

Identität mit dem Anderen, der Kohärenz mit dem Gegenüber teilhat, das sich gleichzeitig aber als an dem Geheimnis der Individualität, der grundsätzlichen Einzigartigkeit eines jeden Wesens teilhaftig erlebt. Entlang der Konstruktion eines dialogischen und doch geheimnisvollen, unentschlüsselbaren Kontextes über das rätselhaften Wesens der Individualität und ihres kommunitär-distinkten Charakters entfaltet sich das Werk Claudia Peills und vermittelt das unmittelbare Erlebnis der Partizipation an einem Geheimnis, deren wesenhafte Bedeutung es ist, Teil seines Inhalts zu sein, ohne diesen je benennen zu können. Claudia Peill erzeugt in der Repräsentanz eines Referenten die Erinnerung an seine Präsenz, legt Zeugnis ab von der Vergangenheit seiner Anwesenheit und seiner akuten Abwesenheit, dem Verlust dieser Präsenz beziehungsweise dessen Ersatz durch Repräsentanz. Seine Repräsentanz durch die Existenz eines ästhetischen Objekts ist referenziell mit seinem Status als individuelles, authentisches Subjekt verbunden, und darin liegt auch das Bewußtsein der Erinnerung an die Einmaligkeit des kohärenten Augenblicks, der Erfahrung von Integrität und Distinktion. Im Akt der Fragmentierung, Intimität und Hermetik gelingt die Schaffung eines Geheimnisses über das Geheimnis der Präsenz und des Daseins, das sich durch die akute Anonymität des Referenten und die distinkte Existenz des Repräsentanten auszeichnet. Schließlich besteht eine subtile Korelation zwischen dem Charakter des photographischen Objekts und der Wahl des Pigments und seiner Dichte bei der Anwendung des Kunstharzes auf die photographische Spur. Ist die Aussage des photographischen Fragments an sich schon geheimnisvoll, so erzeugt sein Einschluss in den ästhetischen Komplex des Harzes und der rahmenden Metallprofile eine potenzierte Qualität der Distinktion. Wie ein Wesen aus einer anderen Sphäre in Bernstein eingeschlossen ist, so versiegelt Claudia Peill die Objekte ihrer Aufmerksamkeit in einer rätselhaften ästhetischen Hermetik. Sie zeugt damit von der jeweiligen Einmaligkeit der Identität, auch der eines jeden Augenblicks, einer jeden Begegnung, und erkennt sich entsprechend selbst als an dieser Hermetik teilhaftig. Durch ihre Arbeiten läßt Claudia Peill auch jeden Betrachter, der sich als identisches Subjekt anerkennt und auf das Geheimnis der Objekte einläßt, an dieser Erkenntnis teilhaben.

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**In the visual approach to Claudia Peill's work the observer is attracted by two dominant aspects.** On the one hand there are the black & white photographs, photographic traces of reality, and on the other hand the presence of coloured surfaces. Initially the black & white of the photographic material and the colourfulness of the surface do not appear to be integral components of one and the same creative process, but encounter each other, so to speak, on the level of the creative work, and are united in the process of visual reception.

Also one of her most recent works, *Onde* from 2001, which was created for and in the humanistic context of the Museo Laboratorio dell'Università La Sapienza in Rome, shows close-ups of faces and parts of the human body, which are partly covered by a coloured, transparent synthetic resin. The arrangement is rhythmised by monochrome coloured surfaces which correspond to the photographic tableaux in colour and format, however their opaque character, in contrast to the transparent layers applied to the photographs, makes no allusion to a photographic representation. At first sight the monochrome areas, unlike the representational photographic segments, appear only to serve the colour correspondence and rhythmic order within the work; they act as homogenous composition elements without any contextual significance. However, given Claudia Peill's artistic approach one could by all means wonder whether these apparently monochrome, hermetic surfaces are not perhaps completely covering a photographic image. Is there perhaps not a photographic detail of a human visage or a part of the body lying hidden under these opaque layers of resin?

This question is of fundamental relevance in view of the structure of the resin layers whose colour intensity and degree of lucidity is determined by an individual intermixture of coloured pigments. It is not just a homogenous sleek surface that hermetically seals the picture, rather layer upon identifiable layer whose application and liquid differentiation are manifested as a kind of grain in the hardening process. The constitutive significance of this artistic approach is then clear: it is not just a case of creating an immaculately planed, sealed surface, but the formation of a pictographic, integral object. The internal visual structure of the photograph and the material composition of the synthetic resin cannot be distinguished in the aesthetic consequence any longer, the layers of resin and the visual, photographic material coalesce structurally with

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each other transcending the encounter of two heterogeneous visual factors as described above.

