

## **Brigitte Zieger *'Other Scenes'*** **curated by Gregory McCartney**

**3 June - 29 July 2017**

Brigitte Zieger develops an oeuvre, which in a subtle manner undermines aesthetic forms and decorative patterns. She employs a whole range of media, such as drawings, cut outs, video and sculpture. Though her works initially appear ideal and harmonious, this perception slowly falls apart upon closer examination – explosive charges lurk everywhere. She activates the consciousness of the gaze through humour and quiet sensitivity. The artist employs surface effects that exploit prettiness as a means of enchantment to lead her spectators onto the most virulent and radical terrain of political meaning. War and the power of violence are pervasive without being visible or binary. She advances masked, benefiting from the ability of certain images to blind the spectator, deploying work that is critical and sometimes provocative.

The works of Brigitte Zieger have all been related to her view on political and historical context, and on images which emerge from it. Each piece suggests the reactivation and renewed reading of such images.

Curator of the exhibition Gregory McCartney says “Her sculptures exhibited in Ireland for the first time remind me of the shadows on the ground left by the bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima or even perhaps more so the frozen people of Pompeii. Most of us are shadow-people living in the moment trying to make the best in a world that can suddenly overwhelm us or maybe even already has and our continued being is an act of defiance in itself. That to me is heroic and political in a pure and poetical sense. The man stopping a column of tanks in Tiananmen Square, the Young Women facing down the military police with a flower. They know it’s probably completely futile yet their gesture is epic. And Zieger’s sculptures are epic not in the sense of an official power and pose that sculpture often is but in its expression of the human and humane and the quiet defiance of people living in the face of often at best indifferent and at worst downright hostile official narratives”

### **Gallery 1** ***'The Anonymous Sculptures'***

Brigitte Zieger's works also challenge art forms dedicated to history, such as monuments or, ultimately, bas-relief. She selects the pictures of events, reproduces them, activates their memory and revives them in a field other than official history, for these are figures of resistance.

In this sculptural work, black, life-size figures stand in harmless, everyday poses. They seem strangely familiar, well known, as they are people featured in the media and

frequently portrayed in the press. These are life-size sculptures of ordinary people who have become icons of contest, tridimensional representations of the images that have made them famous –like the man who reads a book during Occupy Wall Street, or the woman holding a stone and sticking out her tongue in defiance of the Paris police in May 1968.

Originating as they do from two-dimensional photographs, these sculptures are left deliberately incomplete, therefore questioning the accepted role of commemorative sculpture as social art and the fabrication of collective memory.

When it comes to selecting her protagonists, this collective memory is Zieger's point of departure. Walking around the sculptures reveals the fact that they are hollow, only half finished. They seem to invite the viewer to take their place, and thus take on the function of placeholders, which appeal to our empathy and ask us to examine our own possibilities of action in everyday life.

## **Gallery 2**

### **'Other Scenes'**

This is new work presented at Void. In a series of large format prints, fragments of images of 1970's pacifist contestation float on a digital background projecting their shadows into this non-space of emptiness and 'meeting by random' some slick parts of advertisements and colour gradients. The conflicting dialogue between image, surface and volume seems to represent the one who exists between reality, information and art.

## **Gallery 3**

### **'We The Indians Discovered America'**

Video Diptych

Video 1 5:29, 2017

Video 2 6:10, 2017

Another new work presented at Void, these 3D videos are focused on the little-known spaces of this parallel history, in which certain events have happened, suggesting visitors move through particular transcriptions, integrating displacements between image and space.

This series of videos is related to the particular history of the one-year occupation of Alcatraz in 1969. Emphasising the sway over that power generates towards minorities, it questions our present and pinpoints the colonial footsteps in which contemporary society is embedded.

Created in Alcatraz in November 2016. this set of works was made using a popular digital tool (123D Catch) that is capable of reconstituting a volume out of a few images of the same object. The errors and misunderstandings of this software are multiple and the

resulting visuals are particularly interesting because they match the issues Zieger address in her work.

Creating a volume from an image and thereby assuming the incompleteness of the reconstitution, allows the artist to metaphorically question what remains of the events through documents and contemporary digital media.

The space which is represented produces forms which are both typically digital and seemingly decaying, thus talking simultaneously of the future and of ruins, of a past perishing in a fragmented digital memory and a world in the period of dematerialisation. These videos will be the opportunity for the viewer to experience a space between historical documents of the 70's and digitally generated reality of the present, and to share the feeling of time collapse.