

Tanja Boukal – WAS TUN, WENN'S BRENNT
Mina Nasr – MOVEMENT

AB Gallery is pleased to open the new season with two exceptional solo exhibitions. We show current works by the renowned Austrian artist Tanja Boukal (*1976, Vienna) in "Was tun, wenn's brennt" from the past exhibition "Political Correctness" in the Museum der Moderne Salzburg. The second solo exhibition is dedicated to the young Egyptian artist Mina Nasr (*1938, Cairo). In "Movement" we show a selection of Nasr's new, two meter-high black and white drawings. The works were created this year in the Rote Fabrik Zurich when the artist participated in the "Artist in Residence" program of Pro Helvetia.

In their works, Boukal and Nasr transcend boundaries and deal with social and cultural questions and backgrounds. Perspectives cross in these exhibitions. Boukal discusses the "Vendetta", uprisings around the globe, in her work. Her 75-part work series "Unfinished" is an almost gapless document, made up of photos of female activists, of the events on Tahir square in Egypt in the last three years. Nasr's work on the other hand documents his experiences with Swiss culture and lifestyle. During his stay in Zurich the artist observed people on the street, analysed their behaviours, their way of standing and moving, their closeness and distance compared to ways of life in Egypt. The drawings express his experiences and emotions: "In Switzerland I feel as though there was an infinite amount of free space. I feel 'grand', I can move unrestricted in this freedom. My drawings have a fairy-tale character, as though they were created by a giant in wonderland. This is exactly what I see and feel."

Tanja Boukal also has a personal connection to the themes of her work. "Was tun, wenn's brennt" ("What to do in case of fire") is the core question of her work. The artist has been travelling regularly to crisis regions for five years. In places such as Egypt, Greece, Columbia, Lampedusa, Mellila (Spain) or Sarajevo she tries to find out which strategies people use when nothing is working, when there is a fire. The artist concerns herself with the local situation and develops her artistic themes from there. It is however not her goal to offer solutions. "I deal with people, their situations and their strategies. In my work I do not want to show the negative aspects, but draw attention to the things people do to change their situation or at least attempt to change it.", Boukal says.

Influenced by her professional training as a stage designer and art embroiderer, Boukal has been working mainly with sculpture and installation since the mid-1990s. For a couple of years photographs have been the basis of her work. Since 2007 she has increasingly used soft textile material to portray the people and their "tough" circumstances such as revolutions, wars or refugee crises. Besides common media like photography, Boukal employs embroidery, knitting and sewing techniques or works on exceptional material and surfaces such as bricks or walls. Her aim is to make the observer approach the difficult subject matter via familiar material, to deal with it and thus overcome the distance to it. The works shown in the exhibition demonstrate that she is more than successful in achieving her aim.

We would like to invite you to the opening of the season in the Gallery on Saturday, August 30th 2014, from 11 am to 4 pm. The exhibition runs from August 30 to September 27, 2014 in the AB Gallery Lucerne.

For more information please give us a call: + 41 41 982 08 80, write us an email: office@ab-gallery.com or visit our website: www.ab-gallery.com.

Short artist biographies

Tanja Boukal (*1976, lives and works in Vienna) is the youngest Austrian artist ever to have been dedicated a solo exhibition in the Museum der Moderne Salzburg. Her works were shown in the exhibition "Political Correctness" until early March 2014. This year the artist is represented in 11 further international exhibitions. At the moment her works are shown in the exhibition "Am Seidenen Faden", part of the exhibition series "Der Menschheit Würde". The exhibition started at the museum MUSA in Vienna and will be shown in Sarajevo from June 28 and in Brunn in fall. During the month of photography entitled „Eyes On“ from October 27 to November 30, 2014, her series „Rewind:Obersalzberg“ will be presented at the museum MUSA in Vienna, followed by another exhibition in the DarbCenter1718 in Cairo, Egypt, from December 21.

31 year-old artist Mina Nasr (*1983, lives and works in Cairo) studied applied arts at the Helwan University Cairo. From the early stages of his artistic career the artist was interested in graphics, 3D applications and oversized drawings. In his work Nasr often combines the media drawing, audio and video. With a hint of sarcasm he documents the social and political circumstances and their repercussions on his revolution-stricken home country. His drawings are often done life-sized and directly on a wall. His most recent mural "Egypt Selection Part 2", in which he depicts a colourful selection of different cultures living in Egypt in a queue to the Egyptian election. The mural was shared over 1000 times on Facebook. Mina Nasr has, among other cities and countries, exhibited in Cairo, London, Beijing, Brussels, Spain and Greece.