

Brussels Flamingo
Contemporary
Art and New Media

Newsletter

Brussels, Belgium
17 January 2008

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JAN 08

Next Vernissage:

**Clemens Botho
Goldbach —
Unterholz
(Land Art In-
stallation and
Drawings)**

Thursday, 24 January
2008, 19h

Dear Friends,

I take pleasure in presenting to you the first Newsletter published by



Brussels Flamingo Contemporary Art and New Media. This will be the starting point for a monthly edition which will deliver to the Gallery's friends exclusive information mostly relating to its programme and its artists. As the Gallery puts particular emphasis on new media, including photography, video and interactive art, I plan to channel to the reader in particular insights relating to these forms of contemporary art.

Thanking you for the warm welcome which Brussels Flamingo experienced in the art scene of Brussels,

*Kindly yours,
Natascha Mehlhop*

NB: In order to keep the size of the electronic file manageable we had to scale down high resolution photos to reasonable dimensions - entailing that their quality is most likely better on the screen than in a print-out.

Claudia Fahrenkemper

The exhibition on the two ongoing

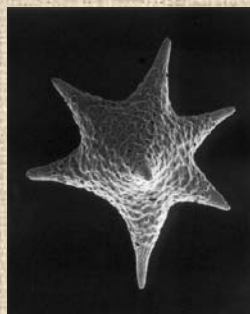
series PLANKTOS and HABITUS is closing on 19 January. I have been asked dozens of times about Claudia's sophisticated way of achieving the beautiful images which are on display at the moment. However, I think that there is no better description of the peculiarities of her technique and the amazing beauty flowing from it than the one by Ann Thomas, curator of Photography at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa:

"By the mid-twentieth century a revolution had occurred in photo microscopy. The electron microscope, which first became commercially available in 1935, was subjected to a rapid series of refinements over the next five years, to the point where it



(Sodium chloride, 2000:1, silver gelatin print, 50 x 40 cm, 2003)

could enlarge to fifty times the magnification of the best light microscope. This would herald new



technologies that we possess today, such as the scanning electron microscope, which not only has an extremely high resolving power but also reproduces the nooks and crannies in the micro world with an astounding sense of three-dimensionality.

It is this advance that has made Claudia Fahrenkemper's pristine, greatly enlarged photomicrographs [...] technically possible, while it is her unusual vision that makes their precision and fine formal and technical realization so visually compelling. Her images are distinguished from the typical entomological photo micrographic textbook illustration by her awareness of the architectonic possibilities of the specimens she photographs. Furthermore, she demonstrates a capacity to transform their details into something that appears to exist in isolation from their biological function.

(picture above: Foraminifer, 30:1, silver gelatin print, 25 x 20 cm, 2005)

While playing simultaneously and ambiguously with the notions of both the beautiful and the grotesque in all of these photographs - which range from low magnifications of a

aesthetics in art. Her vision would appear to be closer to Max Ernst's surrealist sense of the microcosm, in its creation of a parallel world of previously unimagined shapes and forms.



(Plant seed, 40: 1, silver gelatine print, 100 x 80 cm, 2001)

factor of thirty times to a factor of three thousand times the size of the specimen - Fahrenkemper ensures that we will be attracted to a different aspect of the microstructure in each one. Her close-up examination of forms often endows the subject with sensuality reminiscent of the paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe. Fahrenkemper's images draw our attention to the intricacy and purposefulness of design in nature.

While the neutrality of presentation, clarity of expression, and emphasis on the revelation of structure seen in Blossfeldt's work is also evident in Fahrenkemper's photographs, she is less interested in a concept of archetypal forms in nature drawn from a theory of unified

A student of Bernd Becher at the Art Academy in Düsseldorf, Fahrenkemper has succeeded in achieving a monumentality of form with her interpretations of microscopic views [...] that rivals some of the stunning photographs of pit-head structures made by her teacher and his partner, Hilla Becher. Like her predecessors, Blossfeldt and

Renger-Patzsch, Fahrenkemper has borrowed the tools and analytical values of scientific investigation to make art. In the end it is not the scientific significance that has meaning for her but the ability of the image to interpret this new relationship with the microcosmic world, to convey to the viewer a sensual experience of the perfect and complex tiny forms that constitute its inhabitants".

