

Lori Hersberger: FLASHBACK

The neon outlines of *Ghost Rider* (2008) glow brightly red in the darkness of the room, a blurry reflection in the broken black glass on the floor thus opening a space for imagination: the world as a representation, something eluding us and never to be fully grasped. The dream is that we let this visible world become an appearance to us.

For Lori Hersberger, the reference to a given room is essential also with his earlier installations. His works reflect the room, absorb it and disintegrate its architecture into immateriality. At the same time, they increase the presence of the room by becoming an image and reflecting in mirrors. Decomposition and accentuation of this spatial shell exist together and thus create a syntax of confrontation of positions which mutually interfere and seem incompatible to a basic structure, an instance characteristic for the artist's entire oeuvre. Abstraction, though, is not understood as a hermetic entity. On the contrary, the works suggest an openness guiding the gaze into a dramaturgy of emptiness and signs, ambiance and fissures.

For the exhibition, the artist arranges the darkened gallery space with neon outlines producing an intense light which through ephemeral contours stages optional images - ghost images. Hence emblematic fields of meaning are juxtaposed and in the resulting dynamic illusion and disillusion, reverence and gaucherie, flirtation and animosity relentlessly clash.

If certain art of the past decades took effect as an art of mock-ups, it is appropriate to speak of phantoms in Hersberger's works. Other than a mock-up, which only depicts an image, the phantom actually lingers between life and death. This *not-anymore* or *not-yet being* Jacques Derrida characterizes with the term *Hantology*. Modernism is history, but Hersberger makes it return. Modernism reappears as a corpse in the scenery of art. All of modernism is contained in postmodernism, but now speaks from the afterlife.

A particular type of irony against post-modern cynicism is inherent in Hersberger's work. Because it not only expresses freedom and triumph, but also despair and melancholy, it curiously obtains a broader critical reach than a strictly cynical attitude towards traditional values.

We are pleased to present the first solo show of Lori Hersberger at Galerie Nicola von Senger, an impressive insight into his current work. With his work, the Zurich based artist is part of an internationally acknowledged generation of Swiss artists. Furthermore we would like to announce the publication of *Lori Hersberger - Phantom Studies*, Musée d'Art Contemporain Lyon at publisher JRP|Ringier this autumn.

Rémi Jaccard, Juli 2009

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