



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 10th February 2008

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to invite you to the following exhibitions:

HADASSAH EMMERICH

Casino Exotique

22nd February – 9th March 2008
Studio 2

CHARLOTTE SCHLEIFFERT

Schlüsselszene

22nd February – 9th March 2008
Studio 3

CAN ALTAY

Setting A Setting / Forecasting a Broken Past

22nd February – 9th March 2008
Studio 4

Wed – Sun, 2 – 7 pm

JOINT OPENING

Thursday, 21st February 2008, from 7 pm

HADASSAH EMMERICH's works on paper, mural paintings and installations are immediately striking due to their distinctive colouration and large formats, which sometimes fill an entire room. The artist combines a wide range of materials and techniques; employing acrylic paints, ink, watercolours, charcoal and lino-printing, she creates different levels and layers that lend a characteristic, mysterious atmosphere to her works. The colourful ornamental paintings - which also include figurative references, as the faces of island beauties or single human limbs appear out of thick vegetation -, and the tropical leaves and blossoms suggest the projection of exotic dreams. Emmerich's more recent works depict intertwined floral motifs painted in lush colours, pointing beyond simple figuration e.g. to the customs and rituals of Indonesian culture, in which the artist has a keen interest. Figurative elements are connected by lines that wind around the rampant vegetation, merging into it. Sometimes it possible to find words or sentences – quotations that Emmerich takes from literary works – amidst the exuberant flora

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of the pictures. The eternal cycle of growth, blossoming and decay becomes tangible in these works, giving them a mystic character. The glowing colours, the splendid flora, and the mysterious faces and limbs that seem to project from hiding places amongst the foliage combine into fantastic tableaux of a far-distant world. Bearing in mind that Hadassah Emmerich has Dutch and Indonesian, as well as Chinese and German ancestors, her art can surely be understood as the expression of a vagabond longing, which mixes autobiographical and fictive aspects together with common notions of the exotic. But Emmerich's approach is not anthropological; the exotic is understood as an intellectual construct. In order to underline the question of semblance and authenticity suggested in the title *Casino Exotique*, Emmerich selected a presentation form for the exhibition that makes obvious reference to a museum of art history.

A catalogue of the same name is appearing parallel to the exhibition, realised with kind support from the Dutch Embassy Berlin and the gallery Akinci, Amsterdam.

Hadassah Emmerich was born in Heerlen in the Netherlands in 1974, and lives and works in Berlin. She studied at the Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten in Maastricht, at the Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, and at Goldsmiths College in London. Individual and group exhibitions include: *Prospect Park II*, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht; *Tigerlily Legacy*, Gallery Akinci, Amsterdam, *Trial Balloons/ Globos Sonda*, MUSAC, León/Spain; Galeria Kordegarda, Warsaw (department of the Zacheta National Gallery of Art), 2008; 2nd Biennial of the Canaries (curator: Octavio Zaya), November 2008. (www.hadassahemmerich.com)

At present Hadassah Emmerich holds a fellowship from the Fonds voor beeldende kunsten, vormgeving en bouwkunst, Amsterdam within the context of our International Studio Programme.

CHARLOTTE SCHLEIFFERT's highly-expressive coloured drawings and paintings reflect socially relevant topics such as power, oppression, poverty, displacement or prostitution. The artist, who lives in Holland and China, finds her motifs in newspaper reports and magazines from the countries in which she is living. Characteristic colours, moods, patterns or typical materials of the place where she is staying also flow into her works: for example, during her stay in China Schleiffert also worked with rice-paper and satin fabrics. With her drawings, she aims to 'hold onto' relevant themes before they can disappear in the daily media current of the global age.

In Berlin, Charlotte Schleiffert discovered sheets of gift wrap, the colours and textures of which recall wallpapers frequently used in this country. She integrated them into her work as the backgrounds to a series of small-format drawings produced in Berlin, which are based on current press reports e.g. on the situation in Darfur, discussion of youth violence, or the Palestinian exodus from Gaza. Schleiffert often relates the drawings to large-format portraits of women from glamorous magazines, which she monumentalises into pro-vocative-expressive pin-ups, seemingly aggressive heroines and overpowering idols. Cultural codes and foreign rites are mixed with text fragments from the media and cool street slogans. The spatial installation of the drawings and collages heightens the images' fascination and makes it difficult to evade their impact – the artist's critical commentary on the presence and influence of the media in a global world.

Charlotte Schleiffert was born in Tilburg, Netherlands, in 1967 and lives and works in Rotterdam and Xiamen (China). She received her artistic training at the Koninklijke Academie voor Kunst en Vormgeving in 's-Hertogenbosch, and at Ateliers '63 in Haarlem (1990-1992). Individual and group exhibitions include: *Feel No Shame*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen,

Rotterdam, 2004; Kunstverein Glückstadt, 2006; Galerie Barbara Gross, Munich; Chinese European Art Center, Xiamen (China); *Getting Rid of Madonna*, Kunsthaus Dresden, 2004; *Drawing Typologies*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 2007.

In 1999, Schleiffert received the Prix de Rome for painting and currently holds a fellowship from the Stichting Centrum Beeldende Kunst Rotterdam in the context of our International Studio Programme.

CAN ALTAY works with video, documentation and installation. His works take viewers along on tours of the city, involving them in the everyday life of the street and making them aware of certain people's lives and the niches and existential structures that they have developed for themselves within the urban environment. Altay documents everyday practices on the edge of urban society, unusual utilisations of urban space, and the existence of individually created freedoms in public space. In his video work "*We're papermen" he said* (2003) shown at the Istanbul Biennial, for example, he takes a look at the used-paper collectors that can be found in all Turkey's bigger cities, where they are accepted as a type of unofficial refuse collector, but remain largely outside of public awareness. Collecting and sorting omnipresent but little-noticed 'material' – as the used paper collectors do with paper – he combines it to create a story that penetrates the public's consciousness.

The installation *Setting a Setting / Forecasting a Broken Past* in Künstlerhaus Bethanien is a work in progress consisting of several individual components. Here, Can Altay presents the second issue of his continuing newspaper project *Ahali: a journal for setting a setting*, a publication that concerns artistic and site-related practices in connection with various aspects of urban society. It contains contributions from various authors from the fields of art and architecture. Visitors are given the opportunity to compile their own reading matter from individual sheets of the journal. Another work in the form of a slide presentation - which continues Can Altay's series of works *exercises in sharing* – examines the animals and plants with which we cohabit in the city. A further component of the installation is a site-related sound collage. This reinterprets various songs from the 70s and 80s relating to Kreuzberg, its inhabitants and the Bethanien building, and recounts tales of the homeland, foreignness, belonging and displacement.

Can Altay, born in 1975, lives and works in Ankara. He studied at the Institute of Art and Design, Bilkent University, and the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, Ankara (MFA1999, PhD 2004). He participated in the Critical Studies Post-Graduate Program at Malmö Art Academy, Lund University, and Rooseum Centre for Contemporary Art, Sweden. Exhibitions include: 2003 Biennale Istanbul; Garanti Platform Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul: *Making Space*; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis: *How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age*. At present, Can Altay holds a three-month fellowship from the Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH in the context of our International Studio Programme.

Best Regards
Künstlerhaus Bethanien