

Couple – Gun

Series in 5 parts, photography, 27 x 27 inches, 5 + 2AP, 2008
Title: Couple – Gun – Helping / Finding / Giving / Holding / Playing

A man with a weapon poses, after a successful hunt, in front of the trophies of his passion. Only that the hunted are images, the weapon is an object, a bricolaged contraption that pretends possessing a shooting function, and the hunter is a harmless neighbor of the building, in which the artist's studio is located.

The bemusing play of image realities, identities, possibilities of critique, sex and crime, humor and more or less voyeuristic approaches begins:

The oil paintings exude 'self-aware or perceivable superficiality'. They are props adopting impressionistic approaches: either embodying scenes of both unmistakable content and factual atmosphere, or emotional and lovely ambience, or mysterious and detached moods, or humorous and cynical temper. At first glance the paintings show simple and pleasant scenes:

Nudist unrestraint suggests naturalness.

The human beings are what they are, so they think.

Setting, image composition, painting style, and color palette support the first impression of harmony or harmlessness of the scenes, which treat questions of gender relationship. Questions that, at first sight, aren't questions: assistance, demonstrating and finding objects, together viewing of/reaching after the child....

If one looked at the paintings as such, independent from the photography work, certain observations would occur, such as "In the current art context the paintings could hardly be meant as they appear." Other occurring questions and content would equally create moments of bemusement and lead to deeper levels of reflection: i.e. the usual male dominance in every day interaction, which lies far away from the global and political feminism debate. One could say that the slowly creeping in perturbation became the motor for reflection. The images changed irreversibly, their superficiality was broken open, and their critical core emerged.

However, the paintings were brutally torpedoed (destroyed?) by a man who most likely did not see an art theoretical or gender-specific discourse in them. The location of the bullet holes suggests that the "perpetrator" targeted the genitalia on purpose, that he left a void at the location of nudity and ostensibly satisfied after his accomplished "work," meaning after the elimination of obscene areas, now poses in front of his achievement.

It remains unclear, if the built weapon reminding of a bazooka gun, the actual corpus delicti, represents a mockup serving as a prop or if it is a coincidentally matching object found in the properties of the artist or if the photographed model himself was the "perpetrator."

The place of action is as in other related series the described microcosm in the courtyard of the studio. It is an experimental field for performative approaches in photography involving people from the environment who become part of the action. These people participate voluntarily. They know the artist for example from bringing the trash out or from talking more than about the weather, like meaning and senselessness of making art.

Furthermore, this series can be understood as a "missing link" of those photo series that illuminate the relationship of painting and photography or objects and photography in the area of performative photography.

