

HEIMIR BJÖRGÚLFSSON: Two psycho ravens shy of unkindness

January 14 – February 25, 2011

We are very delighted to present 'Two psycho ravens shy of unkindness' by Heimir Björgúlfsson. In his second solo exhibition at Barbara Seiler he shows a new series of photo collages and, for the first time in Switzerland, a series of new paintings.

The work of Los Angeles based artist Heimir Björgúlfsson (1975, Iceland) deals with man's relationship with his surroundings and nature, displacement and man's character within human culture. Björgúlfsson takes nature as he finds it through the lens of his camera and creates new, often disturbing and threatening scenarios by adding various elements to collages: a group of golden yellow, raw citrine gemstones conquering a deserted backyard alley in the outskirts of Los Angeles or a huge pinecone hovering above a gas station in the nowhere of the Mexican desert.

Heimir Björgúlfsson applies the same technique in his paintings, which he will present in Switzerland for the first time. The paintings are originally collage based but evolve into something different when they are painted. This is most visible in 'Man believes in magic', a large-scale painting in different color hues of grey, brown, yellow and green. What seems to be an abstract composition at a first glance emerges into a complex and bewildering landscape of deserted houses and patched fences, from behind which a huge billboard with torn, sun-bleached remains of advertisements towers. A huge 'organ pipe' cactus debouches from the right angle of the painting and an oversized, cut and muddy treeroot hovers over the scenery.

In the series 'Entrance uncovered', which follows the earlier series 'The Classical', Björgúlfsson uses classical imagery and distorts it. By creating an image within the image he alludes to the fact that the perception of an environment can vary immensely by different people. He is interested in the question of people's perception of nature and their surroundings, what is considered beautiful and to whom it is considered as such.

Besides photograph-on-photograph collages Björgúlfsson's recent works include photographs combined with spraypaint and larger scale almost scientific drawings of birds in colored pencil. The diptychs are characterized by the layering of the various elements and create a complex reference system of man made and natural objects, which visualize and accentuate their conflict-ridden relationship. Peakholes adjourn the arrangements in layers and open up a glimpse to a world that seems to be hidden behind the collage. The birds, a recurring element in Björgúlfsson's work, reflect human situations created by the given surroundings, as well as ideological and cultural backgrounds. He chooses the form of the diptych for the dialogue that the medium creates; between the old material and waste to be recycled, old paint flaking or dirt walls as remains of human expansion and intervention, versus the grown and natural environment of floating rivers and lush wilderness.

Heimir Björgúlfsson is currently participating in the exhibition accompanying the Carnegie Art Award 2012 (The Stenersen Museum, Oslo, 18 November, 2011 – 29 January, 2012; The Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts, Stockholm, 16 March – 13 May, 2012; Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki, 25 May – 30 July, 2012; Sophienholm, Lyngby/Copenhagen, 28 September – 8 November, 2012). He is also part of the group exhibition 'Utopia / Dystopia' that opens in March 2012 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas. His work has been presented in solo- and group-exhibitions in Europe and the United States, among others Reykjavík Art Museum, Reykjavík, IS (2010) and Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, NL (2006).

Please contact the gallery for further information and images.