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Uta Eisenreich

Kenniskring / Knowledge Network: Uta Eisenreich

Uta Eisenreich researches towards a new artist book with the title 'AS IF' – a second volume to her book 'A NOT B' (2010, Roma Publications). The core of the research is an investigation of the incongruous relationship between reality and representation.

The image-driven research focusses on how domestic objects are framed in different contexts: in commercial product photography, in educational books, in memory- or assessment- tests. The archive is also enriched by her own simple snapshots of observations of everyday life. Eisenreich looks into methods of abstraction: eg. the reduction of figurative painting to universal shapes in movements like De Stijl, or the use of silhouettes in advertisement campaigns.

Next to that, there is a more text-based journey that is relating Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* to Hans Vaihinger's *Philosophy of the As If* (Merleau-Ponty's notion of the primacy of perception meets Vaihinger who proposes that man willingly accepts fictional representations in order to live peacefully in an irrational world).

Eisenreich draws from theories of language learning and studies popular symbol systems like Emoji as well as more coded ones, like the grammatical and mathematical visualisations of Maria Montessori, but also collects jokes, pieces of novels and advertising slogans. Selected quotes from this text collection will form a text layer in the book.

Both image and text research inform the production of photographic images for the book. In a gloomy and slightly commercial atmosphere, objects are arranged on a table and carefully lit. In front of the unblinking eye of the camera, ordinary everyday objects turn into protean characters and animate each other mutating from their humble selves into characters, into products or advertisements for themselves, to then be reduced to their sheer shape and turn into signs and symbols. Sometimes those things coalesce into strange arrangements forming diagrams and representing relations or forming arrangements strangely reminiscent of the doom-scenarios living in our collective consciousness.

As usual, Eisenreich suggests underlying patterns that viewers are triggered to discern.

Uta Eisenreich, born 1971, Germany, studied photography in Dortmund and some semesters of philosophy in Frankfurt, before integrating different disciplines at Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam. In her practice, she explores the field between photography, performance and video. Eisenreich teaches at Gerrit Rietveld Academie and is represented by Ellen de Bruijne Projects in Amsterdam.

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