



Media Information

VISUAL ECHO

New media, contemporary techniques for generating pictures, novel materials and substances are currently exerting great fascination. A move away from physical-material reality and toward formless immateriality is thus correspondingly shown in the artistic practice of Claudia Zweifel. Her work assumes a threshold position. She works—in a transitive and process-oriented way—in the transition between space and imagination, object and picture, and between opposing realities. The monograph makes the consistent development of her oeuvre visible for the first time.

Bielefeld/Berlin, February 20, 2020 – The artist Claudia Zweifel (*1981) does not work in one exclusive medium. Her previous work has gone through a variety of forms, such as the panel painting, drawing, ceramics, installation, video, and film. “The different phases of Claudia Zweifel’s work are like individual chapters from one or several novels, all by the same person. The various phases of work each occur within a relatively brief period of time. Auteur film, realistic figural painting, digital painting, appropriated drawings, stereograms, model sculptures, all come to mind right away,” writes fellow artist Gunter Reski, and is accordingly, “pleasantly confused.”

Zweifel’s reply to the question of whether or not her creative phases are connected corresponds to the above: it’s more than obvious that it all goes together, and how. She refuses to say more.

Besides a formal interest in the specific qualities of various media, a concentration on “references” can also be observed in Zweifel’s work. Zweifel distorts, reinforces, and emphasizes found visual material in a process of constant change and updating. For clarification, the artist refers to the aural phenomenon known as the echo, which creates a space in which repetition is used as a narrative. “Each of Claudia Zweifel’s visual appropriations responds to its source like an echo and, in particular, they shift into the foreground the relationships created between the signifiers and their (contextual) interpretations,” says author Lina Launhardt.

Looking at early works from the years 2002 to 2005, it is clear that, during those years, Zweifel conducted most of her discursive explorations of the echo mode through the panel painting. Visual material taken from, for example, advertisements for renter’s insurance and retirement planning, served as sources, in order to show how they overlap with classic pictorial space in painting, as well as what kinds of roles they actually play and how they construct identity in public.

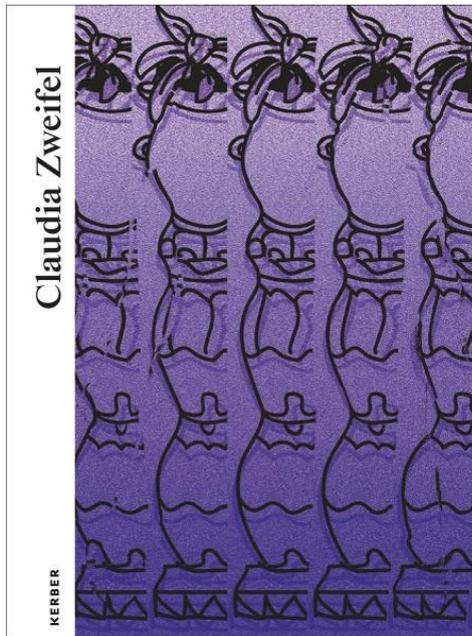
Take, for example, the piece *Untitled (Family)*, 2005, which uses the cover of a magazine about tenant protections as its source. Zweifel cut down the size of the image, but otherwise, like a copy machine, she transferred it in oil paint to canvas, in a one-to-one scale, thus turning it into a panel painting. The traces that this “echo” creates are almost exclusively generated from the transfer of the source material into the medium of painting, and establish a dialogue between the formal, presentational effects of the adapted cover and the traditions of panel painting.

In her exhibitions Zweifel expands upon the way she plays with visual echoes, by adding a spatial component. Her mostly installative hangings shift the focus to the space in between pictures and its potential to create, through their juxtaposition, new overtones for interpretations and meanings.

Thus, at the Kunstmuseum Lucerne in 2006 the artist combined five other types of images also based upon advertising photography, among other things, in her “family portrait.” Placed right next to the “family portrait” was a large canvas, which showed a horror film scene. A painted adaptation of a protagonist from a key moment from *The Ring*, 2002 blended a fantastical scene of terror with the idyllic, odd chain of images from the other works. This painting worked like a blemish on the whole, while at the same time subtly intensifying the grotesqueness of the other pictures.

For her series *Air du Temps*, 2012 Zweifel repeated the intertwined ornamentation of the squares in the classic silk scarves by Hermès. The color scheme created a deviation from the photographed base: the artist replaced the brilliant, diverse colors of the squares with a black-and-white copy, which underscores the retro character of the colorful fabric instead of inhibiting it. At the same time Zweifel works empty space into these drawings: the repeated patterns dissolve into nothing in some spots, like an overexposed photograph or faded fabric. A drawing that brings its own disappearance into play also plays with the temporal quality of the medium and creates a kind of deeper moment of tension, just as in her chain works, for example

With the newly released artist’s book, Claudia Zweifel, comes the first monograph on the Swiss artist to explore all of her creative phases.



Claudia Zweifel

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