

Post-production

01.02.13-09.03.13 | Opening 31.01.13, 7pm

Claudia Breitschmid, Alexandra Navratil, Riikka Tauriainen
curated by Yasmin Afschar and Aline Juchler

The act of revisiting things that already exist, whether artworks or cultural artifacts, plays an important role in young contemporary artistic practice. The French theorist Nicolas Bourriaud labels this trend 'Postproduction' - thus borrowing a term from the world of cinema and television, where the word is used to describe the sum of processes that occur between the stage of filming and that of screening (ie. editing, sound design and special effects, etc.). Relating the term to the world of fine art, Bourriaud suggests that, instead of creating new forms out of unedited 'raw' material, artists prefer to work with objects that are already carrying a certain cultural currency. Through acts of splicing, sampling and reordering, artists transport these works into new contexts. Post-production can therefore be understood as an act of artistic recycling of existing cultural works.

This eponymous exhibition draws together work by Claudia Breitschmid, Alexandra Navratil and Riikka Tauriainen, who display differing stances on the subject of 'cultural recycling'. Using found documents, oral accounts, archives and other materials, their work illuminates this issue from diverse angles: How do cultural products stand the test of time? What is the relationship of a given medium to history and to its social context? They share a certain associative freedom - a result of the pseudo-archival logic that runs through their artistic approaches - as well as an impulse to create personal archives that run against the force of history and its supposed linearity. The central focus, therefore, is not on any thematic similarities, but on the processes and treatments of the artists' chosen materials. These processes challenge our own relationship to media as well as our socially-defined habits of interpreting visual and textual information.

The idea that a large part of collective, cultural memory is stored in images is fundamental to **Claudia Breitschmid's** (*1983, CH) work, which analyses the transmission of historical photographs. Breitschmid finds private, personal images that are in danger of being entirely forgotten, and brings them back into the present. This occurs not only on the level of the motif, but through a thorough analysis of the photograph and the photo album as carriers of representational and cultural meaning. The series *Welcome Back* treats the photo album as a materialised form of time itself - a visual memory put into book form. It is not the reconstruction of the past that fascinates Breitschmid, but the mechanisms of remembering. Just how diffuse this process can be is shown in the layered portraits of her piece, *Individuen*.

Unstable Grounds (after The Great White Silence) is a calm video loop by **Alexandra Navratil** (*1978, CH). Individual frames of Nitrate Celluloid film float past the viewer from right to left. Silently, words etched into the film's surface refer to the colours, which the following film sequence was intended to be dipped into. The original material is taken from Herbert Ponting's *The Great White Silence*, a documentary that was shot in 1910, during Robert Falcon Scott's tragic attempt to reach the South Pole, but only shown publicly in 1924. By showing the viewer the frames that were intended only as coloring instructions for the processing lab, and using material that was only ever designed as a step in the production process, Navratil is inverting the meaning of the film, and showing what was never meant to be seen. She plays with the semiotic blurring of colour codings and conjures up subtly colourful pictures of snowy landscapes in our minds.

Researching, collecting and archiving is equally crucial to **Riikka Tauriainen's** (*1979, FIN) approach. Her piece, *An Unobserved Paradigm of the Hidden Economy*, is the result of research into the subject of the phenomenon of underground economies. For her analysis, she has collected material from books, from the internet and from print media. In her installation she combines pictures, texts and diagrams into a display of possible representations of the phenomenon. This order serves as a starting point for new readings, cross-references and connections that go beyond the initial subject, in the process raising sociopolitical and theoretical questions. Tauriainen shows how our subjectivity becomes crucial to a matter that defies analysis through traditional scientific measurements.