out of joint. Kuttner's obsession with color also manifests itself in found objects doused in radiant pink — *Sattel* (Saddle, 1963-2006) and *Heiliger Stuhl* (Holy Chair), 1962-2006). These works echo the iconoclastic gestures of Dada and Pop. The concentrated, almost museum-like exhibition is enriched by a small collection of drawings and the 8mm film *A-Z* (1963), a compilation of images from the artist's life. After a comparatively short period of activity, Kuttner suspended his practice in 1965 on economic, not ideological grounds. In the light of a biography that took him from East to West Germany just five years earlier, this makes him a figure prone to romanticization or mystification and impacts the reception of his oeuvre today. The appeal of this exhibition thus lies beyond the work itself in a portrait of a historic position.

Astrid Mania

PETROS CHRISOSTOMOU

Xippas, Athens



PETROS CHRISOSTOMOU, *Anastasia 1*, 2005. 80 x 120 cm. Courtesy Xippas Gallery, Athens.

Pictures of mysterious visual art topographies constitute the oeuvre of Petros Chrisostomou. Entering the gallery, the viewer is confronted with what appears to be a photographic documentation of monumental sculptures that have taken over art environments, luxurious residences and even smaller working-class apartments that can hardly contain their size. The omnipresent plasticity of the illustrated sculptures imprisons the sight for critical minutes and soon the game between reality and fantasy begins. Familiar objects render the 'mockery' apparent and transport these works to the

door of *Alice in Wonderland* or of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Chrisostomou creates miniature sculptural constructions which he later places in different indoor spaces/models. He then photographs his rather small settings in a way so as to bring them closer to real-life scale. This is neither a very complicated nor an uncommon technique and alludes to a variety of references found not only within visual art but also to any sort of meditative mode of communication. The displaying of three dimensions in a two-dimensional way acts as a metaphor, in his words, for the sociological paradox of the promotion and the denial of physicality all at the same time. Most of all, the way Chrisostomou arranges his works — the way he oscillates between the personal and the objective, the untreated reality (his interiors) and the fantasy (his sculptural constructions) — is what really draws viewers into the image and makes them lose their own scale so as to re-examine from another physical standpoint the dialogue between the real world — where we all think we are grounded — and the fantastical.

Marina Fokidis