

A Baronian

Isidore Verheydenstraat 2 B 1050 Brussels T 32 2 512 92 95 F 32 2 512 71 08
Tuesday > Saturday – 12:00 > 6:00 pm
info@albertbaronian.com - www.albertbaronian.com

Press Release // ROOM

LUCAS KNIPSCHER “New York is an island” Exhibition from February 15 to March 23, 2013

Opening on Thursday February 14, from 6 to 9 PM

In his most recent work, Lucas Knipscher engages with the proliferation and hybridization of the technical image and the art object. Contemporary image making, materially different from photography, mediates the present by circulating between fantasy and reality as we negotiate our relationship to the world.

In the ‘Room’ Knipscher presents « New York is an island », a series of works in a variety of media including bamboo, ceramic, felt, fabric, foam and smooth cast resin. Next to stating a simple fact, the title also refers to New York as an exotic place, a fantasy sought after by many artists who move there today looking for a sense of freedom and the promise of an artistic lifestyle filled with possibilities and excitement. This was no different in the past, if we think of Gauguin who spent the second part of his life on the seemingly idyllic island of Tahiti and painted with the cultural material he found there. In the early 1970s Robert Rauschenberg moved his studio to Captiva Island, off the gulf coast of Florida, marking a shift in his work towards an embrace of colour and geometric abstraction and giving rise to the *Jammer* series (1975-76), named after the Windjammer sailing vessel. In 1975 he also went to India and the inspiration of this new and exotic context was made clear in the production of works with stitched fabrics in pure, solid colours attached to rattan poles or hung directly on the wall.

Overtly conscious of this, Lucas Knipscher here presents a soft frame in felt held up against the wall by two bamboo poles (*Michael Heisterkamp*), acknowledging the flexibility of supports while stressing the fact that under each image a structure remains underneath. In his practice Knipscher looks out for the thread running through many artists’ work and the communal of making work informed by art history and discussions between peers. Next to Rauschenberg, the bamboo for instance brings to mind an installation of Cosima von Bonin shown at Documenta 12 or early archive photographs (1968-69) of Sigmar Polke of improvisational sculptures in his studio.

Another artist who can be said to perform as a kind of ghost in his studio is Isa Genzken. Her image can even be found literally in the exhibition, attached to an octopus-like body (*I.G.*). Nearly an act of provocation, since one is not supposed to borrow directly, it becomes clear that here the real conversation lies besides the object. Genzken's practice is characterized by an eclectic trajectory and a non-static engagement with materials, equally we find a similar attitude in Knipscher's work where the objects and materials take on decisions and relate directly to the viewer.

This can be seen likewise in the "chair sculptures", where reality and fantasy become intermingled within materials, forms, histories and individuals. They are copies of the iconic Marcel Breuer chairs, often found in interior magazines, whose form has grown into an image standing for a kind of bohemian lifestyle. The metal tubular form becomes the support for a piece of Ikat fabric, hand-made and dyed with a traditional technique originating from India, Japan and Indonesia. The use of these fabrics as a cultural indicator evokes a general sense of tactility and directness, and relates to the primitive in the sense of a non-industrial, tribal culture. In an era determined by the digital and the ubiquity of interfaces it seems such aspects have gained value again, causing a recent surge of interest in these kind of artistic practices.

Lucas Knipscher (1979, Washington, DC) received a BFA in photography from the New School for Social Research, New York and an MFA in photography from Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. He lives and works in New York. His previous exhibitions include: Gio Marconi, Milan (with Kerstin Brätsch and Adele Röder), Dingum, Berlin, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York (with Steven Baldi), Sculpture Center, New York, Balice Hertling, Paris and Swiss Institute, New York. In 2012 he received a solo exhibition at Thomas Duncan gallery, Los Angeles.