(excerpt from the book "Claudia Fahrenkemper - Photomicrographs", ed. Christiane Stahl, Hatje Cantz, 2004, ISBN 978-3-7757-1456-3)

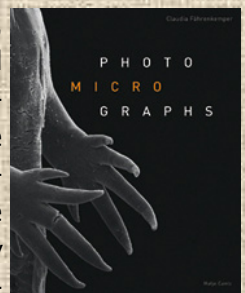
Press Claudia Fahrenkemper's exhibition was very well received in Belgium as reviewed in two enthusiastic articles reproduced here in excerpts.

Bert Danckaert in H-Art#29: "Fahrenkempers foto's zijn

bijzonder esthetisch en hoewel strikt documentair, leveren ze veeleer een virtuele werkelijkheid dan een objectieve waarneming op... Fahrenkempers foto's zijn objectief en subjectief tegelijkertijd, wat ze tonen is zo klein als een planeet en bovenal: ze gaan over ultieme orde en daardoor over complete chaos."

Claude Lorent in La Libre Belgique (28/12/07): "Enfin, [...], le remarquable travail de microphotographie de Claudia Fahrenkemper (Allemagne 1959). Ses clichés noir et blanc du plancton attestent des accointances avec la science, mais ceux sur le cristal dérivent des mondes connus pour offrir des visions bien énigmatiques flirtant avec l'abstraction dans des luminosités interpellantes."

Books Claudia Fahrenkempers works are comprehensively documented in the above mentioned high quality publication edited by Christine Stahl (79 photos of METAMORPHOSIS, IMAGO, HABITUS and EMBRYO series) and the Novatone-Catalogue published by Brussels Fla-



mingo in 2007 (13 photos of the PLANKTOS series), ISBN 978-3-939825-55-5, both avail-

able through the Gallery.

Extensive Bibliography avail-

able on request.





Ulu Braun

Ulu Braun's films reveal to be a true drawing card for Brussels Flamingo. Thus, the exhibition of "Rhabarber Boy", "The Flooding of Victoria" and of his other works will be prolonged well into February.

Since early this month Ulu Braun and his family exchanged their home town Berlin for Helsinki where he was granted a one-year artist in residence scholarship from DAAD. In November last year Ulu participated with his film "Südwest" at the 14th "Rencontres Internationales" in Paris, an interdisciplinary project designed to promote new cinema, video and multimedia. Link: www.art-auction.org

In collaboration with Roland Seidel under the pseudonym of



(pictures above: Filmstill from 'Rhabarber Boy', 2007
below: Filmstill from 'FishSoup', 2006).

"Bittebittejaja" Ulu Braun participates with the film "Rekorder" in the Transmediale in Berlin on Friday 1 February 2008. The Transmediale is a Video festival for art and digital culture in its twentieth year. Link: www.transmediale.de

Press

Braun's exhibition at Brussels Flamingo has been positively reflected in the Belgian press.

Claude Lorent in La Libre Belgique (28/12/07): "...intéressantes sont les réalisations filmées d'Ulu Braun (Allemagne, 1976), qui mêle animation et réalité dans des fictions assez baroques, pleines de couleurs où le suspens émerge autant de l'étrangeté des situations que de la narration elle-même. La notion de collage et d'entrelacs fait partie de ces productions cinématographiques qui échappent aux catégories et dont on peut tirer des images statiques tenant de l'univers du conte."

Baudouin Galler in Le Vif Express (30/11/07): "[...] le vidéaste allemand Ulu Braun réputé pour ses accents psychanalytiques servis par une narrativité exemplaire..."

