

**GENIUS LOCI II. FUTURE MASTERS**

curated by **Gérard A. Goodrow**

**4 July - 30 August 2014**

**Opening, 3 July 2014, 7 pm**

SETAREH GALLERY is celebrating its first anniversary. After an eventful year with seven exhibitions on various aspects of modern and contemporary art, we take this opportunity to continue the theme of our opening exhibition: the “genius loci” or the spirit of the place, which, in Düsseldorf, is determined decisively by its Academy of Arts.

Last year, we presented established and internationally renowned artistic positions under the title “*genius loci. Contemporary Masters. The Düsseldorf Academy after 1945*” with personalities such as Joseph Beuys, Tony Cragg, Otto Piene and Gerhard Richter. This year, the young stars of the Academy move into the limelight. The exhibition “*genius loci II – Future Masters*” presents works by promising artists who have finished their studies in recent years or are still enrolled at the Academy.

In connection with the exhibition, the **SETAREH FUTURE MASTERS ART AWARD** will be awarded for the first time. The illustrious jury is comprised of Dr. Doris Krystof (curator, Kunstsammlung NRW), Moritz Wesseler (director, Kölnischer Kunstverein), Gérard A. Goodrow (author and curator) and Dr. Samandar Setareh (Setareh Gallery).

“*genius loci II – Future Masters*” represents the whole spectrum of contemporary artistic positions – from figurative and abstract painting to new forms of plastic art, from sculpture and object art to photography and conceptual art.

Two different trends are emerging among the abstract painters: for **Max Frintrop**, **Peppi Bottrop** and **Pascal Sender**, geometry plays a prominent role. While Max Frintrop finds his main motivation for his new works in a profound and long-standing engagement with the (pictorial) space, Peppi Bottrops current lipstick images deconstruct the ideology of the Constructivists of the early 20th century, which was heavily influenced by geometry. In his enigmatic pictorial compositions, Pascal Sender falls back on the visual language of Street Art, bringing it to a whole new level that is motivated by the history of art. **Silke Albrecht**, **Georg Treitz** and **Melike Kara** deal with abstraction in a completely different way: they negotiate the gesture of the painter rather than the geometry of forms. At first sight, the pictures of all three artists can be seen as a tribute to German Informel painting. With Silke Albrecht and Georg Treitz, however, colour as material plays a far greater role than the gesture itself. Different types of paint are applied to a surface, next to each other or above each other, creating fantastic pictorial spaces, at times with tremendous depth effects. For Melike Kara, in contrast, the image carrier plays the main role: perforated chamois leather or carpet padding made from worsted wool fabric evoke associations of domestic surroundings and question the still ambivalent role of women in contemporary art.

Figurative painting is represented by the Dane **Allan Rand** and by the Moldavian **Nicolai Crestianinov**. The colourful imagery of Nicolai Crestianinov puts motifs and ornaments from folk art and contemporary life on equal footing with traditional mythical symbols. Motifs such as the Holy Grail and skulls as well as allusions to the tradition of carpet art and other textiles play a central role. The works of Allan Rand, are often difficult to decipher and their narration remains a mystery: if there is a narration at all, then it is rather in terms of a stream of consciousness. The objects and the sculptures of **Claudia Mann** and **Matthias Grotevent** are likewise enigmatic. With Claudia Mann the choice of material is directly related to the chosen form which arises in part from ephemeral or seemingly absurd situations. Matthias Grotevent decidedly deals with the human body as the measure of art. To him, material and working process play a central role.

The recent works of **Tobias Hoffknecht**, **Sebastian Riemer** and **Robert Brambora** are stringent examples of conceptual art. At first, Hoffknechts works made from vintage steel tube furniture appear to follow the tradition of Duchamps readymades. Upon more detailed examination however, the viewer realizes that these works are committed to a specific process of taking away or reducing, which makes them more closely related to the traditional concept of sculpture. The works of Sebastian Riemer also oscillate between different media – in his case between photography and painting. He acutely examines the nature of photography and looks at the materiality of the photographic image itself as well as at the perception and reception of photographic images from a historical point of view. Last but not least, in one of his new works, Robert Brambora refers to certain types of economy and communication technology as well as to certain coaching methods (e.g. NLP). He uses elements from different genres – such as photography, sculpture and installation art – to critically comment on the mechanisms of today's post-industrial society.

All 13 artists in the exhibition are highly adventurous and test respectively exceed the conventional limits of their respective medium. Although, at times, their works may prompt associations or memories of earlier positions in the history of art, these young generation artists from Düsseldorf are extremely independent and decidedly forward-looking both in the way they work and think.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue.

**Gérard A. Goodrow**