ALMINE RECH

Matthias Bitzer
fever/field

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Almine Rech Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition in Brussels of Matthias Bitzer, born in 1975 in Stuttgart, lives and works in Berlin.

The thematics of history and identity are central to Matthias Bitzer's work; lives of historical figures being his main inspiration for reflection. In this exhibition, Matthias Bitzer reveals several historical figures as well as some of his friends, the sense of time being based on different eras.

"The underlying idea of the show is to create a kaleidoskopic structure of influences and references. My secret society.", Bitzer says.

A pivotal multimedia installation 'The distance between you and me' (2011) is his interpretation of the passionate love-story between Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya, two avant-garde German artists. Weill, whose music was considered degenerate by the nazis and was forced to flee to the United States, convinced his ex-wife, Lotte Lenya, to escape Europe together. They remarried in the United States where Weill died at a young age in the arms of the love of his life. Bitzer recounts their temptuous love-story due to her infidelity and his commitment to his musical career. With this installation he translates the complexity of passionate relations that embrace strong feelings of love and passion as well as drama. Up to the visitor to discover the autobiographical element that is presented in this room-filling installation.

One can also discover Berthold Brecht (1898 – 1956), an influential German theaterpractioner, who produced several operas with Kurt Weill. Brecht also fled from the nazis, first to Scandinavia and then to the United States, and spent his last years living in post-war East-Berlin.

When visiting the exhibition, one enters a universe created by the artist. "As the works are constructed in several levels, for me it is just a logical conclusion to give all elements of the space an embracing role. Interventions like painting the floor, installing a light installation that besides lighting the paintings also forms a poem, establishing a connection between the individual works in the exhibition. The idea is to construct an autonomous space, that renders the magical-mystical relations between single objects.", Bitzer says. The different artworks created for this exhibition are brought into a narrative field rich in references and can also be seen as one major installation.

One can only observe the dichotomies that appear in Bitzer's paintings, drawings, collages and sculptures : the visible and the hidden, the rational and the emotional and the figurative versus the abstract.

Bitzer has taken a new turn in his art with the use of photographs the artist has captured himself. These are combined with self-written poems or hidden behind geometric laquer figures. While doing research for this exhibition Bitzer rediscovered his passion for photography, and has integrated them in his art. The attention to lighting has always been important in his interventions in order to create the autonomous space his installations form. Only this time, the neon tubes and lightboxes in different poetic colorshades form autonomous artworks.

A monographic catalog will be published by the gallery on occasion of the exhibition. Solo exhibitions have been dedicated to Matthias Bitzer's work at the Städtische Galerie Nordhorn, Germany (2007) and in Kunstverein Hannover, Germany (2010). An in-situ installation has been displayed at MARTHa Herford, Germany (2009 and 2010). An overview of his art is currently exhibited at the Rosenblum Collection, *What You(ngs) See Is What You Get*, Paris (October 2011- July 2012).