

Jo Baer – Lynda Benglis – Jutta Koether

Trio exhibition 2009

20/6 – 4/10/2009

Jutta Koether

From 20 June to 4 October 2009 there is a Trio exhibition of the work of Jo Baer, Lynda Benglis, Jutta Koether in the Oudbouw (Old Building) of the Van Abbemuseum. This is the fourth time that the Van Abbemuseum organises a Trio exhibition, this time with solo presentations of three generations of artists: Jo Baer (1929), Lynda Benglis (1941), and Jutta Koether (1958). They are connected by their choice for 'painting'. Not pure painting, the non-narrative painting which does not refer to anything outside itself, but an evaluation of the phenomenon of painting in terms of art criticism. In the ten halls of the monumental Oudbouw, Baer, Benglis and Koether tackle certain aspects of the history and current practice of painting from different perspectives. The exhibition makes clear that the medium of painting is not the only medium for them to challenge the tradition of painting. From the mid sixties to now these artists work, each in their own way, with a range of mediums like video, sculpture, installation and text. This Trio exhibition highlights their individual works, while at the same time the visitor can explore the potential links between the artists' positions.

Jutta Koether is not exclusively a painter she is also a performance artist, musician, writer and critic. Within the field of painting she is equally 'multipurpose' with her use of translucent colour fields, the gestural brushstroke, foreboding black landscapes, use of the female form and the appropriation of poetry, song lyrics and visual imagery from both the paintings history and pop culture. Her work flips between an exuberant visual experience and a witty, rigorous critique of aesthetics

Multifunctional medium

"I choose everything", Jutta Koether, 1997.

Jutta Koether (Cologne 1958, lives and works in New York) works in the field of painting, performance, music and art criticism.

This solo presentation in the Van Abbemuseum brings together a series of recent paintings developed in 2008 and 2009. Jutta Koether examines the medium of painting by placing her works in installations, as if they are in dialogue with each other. In this way, as she says herself: she makes: *"[...] what doesn't belong together compatible"*. She investigates the relationship between the landscape genre and the idea of the stage, between painting and display.



Jutta Koether, *Incarnation Found Identified Executed*, 2008. Courtesy Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne/Berlin

For this exhibition the artist will work with a series of screens on which the works are hung and in some cases with theatrical lighting. This way the viewers become dramatically aware of their own presence walking through and looking upon the work.

By referencing the museum architecture of Lina Bo Bardi, the Brazilian architect who developed glass panel hanging systems in the sixties, Koether invents her own hanging system of transparent glass walls in two of the rooms of the Oudbouw in the Van Abbemuseum. The viewer can literally flip back and forth between the dramatic black scenes of glass paintings, for example the series *The Necessity of Multiple Inconsistent Fantasies* (2008), and a group of vibrant bright red landscapes like *Incarnation Found Identified Executed* (2008).

The latter are a series of what Koether herself calls "bruised Cézannes". This particular series is made from a group of painting-by-number still lifes which she converts into landscapes. By doing so, all the references becomes unstable and merge into something new which she makes unmistakably tangible for the viewer.



Jutta Koether, *The Necessity of Multiple Inconsistent Fantasies #13*, 2008. Courtesy Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne/Berlin

Painting and music

Both the aesthetic aspects and the aspects related to the content of Koether's work refer to things outside painting: to literature, music and pop culture.

For this exhibition Koether will include two works from a series she has been developing called 'Sovereign Women'. Here she will show *The Soul between Heaven and Hell 2 (picture after an image of Maria Callas on stage)* (2008) and *Souveraine (picture after an image of Kylie Minogue on stage, from the KSTA)* (2008).

Painting and mythology

In the centre room Koether will exhibit a single painting, installed on its own wall, called *Hot Rod (after Poussin)* (2009).



Jutta Koether, *Hot Rod (after Poussin)*, 2009. Courtesy Reena Spaulings, New York. Photo Farzad Owrang.

This is the artist's to-scale remake of Poussin's *Landscape with Pyramus and Thisbe* (1651). The painting receives

extra illumination from a vintage theater light which picks up on the iridescent surface of the painting. The remake depicts the Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, a widely popular theme in post-Renaissance painting. The lovers, forbidden by their parents to marry, planned to meet in secret one night beside a spring. Thisbe arrived first but as she waited a lioness, fresh from a kill, came to quench her thirst, her jaws dripping blood. Thisbe fled, in her haste dropping her cloak which the beast proceeded to tear to shreds. When Pyramus arrived and discovered the bloody garment he believed the worst. Blaming himself for his lover's supposed death he plunged his sword into his side. Thisbe returned to find her lover dying and so, taking his sword, threw herself upon it. This story became widely popular in post-Renaissance painting.

As curator John Kelsey of Reena Spaulings in New York explains this new work "*Koether's practice has often involved appropriations and distortions of male masters such as Manet and Cézanne. Her recent encounter with Poussin – via T.J. Clark's study *The Sight of Death* – has evolved into an experimental movement between reading and painting, an exploration of the relations between language and pictures (and their reciprocal mistreatments of each other).*"

Curator

The exhibition of Jutta Koether, part of the Trio exhibition Jo Baer, Lynda Benglis, Jutta Koether is curated by Annie Fletcher.

Blend special Times 3 - Jo Baer - Lynda Benglis - Jutta Koether

In co-operation with Blend magazine a special publication is realised, in which the idea of a traditional exhibition catalogue is raised to a higher level. In stead of an abstract of the exhibited works, this publication is compiled of specially made interviews, photo shoots and artworks, inspired by the oeuvre of the three artists. The special publication is for sale at the opening and during the exhibition. It is also available in stores. Selling price €5,95

Van Abbemuseum

Van Abbemuseum
Bilderdijklaan 10
Eindhoven

Opening hours

Tuesday - Sunday 11.00 - 17.00
Thursday 11.00 - 21.00

Admission

adults € 8,50
groups -15, visitors 65+ € 6
students / CJP card holders € 4
Thursday night 17.00 - 21.00 free admission

For more details visit
www.vanabbemuseum.nl

Note for Editors

More information and images can be downloaded directly at:
www.vanabbemuseum.nl/press

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