ALMINE RECH

Constructivismes
Group Show

Jan 23 — Mar 6, 2009 | Brussels

The idea of this show started basically on wanting to confront two bodies of works by veteran artist/photographer Barbara Kasten and mid-carreer artist Eileen Quinlan. Noticing also a major resurgence of works by younger artists recently directly inspired by the "constructivist" and "suprematist" movements, it seemed timely to explore this phenomenon whether in a formal or more literal manner.
A key group of artists were selected from the stable of the Almine Rech gallery, namely Katja Strunz, Gregor Hildebrandt, Haim Steinback and Anselm Reyle.
In order to establish the "lineage" it was crucial to include some of the pioneer by selecting works and names being at the foundation of the movement : Kasimir Malevich, Alexander Rodchenko and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy.
This exhibition although not an academic attempt tries to make unusual choices of works and artist ranging from the late 30's to today by covering each decade.
Japanese artist Akira Kanayama directly issued from the Gutai movement and lesser known in Europe and US seems to fall naturally in that category with works more reminiscent of the suprematists than the typical Gutai.
Representing the drawings and collages by american artist Burgoyne Diller is a direct quotation by a lesser known american "suprematist" of the 60's.
Surprisingly the optically constructed and little know black and white photographs from the 60's by Raymond Hains complement an interesting dialogue with Moholy-Nagy late color photographs.
In a more direct attempt the works of Katja Strunz, Florian Pumhoesl or Camilla Løw are a direct attempt at quoting the works of their peers in a fresh manner whether by choice of the medium or the presentation of the works themselves.
Haim Steinback adresses the notion of the "construction" itself. By including a much lesser and primitive early work and a more recent one-(titled "Lissitsky")-he definitely addresses his sources and inspiration.
Frank Stella continues to explore the constructive éléments using his personal vocabulary.
With Liz Deschenes we seem to explore the refinement of a movement both ascethically and formally with the direct references disappearing and remaining as a trace. It resonates very clearly also in R.H. Quaytman series of works and chapters primarily with the use of her borrowed references and her system of presentation. Through reappropriation, Sherrie Levine continues to quote and offer reflection about time and history. Anthony Pearson's use of unique photographs/photograms combined with sculpture continues to challenge and question forms of representation and presentation.
Gregor Hildebrandt and Matthias Bitzer follow that same road in their collages and the pinnacle is reached by the explosive aspect of Anselm Reyle's recent piece for the show.
Finally, it seemed natural to include work of master artist Dan Flavin.