

IN APPEARANCE

13.1. 2011 - 19.2. 2011

CURATED BY URS KÜENZI, SUBSTITUT, SPACE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART FROM SWITZERLAND, BERLIN



SUBSTITUT
Raum für aktuelle Kunst
aus der Schweiz
www.substitut-berlin.ch

with Boaz Aharonovitch,
Cat Tuong Nguyen, Martin G. Schmid.

Opening: 13.1.2011

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

«A really homogenous area offering *nothing to be* cannot be given to *any perception.*» *

* Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenology of Perception.
Routledge Classics. London, 2002. Italics by author.

The three participating artists of the exhibition «*IN APPEARANCE*» offer a lot to be, giving it to perception. They all use strategies of overwhelming, provoking astonishment to capture the attention of the viewer. They use techniques of layering and assemblage to create an extremely beautiful body of works. The spectator stands in the middle of the installations, can see it as a total, as an ornament but then, by getting closer, will discover endless details.

The exhibition talks about the idea of perception of art and its offers. It talks about the relation of aesthetics and content, the layers below the surface and how the viewer starts to read the narratives of the works and how he creates his own stories.

www.martingschmid.de

Martin G. Schmid, a Berlin based German artist, transfers a room-size print onto the walls of the Bezalel-Gallery. The result is a fresco like wallpaper with a patina. Schmid combines fragments of painting, printing, photography and computer-generated images to a tornado-like experience. He refers to baroque traditions but also to the power of the architectural space.

[www.chritingerdemayo.com/kuenstler/
cat-tuong-nguyen.html](http://www.chritingerdemayo.com/kuenstler/cat-tuong-nguyen.html)

Cat Tuong Nguyen, a Zurich based Swiss artist, brings together large scale photos with sculptural installations. The photos are developed directly in the exhibition space, the smell of the chemicals still hangs in the air. The patterned photopographic papers could be the decoration of a sanctuary. Or, like in Egyptian tombs, a fresco telling the life of the deceased. Nguyens work also refers to ideas of eternity in contrast to the volatile contemporary (pop)culture that bases on ephemeral celluloid and pixels.

www.boazaha.net

Boaz Aharonovitch explores the limits of the contrast of beauty and horror. His latest photos have an almost too sweet appearance; flowery, similar to works of Fischli&Weiss. It sounds a bit pathetic, but since we all are surrounded by an ugly reality, a bouquet lightens our day... And we need some flowers as soon as we learn what the layers beneath Aharonovitch's images are: burning books, burning Lebanese woods, bombs dropping on Germany, suicide bombing sites etc. Of course one question that arises when regarding his work is vibrant for the whole exhibition: What is the relation between aesthetics and ethics?

About Substitut:

Substitut is an independent non-profit space and platform for art from Switzerland in Berlin founded by Urs Küenzi in 2007. The venue encourages a long term international exchange. The name Substitut plays on the behalf of the institute, subculture and even subversion. The name reflects the fact that they do not constitute a pure off-space or a perfect institution, but a mixture. The name Substitut can also be seen as a critical representation of art in society.