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Claudia Kugler

grrrrr

January 19 – March 03, 2018

By the early 2000s - a moment regarded as the height of the painting boom - Claudia Kugler had already begun exploring the new possibilities opened up by digital image production, which she, in turn, short-circuited using the specific attributes of a diverse range of media formats and printing techniques. Since then, posters, wallpapers, Diasec C-prints, curtains, and carpets as well as slide and film projections and even the surface of a screen itself have served as media for the precisely rendered subjects of her work.

Her working method has set itself apart from the approaches to digitality within contemporary art common since the mid-2010s. She's hardly interested in the principle of collage which came to define the so-called Post-Internet art movement nor the spectacular theatricality at the heart of virtual reality applications, which have become increasingly present within the art context. In general, Kugler constructs her image-objects in the three-dimensionality of digital space, which she contrasts with the two-dimensionality of the layout of either the same image or a neighbouring image in the same installation. The starting material for her creations can be found objects from the internet often presented in isolated, discrete and strikingly edited forms, or they can be things she has photographed herself, brought back into focus a second time. She also "invents" image-objects, for example, the fangs in the current exhibition realizing them in the form of exact renderings.

She often limits herself to the exhibition of, in the strictest sense, digital objects with a single subject, separated into two or three component parts. They are, nevertheless, frequently depicted in diverse, highly rhythmic and repetitive ways, especially in her work from recent years. This explicitly graphic aspect of Claudia Kugler's practice makes it clear that she works as both a visual artist and a communications designer, constantly stretching and expanding the boundaries of both fields with remarkable pleasure. Whether through the constant use of different media forms or the almost programmatic variability with respect to the number of editions, she foregrounds the peculiarities of the two fields as a theme of the work.

This also applies to her exhibition "grrrrr"; a persistent desire for focused and specific visualization in the pervasive flood of digital images as well as the challenge of working through the high resolution, pop culture filled imagery like tongues and vampire teeth serve as common threads throughout the selection of works. In this exhibition, Claudia Kugler once again avoids too tight a thematic corset. The title's phonetic, subliminal rage or, given its necessary ambiguity, sexual arousal overlays the exhibition like background static, whose images operate like vectors of meaning engaging with the theme of "the present" in a variety of ways. Resisting the notion of a closed cycle of work, she reveals an atmospheric unity, only apparent at second glance. The images offer enough work and space to thoughtfully but definitively cut through art and media historical conventions, through hints, breaks, and paraphrases and, in so doing, counteract a hasty desire for a simple sense of identity.

Wolfgang Brauneis