

sommer & kohl
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Beni Bischof
(Bad) Habits

opening 2 November 2012, 6–9 pm
exhibition 3 November – 22 December 2012
Wednesday – Saturday 11 am – 6 pm and by appointment

Sommer & Kohl are pleased to present the second solo exhibition by Swiss artist Beni Bischof (*1976, St. Gallen).

Beni Bischof's practice incorporates drawing, painting, collage, and installation in equal measure. He draws from just as broad a spectrum of source materials from everyday life, pop culture, junk media and the internet. In this exhibition he shows a particular interest in visualising everyday human habits, including the bad ones, integrating elements such as spray paint and chewing gum into his sculptures. These concerns manifest themselves in various new colourful large-scale oil paintings, hanging sculptures made from knotted dog-leashes, manipulated tea-pots, and eviscerated fashion magazines.

In a constant process of digging and questioning Bischof works with whatever vexes him most at any particular moment, finding direct ways to visualise his response to the irritation. Researching and testing out techniques and visual formulae, he does employ conceptual strategies, but much of the work evolves spontaneously. It is important that he works intuitively, playfully and keeps his options open. His audacious exhibitions appear chaotic at first glance, assembled on site with traces of the working process remaining visible. On closer investigation the works reveal a coherent bond; an outlandish bricolage held together by the artist's sharp observations and brazen wit. There is a sense of urgency in Bischof's work. He honestly believes in the functionality of art as a tool to address the complexities of modern living.

The absurdity of human routines and their pleasures is ubiquitous in the work, exposing a society denigrated to the grotesque. The works employ a raw and direct energy, as if to counter the shock of this realisation with poetic humour. Conventions that society unquestioningly accepts are interrogated and given a new perspective. Bischof's practice might be seen as an act of digestion. He feeds on the routines of society obsessed with surface, and spotlights the giant heap of bullshit that is left behind. He scratches the gloss and exposes its inner life.

Beni Bischof studied graphic design at Hochschule für Gestaltung, Zürich and Schule für Gestaltung St. Gallen – as an artist he considers himself more of an autodidact. Recent solo exhibitions included Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen (2010); o.T. Raum für Aktuelle Kunst, Luzern (2012); and Milieu Artspace, Bern (2012). His works were included in numerous group exhibitions such as La jeunesse est un art, Aargauer Kunsthhaus, Aarau (2012); Fumetto Festival, Luzern (2011); Fourth Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art (2011); Space Oddity, CCA Andratx Art Foundation, Mallorca (2011); Kunstraum Düsseldorf (2010); Perla Mode, Zürich (2010); CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux (2010); Fotomuseum Winterthur (2009). In 2010, Beni Bischof received his second Swiss Award from the Swiss cultural ministry.

For further information and/or images please contact Sommer & Kohl.

artists:

eva berendes beni bischof alexandre da cunha andreas eriksson knut henrik henriksen jeroen jacobs tony just deborah ligorio adrian lohmüller paul mcdevitt riccardo previdi kara uzelman