

Text for press release

Melli Ink
„locus amoenus“

19 November 2011 - 28 January 2012

Opening times:
Friday 14h00 – 18h00
Saturday 11h00 - 18h00
and by prior arrangement

Grieder Contemporary is delighted to present „locus amoenus“, a solo exhibition by Melli Ink and the gallery's third exhibition featuring this artist. The Austrian artist is supplementing her new groups of works in glass, wood and ceramic with the minerals mountain crystal and rose quartz, and expanded her cosmos of images through the garden of earthly delights. She is also showing a new work in the form of a carpet.

Rising from illuminated slabs of mountain crystal and rose quartz are vitreous towers inspired by the quixotic architecture of Hieronymus Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights. The artist worked with glassblowers and other artisans representing dying professions to produce these ‚**Faulty Towers**‘. Melli Ink is fond of incorporating traditional techniques and repurposing them for contemporary art. Her work is strongly influenced by the Alpine folk art of her native Austria, which is reflected in the value she places in the craft of the artisan and the use of materials such as glass and mountain crystal. In this group of works, mountain myths have contributed as much to her inspiration as the surreal world of Bosch.

These sources of images are also to be found on the many ceramic vases, plates and skulls decorated by Ink while listening to pop music in her studio. The baroque-like ensemble ‚**locus amoenus**‘, the Garden of Delights, occupies an entire wall, distributed across an orderly arrangement of white shelves. Incorporating quotes stemming from everyday culture as represented by pop songs or Japanese postcards and motifs inspired by the Alpine cultural realm, Ink's fantastical painted images reveal the cosmos of the artist between hell, purgatory and heaven, where fruitfulness and sin are reproduced in all their nuances.

In the exhibition, a small rotating plinth bathed in light bears a glass engraved with a forest scene, the projection creating a play of shadows against the wall. This ‚shadow glass‘ is a found object, its motif linking it to the imagery of the ‚Faulty Towers‘ and the ‚locus amoenus‘. Depiction, sculpture and play of light merge to form a work of art.

The carpet, titled ‚**Walking over broken plates**‘, emerged as part of the ‚Need Knot‘ carpet project initiated by the Franziska Kessler Gallery in Zurich in association with a number of artists and designers of international repute. Global carpet manufacturer Tai Ping produced the works. Ink takes her theme from the video work ‚Plates‘, which shows her breaking 250 plates. She has transferred this performative context to her new work by creating a tension between the fragility of the shards of plates depicted and the soft haptic of the carpet. Nervousness at the prospect of destroying the beauty of the porcelain gives way to the comfort of knowing that it is already broken.