Martin Lorenz

I am delighted to announce that Martin Lorenz has joined the group of artists represented by Brussels Flamingo. Martin Lorenz, born in 1979, currently studies with renowned media artist and Professor Mischa Kuball at Karlsruhe's State Academy of Fine Arts, famous for the crowd of young and promising media artists originating from his classes. Martin Lorenz is a performative video artist who works at the intersection of performance and video installation. His works open our eyes for the beauty and subtle nuances of every day life, for the



wish of any human being for a piece of luck and inner peace. The proximity of his shootings to reality is overwhelming and yet his films seem to contain a truth about life that goes far beyond.

Martin Lorenz takes part in the new international video festival for young artists called PASSAGE until 24 February in Brussels and Mechelen. Link: <http://contourmechelen.be/passage>. In December, Lorenz has been among those participants that have been granted a residence program scholarship at FLACC, Genk. Link: www.Flacc.info (picture above: Filmstill from 'Eicosapentaensäure', 2006).

Exhibition Review

Düsseldorf, K 21, Jeroen de Rijke - Willem de Rooij

Natascha Mehlhop

Düsseldorf's K 21, second home of the collection of North Rhine/ Westfalia, is hosting the first retrospective of the Dutch



(picture above: Filmstill from 'Mandarin Ducks, 2005)

artist couple in Germany. The successful duo became famous for its contemplative films. Their said to be symbiotic collaboration had started in 1994 during their studies at Amsterdam's Rietveld Academy and soon brought them an amazing attention in the art world, culminating in their participation for the Netherlands at the Venice Biennial in 2005. Only months later in March 2006 Jeroen de Rijke died of cardiac arrest on a trip to Ghana.

The exhibition in Düsseldorf is conceived as the counterpart to a twin exhibition in MAMbo, Bologna scheduled for April 2008 that will show a different part of de Rijke/de Rooijs' works.

As it has already been the case for the couple's works, again a

web of cross-references becomes the dominant principle of the exhibition. It seems as if Willem de Rooij who closely worked together with Julian Heynen, director of the K 21, is trying to spell their body of work backwards. The concept of the show is arranged around the so called Droste-effect, Droste after the name of a

Dutch brand of cacao. It is the picture of a woman holding a packet of this cacao in one hand and on this packet there is represented the same woman again holding a packet representing a woman holding... and so forth.

The exhibition centres on two films and a slide-show: 'Mandarin Ducks' (2005) - first screened at the Venice Biennale in 2005 - as well as 'The Point of Departure' (2002) and 'Orange' (2004).

'Mandarin Ducks', rich in quotes from film, theatre and design, is telling the story of a Sunday meeting of ten upper class people. Set in exquisite interior these beautiful persons re-enact stereotype behavioural patterns and emotions in an artificial and mannered way. The monologues are at the same time icy and dramatic and lay bare conflicts about hierarchy, narcissism, sexual identity and self-deception. At

certain points during the film the camera swings towards the windows and offers the spectator a view on the sky. Altogether the film contains seven such views. Today one finds them - this time as photos - in the exhibition. However, this is only one example of recursion. For instance, one might wonder why there is a Rietveld buffet on display. This has to do with the fact that the Dutch Pavillon for the Venice Biennial had been created by Rietveld, where de Rijke/de Rooij have shown 'Mandarin Ducks' in 2005. In "normal life", the buffet is exhibited in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam - where Rijke/de Rooij had a show as well. In the end the visitor realises that each and every piece is linked in a way to the others pieces and will discover those links similarly to finding the fitting pieces of a puzzle.

During the slide show 'Orange' 81 different monochromatic hues of the colour orange are projected. The permanent change of different shades that stay only for some seconds sets an almost hallucinatory mood. It reminds the spectator



(picture above: 'Orange', 2004)

of the very strong and almost sculptural pink that Rupprecht Geiger develops on his can-

vases. Besides the somewhat apparent political interpretation of the piece by linking it to Holland's political history, one has the choice to take the colour for what it is and can be: orange as the shimmering colour of the sun, a flame, summer - in short, everything that is orange is supposedly full of energy and one feels highly energised when finally and only hesitatingly deciding to leave the projection room.