The majority of the individual sections of *Onde* are constituted either completely by the detail of a photographic image or an opaque coloured surface; however, there are also areas in which only a segment of a photographic image is visible, while the remainder of the tableau is indeed covered with same layer of resin, but one which is opaque and thus concealing. This is also the creative principle Claudia Peill pursues in her diptychs and triptychs, allowing the visual object to arise from a rhythmic correspondence between photographic detail and the monochrome, yet materially structured colour field.

Whereas the continuity of the resin layer and its grain creates a homogenous consecutive pictorial complex, the deliberate interruption of the representative context brings about a rift in the visual continuity and draws one's concentration to the photographic detail, whose division experiences an ulterior potentiation through this principle of radical punctuation. It is as if the photographic image, on the one hand, is directly addressing the observer, demanding his individual attention and excluding all secondary aspects of perception, while on the other hand it is defying an unequivocal analysis by shifting the emphasis from the geographical centre of the picture, as if to ensure greater attention on the part of the observer by indicating its volatility and the threat to its visibility.

The diptychs and triptychs of the last few years, and indeed the major work *Onde*, exist in a delicate balance between the creation of an image, the apparition of a fleeting, but specific moment, and the disappearance, extinction of an image, the aesthetically witnessed moment.

With this Claudia Peill pays homage to the uniqueness of the moment, which in its particular clarity is so elementary and constitutive for the very essence of her work.

The photographic material, the basis of *Onde*, was collected by Claudia Peill herself among the students of the Sapienza, Rome's largest and most important university. Again here, as always in her artistic work, Claudia Peill uses photographic material she finds while walking through the city, observing the ambient microcosmos of context which she extracts and eternalises for longer than just the respective existential

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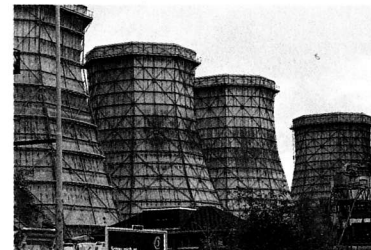
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moment and uses as her essential starting point for her creative work. Be it on the university campus or at the market on Piazza Vittorio Emanuele or on the beach in the Netherlands, Claudia Peill always empathises with the expression and individual characterisation of her objects in a very unobtrusive, yet at the same time - perhaps for this very reason - very intimate fashion. The artist prefers an anonymous approach without the burden of dialogical eye contact; however, there is sometimes face-to-face contact between the person photographed and the artist, which ultimately does not affect the nature of her observation. Even if there is eye contact between the object of interest and the beholder the direct look appears just as hermetic and mysterious as the anonymous registration of a physiognomic or accessory detail of a movement or physical expression.

The discreet, respectful observation corresponds to a subtle longing for encounter and identification, for an empathetic intimacy. Every one of her works testifies to a willingness and desire to capture the essential being of the moment, and what she is seeing at that moment. It is not with voyeuristic curiosity that Claudia Peill faces her opposite number, but with an empathetic interest that leaves room for the individuality and dignity of the other person. With the extreme fragmentation of her choice of images and the formal and material integration of the resin layers she manages to maintain the integrity of the person observed; it is clear that, at the moment of photographing, the character under observation is completely in his own world, and can thus be taken to be authentic, without any recognisable relation to an habitual context. Also the details of the body, which do not derive from the context of the identification of the face, bring across, in their extreme proximity, a feeling of immediate participation, and way beyond their original significance they are perceived as essential to the being itself. Their actual composition and the mediation through the photographic documentation figures less than their potential for the individual characterisation and culmination in an integral personal context.

The unity of the aesthetic complex is emphasised in its genesis and created by the total superimposition of the photographic motifs by sometimes opaque, sometimes transparent layers of clear or coloured synthetic resin. The uniform metal frames, in corresponding colours accentuate the sense of cut.

