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CASPAR
DAVID
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ZENTRUM

Ruth Campau – FIELDING

27th April - 7th July 2019

Danish contemporary artist Ruth Campau was born on the Isle of Mors in 1955. Today she lives and works in Copenhagen. The artist examines the fields of painting. By combining paintings on transparent or reflecting surfaces to site specific room installations, Ruth Campau creates highly immersive works of art. Colour, surface and light merge into vibrating and fascinating compositions.

The art works of Ruth Campau shine, they reflect, they cover up and they hide, while at the same time they create immersive spaciality. Sometimes intensely coloured, sometimes soft and redeemed in their pallet, they tend to ask questions:

What are we actually seeing here?

Why is it lying on the floor?

What has it all to do with Caspar David Friedrich?

You may call the artist a scientist in the field of painting.

Within her often large scaled pieces of art, she is keen to experimenting and exploring. As an example, she probes how a specific surface responds to the surrounding light. Does it absorb the light? Does it reflect it? Is it even permeable to light? Also she fathoms the possibilities of applying paint. She applies one single shade of a colour in long, parallel strokes onto the screen. What may look like an industrial product on first sight, is the outcome of an almost genius technique: Ruth Campau paints with a broom! The broom allows her to evenly fill large spaces with colour while creating the significant structure of her work. At the same time, using the broom as her painting tool, she encodes the scale of the human body into the pieces of art. The single brush- or to be more precisely broomstroke ends where Ruth Campau can't reach out to. Subsequent to this unusual painting process the artist splits her paintings into several panels. She then rearranges these panels in situ and thereby creates works which include the genius loci of their specific surrounding as part of the art work. Therefore her works of art are not always placed upon a wall in a tamely framed manner, but occasionally lying on the floor, crawling up a wall or hanging down from the ceiling. Some of them are (partially) walkable, others invite the beholder to immerse him- or herself in contemplation. Behind the only seemingly simplicity of the paintings, there often lies a sophisticated complexity. Just as

there often lies much more behind the composed paintings of landscapes by Caspar David Friedrich than a true-to-life depiction of the landscape that surrounded the artist.

“FIELDING” is not only the name of the exhibition, it is also the name of the huge installation, which is installed in the main exhibition room of Caspar-David-Friedrich-Centre in Greifswald, Germany. Ruth Campau has covered the total floor with 19 pieces of dark mylar lanes. Each mylar lane is painted with long, rhythmically and very precise brushstrokes. A brushstroke that has been the characteristic for Campaus artistic agenda for many years. She puts the plate (in this case a soft mylar) on the floor and takes long strokes with a broom. The mylar lanes in this installation has different length, but all of them is painted with thick, impasto, black paint. The mylar is transparent and you can slightly see the brown floor underneath. The paintings and the floor melts together and reminds you of a plowed field. The viewer is not allowed to walk on the floor but only view it from a small platform by the door.

Ruth Campau says about the installation: “The CDF-Zentrum is the house where Caspar David Friedrich was born, and my solo show “FIELDING” is a contribution to Caspar David Friedrich and his romantic landscape. I will show two installations that focus on painting installed as landscapes. A site specific landscape where the viewer becomes a part of the motif. CDF often paint a person standing in a huge magnificent landscape, turning his back to the viewer. In the installation “FIELDING” I do the same - just in a contemporary and concrete way. I grew up on the isle of Mors in the northwest Denmark, and I can easily relate to the romantic landscape - I know it by heart and I can smell it. When a field is plowed it is beautiful with the stringent lines. The dark soil and the birds screaming symbolizes a new fresh beginning. The psychic state of mind you get into viewing a landscape like this is also the drive to a more sensual and spiritual connection to the world and to life in general. I hope to bring this forth in my installation “FIELDING”.”

Except from the big installation Ruth Campau also shows a smaller installation and some paintings.

The exhibition is being realized in association with Galerie Hartwich, Sellin, Rügen, Germany.

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CV of the Artist:

RUTH CAMPAU

2000 - 2005 Studies in Art History at the Open University, Copenhagen

2006 Became a member of Grønningen artists-collective association

2006 - 2009 Art consultant and member of the advisory committee of UBST/The Danish University and Property Agency

2005 - 2011 Member of the Danish Academy Council and Danish Artist's Society's Jury (chairman 2008-2011)

2011 - 2017 Member of The Danish Royal Academy of Fine Arts

2013 - 2017 Member of The Academy Council

2018 Board member at OVERGADEN, Institute of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, Denmark

Solo Exhibitions (selection)

2019 The Fall of Diamond Dust, Feldbusch Wiesner Rudolph Galerie, Berlin, Germany
2018 Big G; Kernel Gallery, Cáceres, Spain
2017 Chicago Mountains; Gether Contemporary, Copenhagen, Denmark
2016 Imagine Gold, Feldbusch Wiesner Rudolph Galerie, Berlin, Germany
2015 Interstellar, Gether Contemporary, Copenhagen, Denmark
2015 Between The Past and The Coming, Overgaden, Institut for Samtidskunst, Denmark
2011 Pearl, PS Projectspace, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2010 Mit Museum, KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, Denmark
2006 Curtain, Ostseebad Sellin, Rügen, Germany
2005 Ruth Campau Galerie Hartwich Rügen, Germany
2001 Yellow. Red. Cigar, Overgaden, Copenhagen, Denmark
2000 Spiritual Kitchen, PAINTBOX, Copenhagen, Denmark
1996 Humid Zone, Overgaden, Copenhagen, Denmark

Group Exhibitions (selection)

2017 Cool, Calm and Collected, AROS Aarhus Art Museum, Aarhus, Denmark
2017 Neue Abstraktion, Deutscher Künstlerbund, Berlin, Germany
2017 Downshifting, RedLine Art Center, Denver, USA
2017 IDEALER, Esbjerg Art Museum, Denmark
2014 Pragmatic Painting, Galerie Hartwich, Sellin, Rügen, Germany
2013 Baltic Sea Record 2013, Stadtgalerie Kiel, Germany
2012 Co Lab, The Barker Hangar, Los Angeles, USA
2012 Robert Jacobsen up to date, Esbjerg Art Museum, Denmark
2012 Land of the seven moles, PS projectspace, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2011 Visitation, Galerie Hartwich, Sellin, Rügen, Germany
2010 North, Galerie Hartwich, Sellin, Rügen, Germany
2001 I:I, Herning Art Museum, Herning, Denmark
1995 Horizonline, Castle of Pomeranian Dukes, Szczecin, Poland
1991 The Young Artists Creative Triennial of Baltic States, Vilnius, Lithuania

Honorary stipends, prizes and awards

2018 Eckersberg Medal, honorary medal
2015 Ole Haslunds Kunstnerfond, honorary stipend
2015, 2017 Residency at Accademia di Danimarca, Rome, Italy
2013 Residency at ISCP (International Studio and Curatorial Program), New York, USA.
2008 The Danish Arts Foundation, 3-year stipend
2007 Anne Marie Telmanyi født Carl-Nielsen Fond, honorary stipend
2006 Nominated for Mies van der Rohe Prize, for "Nordlyset"

Work represented at

ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Ishøj, Denmark

KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, Denmark
Esbjerg Art Museum, Esbjerg, Denmark
Randers Art Museum, Denmark
KØS museum of art in public spaces, Køge, Denmark
Malmø Art Museum, Sweden