

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

Press release

MONIKA GOETZ - *within*

11 November - 22 December 2016

We are pleased to present Monika Goetz's third solo exhibition at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY. In four chapters, *within* offers insights into important thematic fields with which the artist engages in her work: light, mirrors, and glass are recurring materials Monika Goetz uses to stage interventions in a space, thus challenging and changing our perception.

The show begins with the work *Within* (1999/2016). Regardless of how close one gets, the mirror surface, etched after having been treated with acid, obfuscates the view of one's own opposite. The interplay of the reflective surface and the reflected light is interrupted, which turns the object 'mirror' into its opposite: showing is here replaced by hiding, the beholder has to be content with nothing more but a hazy image, a mere hint of his or her own view. But precisely withholding the expected can trigger thinking about what should be reflected. What is the relationship between the external, its image, and that which the mirror image cannot represent, the interior of a human being? The implications of making the invisible visible are like a leitmotif running through Monika Goetz's work.

The installation *Esperance* (2016) consists of transparent bottle bases blasted away from the rest of the bottle. To achieve this, a thread drenched in spirit is wound around the bottle, and then set alight. As soon as the thread is burnt completely, the bottle is put in a container filled with icy water, where due to the significant temperature difference, the glass bursts at the place where the thread was. The reassembled pieces form a contradictory construct: an angular ball with sharp edges. Intactness - the coherence of the individual parts in the shape of a ball - and damage - the prominent fracture points of the bottles - mesh here. The glass objects, arranged in the gallery space like a fictive stellar constellation, are characterised by their special aesthetics as well as by the physical danger that they pose.

Just as a blind mirror consists of itself and its opposite - hiding -, and the balls are both intact and damaged, the work *Sunrise* (2016) also plays with contradiction. The associations that go with the term sunrise - brightness and a beginning - are countered by the blackness of the burnt wooden planks. The elaborate production process, which in Monika Goetz's works precedes the public presentation like a hidden performance, can only be

faintly divined in the case of *Sunrise*. By burning individual planks of spruce and fir wood, the structure of the wood is changed, leading to different, unpredictable patterns. As happens so often in her installations, the aesthetics of this work is the result of the interplay of planning and chance.

In the final room, *Captured Light* brings the thematic range full circle. The 1.80 meter height of the 56 lamps of the installation refers to the human body; the cases were produced especially for the show. Their arrangement is reminiscent of a zoetrope, a mechanical instrument from the beginnings of cinematography. If we walk along the semicircle, the change of light and dark creates the impression of a strobe-like light fixed at the centre of the work's seemingly round interior. In actual fact, however, the semicircle formed by the 56 fluorescent tubes is only completed into a full circle by the mirror attached to the wall. While in *Within*, the mirror refuses its function and deprives us of the reflection, here the mirror creates an illusionary space that goes beyond the gallery. The beholder cannot enter the inside of the (semi)circle, it can only be looked at from outside.

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The opening reception is on Thursday, 10 November 2016, from 6 to 8 pm.
The exhibition can be seen until 22 December 2016.

For further information, please contact the gallery anytime at mail@schwarz-contemporary.com

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