

GOWEN CONTEMPORARY

GENEVA, Switzerland

AURELIE PETREL

Images

25 April – 31 May 2013

Gowen Contemporary is delighted to present an individual exhibition of works by the French photographic artist Aurélie Pétre, called *Images*. It is her first solo exhibition in Switzerland.

Aurélie Pétre uses photography as the starting point for a work in progress. *For me 'photography' is a shot that I have transformed visually, which has a size, a weight and which exists in a space* (A.Pétre, 2012).

The artist transforms photography in a way that exceeds the traditional boundaries of this discipline. In her artistic practice, the shot is only the embryonic state in the creative process, followed by work in a laboratory that results in the photograph. The latter is an accomplished photographic object once that it has engaged with the space. For each work Aurélie Pétre creates an environment inviting the spectator to move and discover the object from different perspectives. This phenomenon often results in the spectator actually being included in the work thanks to a play of reflections and transparencies.

Aurélie Pétre likes to experiment freely with different techniques and media. Her work proves to be innovative from a technical point of view; her photographs produced on glass through baking processes or on concrete demonstrate how this artist drives formal research forward and combines different expertise acquired through other disciplines including, notably, architecture.

Time, space and existence are common features underlying Aurélie Pétre's thought process. Figurative or abstract, her works review the process of the materialization of ideas and its implementation. In the *Variations* series, the artist creates abstract and geometric forms in space that question the notion of the object's existence.

Often proceeding through series or by mono-themed projects, Aurélie Pétre is attracted by images of reality in the making, such as constructions or moments in everyday life alternating between activity and rest. Some of her projects show fascination for repetitive actions which do not lead to concrete results, for example the uncompleted project in Leipzig for direct access to the sea, or the unlikely research of Chilean women to find the remains of their 'desaparecidos' (missing), or the rice grain decoration in front of traditional houses in India inescapably carried away each day by the wind. The breadth and wealth of Aurélie Pétre's language, imagery fuelled by her experience and travels, implies several levels of interpretation.

This exhibition combines mechanical works and other more organic ones such as *Terres Brûlées*, a series of photos on wood. Mankind is barely present or not at all. It is suggested between the lines or slumbering in a series of *Dormeurs*, recurring figures in the artist's work.

Aurélie Pétre was born in Lyon in 1980 and studied at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts (National Fine Arts School) in Lyon. She lives and works in Lyon, Paris and Geneva, where she lectures and is responsible for Pool Photographique with HEAD. She is the founder and member of BKR 'A BroKen aRM' laboratory for artistic creation in Paris. Her previous solo exhibitions include: Enssib, Villeurbanne, France (2012-13); Pilotenkueche, Leipzig, Germany (2011); Museum of Fine Arts, Shanghai (2011); Galerie Olivier Houg, Lyon, France (2011); ECNU University, Shanghai, China (2011). Her previous group exhibitions include: Westpol AIR Space, Leipzig, Germany (2012); Baumwollspinnerei, Leipzig, Germany (2011); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012 et 2011); Huhui Museum, Shanghai, China (2010); Universal Exhibition Shanghai, China (2010); St-Joseph – St. Luc Hospital, Lyon (2009); Super Window Project/French Embassy, Tokyo, Japan (2009); Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon (2008); Museum of Modern Art, St-Etienne, France (2006). In addition A. Pétre has exhibited in many private galleries in France, Italy, Spain, Japan, Brazil, Portugal.

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