

## **The Smile of the Spider**

### **About the new spatial sculptures of Kirsten Krüger**

For the past three years, Kirsten Krüger has been distinguishing herself with rather peculiar environments that are characterized by a mysterious imagery. The artist has completed the class of professor Rinke at the Academy of Art in Düsseldorf and might therefore be considered predestined for a spatial artistic approach, for the spatial sculpture. It is all the more unusual to find that she incorporates narrative elements, literary subjects, in her work – themes that were for a long time frowned upon by an artistic avant-garde focused on forms and concepts – and seeks to freeze certain scenes and incidents into sculpture. Her new work “Appointment” is another convincing example of her art. Reminiscent of a theatre setting, it was exhibited this winter in the window of the off-gallery Simon Spiekermann in Düsseldorf.

“Appointment” is surrounded by an atmosphere that reminds us of Beckett. We may see the empty, sagging bench, made of bamboo cane, as a metaphor for “waiting”. Other properties are part of the scene as well: a tree stump overgrown with creepers, and some grey stones. At first glance, the dreary place seems deserted, but on looking closely, peculiar human traces appear. The plant’s flesh-coloured leaves are actually silicone casts made from the artist’s body, and brought into leaf shape. Parts of her face, feet and breasts can be discerned. The stones turn out to be tufts of artificial human hair. This nature scene is a fragmentary image of man, who, transformed into a “plant” or a “stone”, gains new forms of existence.

Kirsten Krüger’s spatial sculptures are arranged pictures which irritate and captivate reason and eye by their unreal colours and strange materials vacillating between artificiality and naturalness. The observer is confronted with seeming actions and feigned processes of change which disturb the conventional way of seeing. Their inherent absurdity makes us feel uncomfortable and amuses us at the same time. We have the feeling, that we hear a “click” in our minds. The world’s genetic code seems to play up. Nature becomes artificial and art becomes natural. Body, nature, object, material, colour – everything mutates, everything is in metamorphosis.

Let us take a look at previous works: spiders’ mouths smile at us, clouds pour with long hair, a bedroom overgrows with moss, ears listen out of open sea-shells, two bottles of conditioner paint a peach- and rose-coloured couple on the wall. Levels and genres get mixed and merge in a surrealistic way. Everything that is possible becomes reality. Kirsten Krüger belongs to a new generation of sculptors who cross the borders between artistic genres without effort. The viewer runs the risk of losing his foothold and orientation when confronted with the mystery of these strange sculptural places and visions.