

Anne Neukamp

Philipp Fernandes do Brito Pitching Pennies

There are pictorial elements in the world of our signs and symbols which can become ambiguous despite the clarity of their multilayered levels of meaning—which, despite their familiar formal character and arrangement, elude our understanding and seem to re-encode themselves as images before our eyes as soon as they appear outside the context of their original and familiar relational structures. This makes their reality seem distant, even though we still recognize it. Their nature as signs also seems strangely liberated in the moment of their detachment—and at the same time open to new thoughts and meanings, to the accumulation of which they seem to expand infinitely. These associations also seem to apply to the symbols, icons, and signs that combine in Anne Neukamp's new works to create impossible spaces and neo-surreal pictorial puzzles.

Galerie Linn Lühn is delighted to announce the opening of Pitching Pennies, Anne Neukamp's (*1976, Düsseldorf) first solo exhibition in the Rhineland, during DC Open Galleries 2020. The phrase "pitching pennies" playfully describes the moment when two symbolic objects—such as coins in the literal sense—meet in a painting. Here they develop a surreal, almost supernatural life of their own and position themselves before us on the canvas like almost questioning signs in pictorial form. Light and imaginary things such as the shape of a cloud become grotesquely concrete and, on closer examination, do not fit into the frame of an underlying figural body. Marked by a shadow, they seem like oversized, sculptural emblems that allow all our projected feelings, dreams, and ideas about their pictorial nature and the nuances of their meanings.

A token—itself a cipher and digital currency in the exchange of goods and financial assets—pixelates into a mosaic of rich yellow tones and white and black rectangles. Its function within the picture seems to change: from the clear contour of a form that allows clearly understandable meanings in the manner of street signs, for instance, to a picture puzzle of its own composition which enigmatically eludes our associations and perceptions. It assumes an almost floating state, created with a combination of oil, egg tempera, and acrylic paint, in which Anne Neukamp's motifs unexpectedly overlap to form hybrids and multiply their meanings, as with the pennies in the game referenced in the title.

Taken from socioeconomic contexts within our everyday consumer culture, the initiated transformations also point, like a humorous comment, to a questioning of our accustomed visual patterns. Well-defined signs unexpectedly combine in the compositions with liquid structures that remain in motion. An angular construction of geometric surfaces seems to be kept from falling by a formal connection in a balancing act. Here the signs we encounter lead us from consuming to looking –and thus to a secret visual language that remains hidden in the symbols and their pictorial abbreviations, but does not fully dissolve. Like the digital world of goods from which they originate and to which they seemingly refer, they perpetuate themselves and create their own images that constantly re-encode their symbolic content in the cycle of familiar visual laws.

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