

H A M L E T

Martina Mächler

do ghosts still believe in us?

Opening: January 27th 2019, 2-6pm

Exhibition: January 28th - March 3rd 2019

Guided Session 006 (with Karolin Brägger): February 24th 2019, 6pm

Opening Hours: Saturday 11am-3pm or by appointment

What if faith in humans is lost? We can believe in ghosts as long as we want; if ghosts don't believe in us, we cease to exist. Martina Mächler postulates a potentiality, but also an oxymoron through a scenario which in its logic seems convincing, but at the same time is based on the reversal of a superstition.

In her first solo exhibition, Martina Mächler interweaves questions of potentiality - personal, abstract, energetic and economical ones - into a para-biographical narrational and conversational environment. The exhibition guides through symbolic, re-imagined and diverse scenes. However, the reutilization of scenographic elements creates a connected narrative structure nonetheless. Existing and conscious insecurities within the narration are highlighted by the fragmentation of the elements: square pieces of carpeting; metal flooring cover joints which separate the rooms; pieced together curtains changing in between transparent and opaque. These elements bring together the experience of the exhibition, but also decidedly point to the breaks in the narration. This narration doesn't have to be Martina Mächler's story, but could also - in this or a similar form - be the story of many people. Who could resent the ghosts for not believing in us anymore?

The narration leads from the question posed on a dating website „Do you think one person can significantly change the world?“ to the 97% match of the narrator. The only reason the match did not reach 100% is because he doesn't believe that we live in a patriarchally organized society. In parallel and in connection with this narrational bracket, an encounter with stories takes place which lead into recurring insecurities. Thus it is shown how questions of economic survival and factory labor are connected to the supposed empowerment provided by liberal educational institutions: which indoor climate must be ensured for a yogurt to become a yogurt? or: which indoor climate must be ensured so a student can reach her diploma? Liberation, empowerment and emancipation are promised - may it be through the portable breast pumps which are produced and assembled in the plastic factory the narrator works in or the absorption of self-empowering strategies through and by the art school -, but how do they actually transfer into self-conception? The ghosts are encountered in the exhibition as figures of the supposed reminiscence of alternatives. Of moments and scenarios in which potentialities were somehow clearly articulated, but the actual outcome of the story appeared not to be clear at all.

An angsty discrepancy in between promises of justice or a better world, and the banality of the every day - which is obviously not banal in any way - pushes into the foreground repeatedly. A video documents the search for the motive of an idealized image on the website of the plastic factory (the one with the breast pump).

H A M L E T

An idyllic landscape from a nature preservation area on the Lake of Zurich is the central image on the landing page of the plastic factory. After the motive is found and consequently potentialities of alternatives can be explored, a second video shows the return journey. The boat couldn't get too close to the nature preservation area because it is also closed off seaward. All that remains is to continuously describe and explore scenarios, moments, potentialities and the resulting alternatives which allow the ghosts to have faith in us.

- *Clifford E. Bruckmann*

audio loop 15'55" via 5 active speakers;
2 videos on monitors 15'55";
100 carpeting fragments (25m²);
bar element, regular's table;
8 white plastic folding chairs;
1 pillow;
3 curtain elements, various sizes;
3 flooring cover joints

Martina Mächler, *1991
works and lives in Zurich
www.martinamaechler.com