

JOHANNA REICH - The Idea of Landscape

Opening: 26.01.2022

Duration: 27.01. – 12.03.2022

After many years of cooperation, we are pleased to finally announce Johanna Reich's first solo exhibition at Galerie Anita Beckers.

The urge to dominate nature has shaped human history for centuries. In times of highly developed technology and artificial intelligence, which seems to be detached from any emotionality, intuition or spontaneity, the question increasingly arises to what extent man is closer to the animal and plant world than to the technology he has created. The resulting problems concern us especially against the background of climate change. Johanna Reich's artistic examination of these questions forms the field of tension for the current exhibition.

In the artist's work recurs the question of a mediality immanent to nature, that functions independently of the technological progress. The work *À la lumière* shows shadows of human figures projected onto rock fragments. On closer inspection, these fragments turn out to be fossils consisting of fossilized ammonites. The human shadow figures are the product of a technological mediality. And even the fossils, contrary to what one might think, are no longer Ammonites, but only their imprint transferred in stone. This natural process of image genesis is similar to that of photography.

>> If we allow the technology of the fossil to be an art, then fossils can be characterized justifiably as the world's oldest art form. Indeed, fossils have been around for aeons and long predate the human race and its ability to appreciate art. << (Hiroshi Sugimoto)

The work series *Shape of the Shore*, a series of works that address the issue of rising sea levels, can also be understood against this background. The artist took Polaroids of a map generated by scientists that illustrates climate researchers' projections of the changing coastline and scanned them during the development process. The series makes visible the gradual transformations of the land surface and transfers the scientific facts into a poetic form. Johanna Reich does not add new forms, but reveals the forces of climate change that are continuously at work to modulate and influence the reality of our lives. The artist understands climate change as a sculptural act and is particularly interested in such creative processes that seem to take place without direct human influence in the natural ecosystem, but are nevertheless very much connected to the far-reaching technical interventions of humans in nature.

Although Johanna Reich's work makes use of technological progress and raises questions of post-digital production, she questions and analyses the interaction of human activity and its long-term impact on our environment in the exhibition *While in the age of the Anthropocene man is trying to dominate nature for himself, Johanna Reich points out that our world might one day continue to exist without our species.*

Johanna Reich was born in Minden in 1977. She studied at the Kunstakademie Münster, the Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg and the Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln and is since working performance-based with video and photography.

JOHANNA REICH received national and international awards and scholarships like the Nam June Paik Award, the Excellence Prize of the Japan Media Arts Festival, Tokyo, the Media Art Award NRW and the Konrad-von-Soest Prize. She took part of several artist residencies Romania, the USA, Luxembourg and Spain.

Exhibitions (selection):

A stolen World, Kunstverein Leverkusen (2020)
Subjekt Objekt, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2020)
Feminine II, Priska Pasquer Gallery Cologne (2019)
The Stolen World, Max Ernst Museum Brühl (2018)
Ornament and Obsession, Goethe Institut Paris, France (2017)
Till it's gone, Istanbul Modern, Istanbul, Turkey (2016)
Miami New Media Festival, Miami, USA (2015)
Behind The Screen, Anita Beckers Gallery, Frankfurt am Main (2014)
Kunstoffbiennale at Palais de Tokyo Paris (2014)
Per Speculum Me Video, Frankfurter Kunstverein (2013)
Young Artists Project 2012, Daegu EXCO, Corea (2012)
ARTE Video Night, FIAC Paris (2011)
¡Patria o Libertad!, Museum of Contemporary Canada Art, Toronto (2011)
Culture Shock: Video Interventions at the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games,
Vancouver, Canada (2010)
Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, Russia (2010)
Kunstoffbiennale at Museo Reina Sofia Madrid (2009)
Stella Art Foundation Moskau (2010)
Japan Media Arts Festival at Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (2008)

Her works are part of international Collections like the Jerry Speyer Collection New York, the Goetz Collection Munich or the Collection of Museum Ludwig Cologne.