The exhibition's dense network of re-contextualisation gradually makes the spectator question his own concept of aesthetics. The artists' works undertake an analysis on beauty and critical potential of the image (in film) that opens new ways of perception. One can be curious how Willem de Rooij will continue this quest.

The exhibition catalogue will be available from February this year. For an interview with Willem de Rooij and a preview on the exhibition follow this link: <http://blip.tv/file/544651/K21> **Kunstsammlung**, Ständehausstrasse 1 - Düsseldorf. Opening hours: Tue-Fri 10-6 pm, Sat / Sun 11.-6 Link: www.kunstsammlung.de

Preview

PASSAGE Festival in Brussels and Mechelen, until 24 February 2008

The common theme of the presentations is the multiple relations between moving image and performance. PASSAGE has been initiated by the CONTOUR Mechelen project, (which equally holds responsible for the video biennial in Ghent showing work of internationally well-established video artists).

A jury composed of highly acclaimed specialists made its choice among candidates originating from ten European art academies. PASSAGE will provide for an excellent opportunity for them to leave their first trace on the European art scene. Among the participants eight had been granted a three-week long artist in residence scholarship in the studios of FLACC in Genk, amongst them Martin Lorenz who is represented by Brussels Flamingo since the beginning of this year. The organisers intend to hold PASSAGE every two years, each time in another European country and with alternating hosting institutions.

Link:

www.contourmechelen.be/passage

Transmediale 08 in Berlin,

Transmediale is an international Festival for Digital Media Art in Germany and a major impetus for reflecting the role of digital technologies in our society. Under this year's motto CONSPIRE, 'Transmediale 08' seeks to examine dubious worlds of story telling and remote opinion making, to look critically at the means of creative conspiratorial strategies, and use these to uncover new forms of expression and digital discourse."

The programme includes an exhibition on the festival's topic CONSPIRE, an extensive list of video screenings, a conference with internationally acclaimed researchers, media activists and artists and a series of experimental performances. Ulu Braun will show his film 'Rekorder' that he produced together with Roland Seidel

under the pseudonym Bittebittejaja.

Opening 29 Jan 2008, Award Ceremony 2 Feb 2008, Exhibition 30 Jan-24 Feb 2008

Haus der Kulturen der Welt, John-Foster-Dulles-Allee, 10, D-10557 Berlin, Germany, Link: www.transmediale.de

Nathalie Djurberg at Sint Lukas Galerie in Brussels

Until 1 March Swedish artist Nathalie Djurberg, born in 1978, will show her work at Brussels's Sint Lukas Galerie. Nathalie Djurberg graduated from the Academy of Malmoe in 2004. She participated in various international exhibitions and had her first Solo show in Moderna Museet, Stockholm in May 2006.

Djurberg works with animation films that are inhabited by clay figures in a strange universe. The short films are often no longer than five minutes. However, they manage to tell stories about the human condition mixed both with black humour and seriousness. The stories deal with topics such as war, violence, sexuality, sadism and assault -in an investigation of the darker side of the human soul. Djurberg's stories all seem to have a strict narrative development with an initial peaceful and playful scene that slowly turns into something profoundly unsettling. In her films one finds various elements of traditional folk tales like the classical roles of the good and the bad.

Until 1 March, Sint-Lukas-galerie Brussel, rue des Palais 74, 1030 Schaerbeek, Tue-Fri 11-5, Sat 1-5pm.

Link: www.sintlukas.be

Brussels Flamingo Exhibition Calendar

Ongoing:

until 19 January: Claudia Fährenkemper, PLANKTOS-HABITUS, microphotography

until 1 February: Zhe Li, LIQUID MUSIC, interactive installation

until 1 March: He Jia, ÜBERGANG, paintings

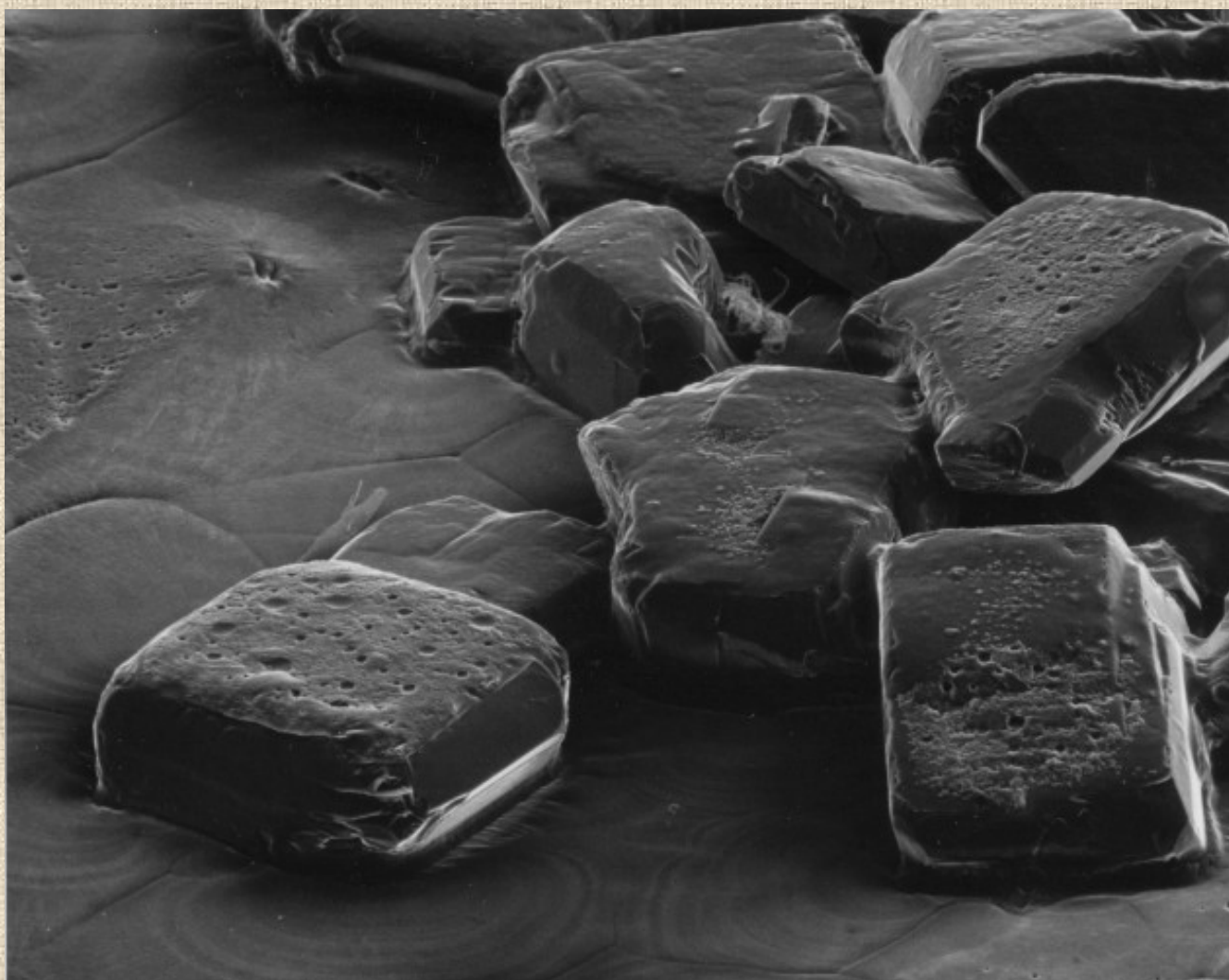
until 1 March: Ulu Braun, RHABARBER BOY, and other video works

Upcoming:

24 January-1 March: Clemens B. Goldbach, UNTERHOLZ, Land Art installation and drawings

6 March-16 April: Felix Reinecker, paintings

6 March-16 April: Martin Lorenz, video installation



(picture above by Claudia Fährenkemper: Ascorbic acid, 80 : 1, silver gelatin print, 40 x 50 cm, 2003).