

Mehdi Chouakri Mommsenstrasse

VALIE EXPORT / SYLVIE FLEURY

March 16 — April 14, 2018

Opening

March 16 from 7 until 9 p.m.

VALIE EXPORT / SYLVIE FLEURY is an exhibition that draws together two distinct positions of feminist art. Both artists explicitly engage with female identity, conventional gender constructions and art norms; they work performatively and not infrequently with similar means and facets, albeit from two different generational perspectives.

VALIE EXPORT's work pivots on notions of identity, the relationship between body and psyche, threats to man and her/his personality, the process of seeing itself, as well as conceptual apprehensions drawn from the media she utilizes. VALIE EXPORT persistently analyzes existential questions within social, political and economic contexts.

Sylvie Fleury equally questions the relationship between social norms and individual identity. By mixing previously separate spheres, she juxtaposes designed gender differences. She bridges esotericism and trash, fashion and motorsports, science fiction and art history. Based on obvious references to consumer culture, she develops a completely independent oeuvre of unmistakable character. Her art might be seen as representational for the second generation of postmodernism and its artistic capacity.

In the exhibition VALIE EXPORT / SYLVIE FLEURY the two multi-layered artists are set side by side for the first time; works by both artists from very different work phases are on show. First off is »Action Pants: Genital Panic« from 1969 — VALIE EXPORT's legendary cut jeans that postulate a shift from object towards subject.

»Every movement is like a cut in space«, VALIE EXPORT states explaining her »Dancing scissors«. She here translates a core principle of her longstanding artistic practice into a sculpture: Art must be an »incision« into our accustomed experience of reality. Media mechanisms, their use and impact on the construction of reality are expressed in the rarely shown »Preliminary studies on "Glass"«.

Sylvie Fleury has been commenting on key works of the male-dominated art world since the 1990s. »Concetto Spaziale« references Lucio Fontana's »Tagli« (cuts), not without subtle hints to common fashion trends. In »Wild Pair« themes of sex and elegance are paired in a very natural way. The fetishized »Stiletto« is emancipated, while the man becomes an object of desire. In a Duchampian sense, the objects are readymades that reflect our need for consumption. The video »Cristalle Custom Commando« sees a brigade of Amazonian female bikers shooting handbags, and encourages the emancipation of "it-bags": kill them!

For the occasion of the exhibition, a neon work by Sylvie Fleury with the multilayered title »C'est la vie« will be shown as a permanent installation on the gallery façade. Named after a perfume by Christian Lacroix, she simultaneously quotes Marcel Duchamp's female alter ego Rose Sélavy.

VALIE EXPORT has been honored with numerous international awards, including the 2014 »Yoko Ono Lennon Courage Awards for the Arts« alongside Laurie Anderson, Marianne Faithfull and Gustav Metzger. She will be present at the opening.

Sylvie Fleury will receive this year's »Swiss Grand Prix Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2018« with Thomas Hirschhorn and Luigi Snozzi, following countless previous awards.

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