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NESW

Benjamin Köder

Hello, nice to meet you. Did you have a good trip getting here? Maybe it rained and you are soaking wet. Maybe you came by bike. Maybe you thought off almost nothing on your way here. Maybe you are wearing black shoes. Maybe you ate spaghetti. Well, great you are here, and now we are having this personal moment anyway, why not talk about the work of Benjamin Köder? Don't worry I'll do most of the talking and it won't take that long.

On the work of Benjamin Köder

There he is collecting his images. We see an accidental glimpse of a naked girl seen through a partly uncovered window, a reflection in a puddle, a particular survey of a map of a randomly opened atlas. He strolls along taking excerpts from his everyday environment deconstructing and rearranging them to create a new state of being. A new order of things. New associations creating new memories. New memories which create new associations.

Then Benjamin draws and paints. There he goes with his pencils and brushes. Using a wide range of hesitant but determined and razor sharp soft gestures he surprises us with things we already seem to know. Creating paradoxical stills ping-ponging from abstraction to figuration and back again. Very concentrated modules as vehicles for new discoveries. What do you think?

Time for an appropriate anecdote!

I once met some man in a forest. It was in autumn and both of us were on our own. When I passed him he asked me whether I knew the route to some nearby village. I explained him how to get there and then he suddenly showed me a trick with a small branch that he probably found somewhere in the forest. It was in his hand and he suddenly made it disappear. He smiled, thanked me for the help and went on his way. I walked on feeling quite puzzled thinking about this lost magician. It was only when I got home that I noticed the branch in the left pocket of my jacket. I had to laugh and still keep the branch in my cupboard as some kind of talisman, as some memory of surprise...Well, sorry... This story wasn't a real anecdote. I made it up. Who says anecdotes should be real anyway?

It shouldn't surprise you that in my view, the work of Benjamin Köder is a bit the same. In my view he confronts us with an image that suggests a specific meaning but at the same time you are never sure he chose this painterly image for its content or as a tool to play with your mind. Therefore he is not only a lost magician, he is also a fake anecdote of a lost magician and at the same time he can be a focussed sniper waiting for his next catch. Have a nice time visiting the exhibition, but be careful, this could be you.

Frank Koolen, 2016