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In *Onde*, when a single image mostly comprises opaque-coloured resin or this interchanges with a photographic motif covered with transparent resin taking up the whole area, the rhythmic overall structure of the work clearly conforms with the creative principle of the diptychs and triptychs, where a split in the photographic motifs either means a partition in the picture that can be harmoniously balanced or a dramatic movement in the symmetry point with a correlating replenishment with a monochrome area. In *Onde* Claudia Peill potentiates this principle by incorporating pure motif images and pure colour fields with combined fields. The superimposition of the photographic motif with opaque painted areas only lets the observer perceive a small part of the cosmos which the photograph seems to have segmented. This in turn leads to a potentiation of the intimacy and enigma of the pictures brought over by the close-ups. One gets the impression of being almost too close to the observed object - despite the respectfully and precisely selected segment of the photograph - and with the identification of the moment of this zoom view and the blatant exclusion of all information on the context of the motif, one is conscious that there is basically no difference between the person being observed and the observer. "Subjects and objects, although in different modalities, are in their general materialness of being to a certain extent *reversible*. (Vivian Sobchak, 1994). The mysterious participation in the enigma of being and the inexplicable, but existential process of identification with the non-identical with the hermetic-exclusive seems to be the essence and the core of Claudia Peill's works.

So what is it that we see when we look at Claudia Peill's works, when we approach them and enter into a visual exchange with them? Is it photography or is it painting? What is essential for the genesis of the work is the application of photography and also the photographic distinction of reality, the photographic fragment. On the other hand, the monochrome coloured resin layers feature extremely pictorial qualities and transpose these also generatively onto the photographic motifs, the more so that her conscious craftsmanship is emphasised by the tactile, structural aspects of the material.

With this re-evaluation of the representational and at the same time concrete image, Claudia Peill differentiates herself from the rudiments of rationalism of picture language and economy of the creative process. On the contrary, she intensifies the question about the essence of representation,

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which is a generative element of an aesthetic object. And it is far beyond these questions that the works of the artist are also way beyond the documentary moment corresponding to the essential being of the empathetic individual that craves for the identity with another and coherence with an opposite number, but that also partakes of the secret of the individuality, the fundamental singularity of that being. Somewhere along the construction of a dialogical yet mysterious, indecipherable context about the enigmatic feature of individuality and communicative-distinct character the work of Claudia Peill unfolds and conveys the immediate participation in an enigma whose elementary significance it is to be part of this content without ever knowing what to call it. In the representation of an abstracter, Claudia Peill creates the recollection of its being there, bears witness to the past of a presence and acute absence, to the loss of this presence or indeed the replacement of such by representation. Its representation via the existence of an aesthetic object is referentially coupled with its status as an individual, authentic subject, and herein is the consciousness of the remembrance of the singularity of the coherent moment, the experience of integrity and distinction. In the act of fragmentation, intimacy and enigma, a secret about the secret of presence and being comes over, that is characterised by the acute anonymity of the abstracter and the distinct existence of the representative. Finally there is a subtle correlation between the character of the photographed object and the choice of pigment and its concentration in the application of resin on the photographic vestige. If the message of the photographic fragment itself is mysterious, then its embedding in the aesthetic complex of resin and the framing metal profiles creates a potentiated quality of distinction. Just as a being from a different sphere is enclosed in a locked world of amber, Claudia Peill hermetically seals the objects of her observation in a mysterious aesthetic enigma. She testifies to the respective singularity of identity, also to that of the moment and encounter, and recognises that she too is part of this enigma. The observer, who can see himself as an identical subject and engage with the secret of the object can also become part of this recognition through the works of Claudia Peill.

1 : *Onde*, 2001 ( particolare cm 50 x 180 ). 2\_4 : *Onde*, 2001 Museo Laboratorio La Sapienza Roma 2001, Claudia Peill con gli studenti di Storia dell'Arte dell'Università La Sapienza. 5\_6 : *Tutto vero / Tutto falso*, 1996 "Convergenze" Galleria A.A.M di F. Moschini, Roma 1996. 7\_11 : *Quattro tempi*, 1993 Galleria Stefania Miscetti, Roma 1993. 12 : *Plot*, 2000 Fotografia b/n, pigmenti e tecnica mista. cm 60 x 150. 13\_20 : Opere su carta, grafite e tecnica mista su carta, cm 60 x 40. 21 : *Rosa-Rosae*, 2001 Fotografia b/n, pigmenti, tecnica mista su plexiglas, cm 25 x 50. 22 : *Testa Rossa*, 2001 Fotografia b/n, pigmenti, tecnica mista su plexiglas, cm 25 x 50. 23\_28 : *Claudia Peill*, Galerie Andreas Brüning, Düsseldorf 2002. 29\_39 : *Lungo il Reno a Düsseldorf*, 1999-2002. 40\_48 : *Düsseldorf* 1999-2002. 49\_51 : *Lungo il Reno a Düsseldorf*, 1999-2002. 52 : *Düsseldorf*, costruzione industriale demolita nel 2000. 53\_55 : *Manifestazione a Düsseldorf*, 2002.