



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 28th July 2009

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to the opening of the following exhibitions:

**ANE GRAFF**

**Sliding**

14th – 30th August 2009, Studio 2

**JOST KIRSTEN**

**Rodung**

14th – 30th August 2009, Studio 3

Wed – Sun, 2 – 7 pm

**Joint Opening: Thursday, 13th August 2009, as from 7 pm**

In addition: **book presentation Sara Hughes**, Studio 244

**Ane Graff** is a passionate draftsman. She practises drawing as an extremely time-consuming, almost meditative process that centres on her contemplation of the poetry of scientific research and the nature of matter per se. Ane Graff's fine drawings with meticulously realised details use graphite pencil to reveal the surfaces and structures of organic matter – birds' feathers, divots of turf, a tree's branches and twigs – or the coral-like ramifications of natural silver and different types of stone. The artist's interest has been attracted by multiform layers of broken slate in particular. In her drawings, Graff likes to develop the similarity of structures from completely different fields of nature. Older works by Graff echo still-life paintings by 17th century Dutch artists, in which the forest floor is depicted as the habitat of evil forces – often embodied by reptiles or insects –, combined with symbols of Christian redemption. However, even in this early work, in Graff's work there is no mystic "padding", true to her belief in positivism, which "shows without doubt that it is possible to understand the world and its phenomena by means of collecting, observation and examination." (Ane Graff). In her more recent works, Graff has advanced from capturing stones and other natural forms on paper and also collects them outside and presents them in the form of sculptural ensembles. Thus, for example, she has laid out a huge number of fine and even finer slate fragments to create a large-format floor work – a further development of the graphic idea that recalls, in this form, artworks of Land Art and yet, if one were to observe the installation from high above, would re-adopt the aspect of a drawing.

**Ane Graff** was born in Bodø, Norway, in 1974 and lives and works in Oslo. She studied art history at the University of Oslo and art at the Einar Granum Kunstskolen, Oslo and the Academy of Fine

b.w.

Art in Bergen, Norway.

Exhibitions incl.: Private Mythologies, (Cur. Ann Demeester), W139, Amsterdam (2007); The White Works, Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (2006); My Days Are Consumed Like Smoke, STANDARD (OSLO) (2005); The Elementary Particles (Paperback Edition), STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo; Autumn Exhibition – The State's Annual Art Exhibition, Kunstneres Hus, Oslo (2004).

Ane Graff holds a fellowship from the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) in the context of our International Studio Programme.

**Jost Kirsten's** work investigates the various forms of abstraction and repetition in art. In his installations he brings together simple sculptures reminiscent of Concept Art or Minimal Art, which are often made of natural materials and enter into creative dialogue with their direct environment. Kirsten's preferred material is wood, which he sometimes combines experimentally with stone. Fire is one element without which Jost Kirsten's artistic oeuvre would seem incomplete. On the one hand, the artist makes it into a 'tool' with which he processes wood, paper, canvas or stone in a methodical way; on the other hand, it becomes an ephemeral artistic medium in itself, and its repetitive traces are left behind on the carrying media in patterns of smoke or soot or 'captured' between two panes of glass by the artist. In his home country Namibia, Jost Kirsten prefers to use working materials customary in that country, such as dolf wood from the local mukwa tree, or if the wood is rare – as is quite often the case in this country dominated by deserts – he makes use of abandoned cable drums or old wooden cases into which he drills thousands of small holes. The light shines through these to the viewer as an ornamental pattern, and he works on the wood methodically using candles, a gas burner or cooker hotplates. At Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Jost Kirsten is showing a selection from his latest works, which were produced during his twelve-month residence in Berlin. In accordance with his preference for local materials, here Kirsten has made a sculpture from the emblematic oak wood of Germany. As the opening of his Berlin exhibition "Clearing" is taking place on 13th August – the day on which the once divided city remembers the building of the Wall and its victims – it is only logical that Jost Kirsten intends to present a wall symbolically destroyed by fire as one of his new works.

Jost Kirsten, was born in Oranjemund, Namibia, in 1977 and lives and works in Swakopmund. He studied art at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

Exhibitions incl.: Bank Windhoek Arts Festival, National Art Gallery of Namibia, Windhoek; Namibian Embassy, Berlin (2004); Standard Bank Biennale, National Art Gallery of Namibia, Windhoek (2003); Chief curator at the Omba Gallery, Windhoek, Namibia (2005); [BURN], Omba Gallery, Windhoek (2005).

**Jost Kirsten** currently holds a fellowship from p.art.ners Berlin-Windhoek gGmbH and is a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien for twelve months in the context of our International Studio Programme.

p.art.ners Berlin-Windhoek gGmbH are sponsored by Air Namibia, Kalahari Sands Hotel & Casino and the foundation Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin.