

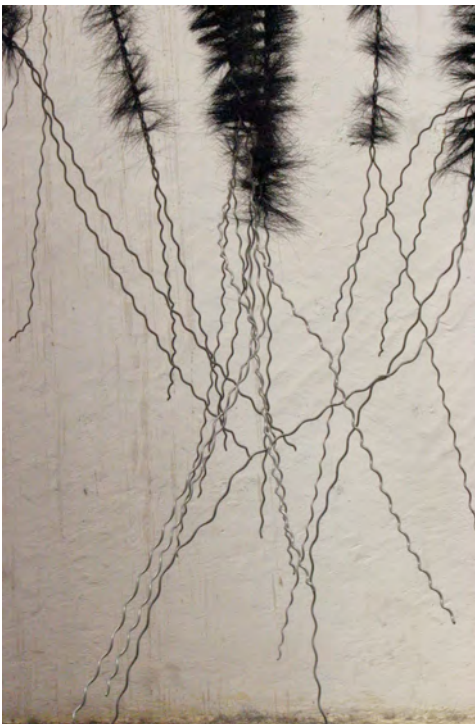
Press Release

Tracing Reality – Hemali Bhuta, Sissi Farassat, Claire Morgan

Curated by Nicole Rampa

25 February – 10 April 2010

Tracing Reality presents three artists, Hemali Bhuta, Sissi Farassat and Claire Morgan, whose works are extraordinarily subtle and are characterized by their careful and enduring manual labour. These young artists from India, Iran and Northern Ireland embroider and assemble unusual materials, such as dried leaves or incense sticks, and transform them into captivating two- and three-dimensional art works. Their innovative approach to form and materiality allows these artists to create works of art endowed with a sense of poetry and lightness. Their photography, video and installation works facilitate a sensitive exploration of space and time. At the same time, the visual accumulation of these individual elements show an artistic approach towards depicting how everyday occurrences are tracing reality.



Shedding, 2008, 25 x 20 cm

Hemali Bhuta (*1978 in Mumbai, India, where she lives and works)

Shedding and *Growing* are photo series and videos that the artist created from installations of the same titles. *Growing* creates a visual experience out of numerous incense sticks multiplying and filling a room. While the installation created a powerful scent and environment, the photos and videos both suggest and elide this sensory experience. *Shedding* depicts long brushes, made of black horsehair, that hang from the ceiling. The artist created vibrations that caused these brushes to shed their hair and accumulate in a thick, black carpet on the floor. *Shedding* references the hair of pilgrims, which when cut in religious centers, is an act of devout belief and personal sacrifice – which is further commodified and exported in the form of wigs used for a variety of transformations by its future users. The artist takes a closer look at the manifold strategies with which we hide, expose or transform ourselves, giving in to society's constantly changing demands for individuality and belonging. Beyond an impressive aesthetic play of form and process, Bhuta raises important questions about the manipulation and the covering up of reality.



Flipside #2, 2009, 45 x 30 cm

Sissi Farassat (*1969 in Tehran, Iran. Lives and works in Vienna, Austria)

The Iranian artist addresses the effect and perception of photographs, often questioning common clichés. Her series *Posen* and *Flipside* show only the backside of photographs onto which the artist embroidered the outline of the depicted person. Inherent in the medium of photography, Farassat's stitching interrupts a voyeuristic gaze and the photograph fails to meet its objective as an object of desire. Furthermore, as a result of the ever-present flood of images we find ourselves surrounded by, we subconsciously fill the silhouettes in Farassat's works with our own – often stereotypical – images. The artist thereby makes us realize that a naïve, impartial gaze does not exist. The perception and interpretation of photographic images is always based on culturally defined codes and can rarely be viewed as a mere image of reality.



Reference Photo, detail

Claire Morgan (*1980 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Lives and works in London, UK)

Claire Morgan transforms ephemeral materials from nature into poetic yet slightly uncanny installations. For the installation in Zurich, the artist has assembled a fragile mobile consisting of countless dried leaves and taxidermied birds. Against all reason and laws of gravity we are able to follow the traces of the flight of the birds suspended in midair and fixated in an exact and geometric spatial drawing. The flow of natural movements seems to be frozen in time. The cycle of life has come to an abrupt halt as we find ourselves confronted with ambivalent emotions: are we in a dream where the passing of time has been momentarily suspended, or is it rather a nightmare depicting the ultimate control of mankind over nature?

Opening reception in the presence of the artists.
Thursday, 25 February 18:00 – 20:00

Press release and images may be downloaded under:

<http://www.kashyahildebrand.org/zurich/press/tracingreality>

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