

Text for press release

Monica Bonvicini

«Increased Anxiety, Sleeping Problems, Sexual Problems, Nausea, Diarrhea»

May 23 – July 31, 2009

New opening hours:

Tuesday - Friday 2 – 6 p.m.

and by appointment

Grieder Contemporary is delighted to announce the first ever solo exhibition by the Berlin-based artist Monica Bonvicini at a Swiss gallery. With graceful pictures, the artist scratches at the surface of the “cosy” living room. This event finds her tailoring her wall and object art to the exhibition space in the residential villa. Meanwhile, the exterior facade of the gallery will be featuring an installation by the American artist Joshua Callaghan.

Grieder Contemporary’s spatial arrangement is unlike any that Monica Bonvicini is used to. She tends to exhibit in institutions that allow her large installations plenty of space, where they adopt a performative approach to their exploration of power structures. This exhibition finds Italian-born Bonvicini seizing the opportunity to show her wall and object works in the gallery-cum-residential villa, which cast homely cosiness in an ironic light. She contrasts the intimacy of the rooms with reflective lettering and drawings on the walls executed in black spray, leather-bound fetishist objects and a harshly glaring lamp installation. The challenge *Satisfy me* (2007/2009) could come straight out of a commercial. The appeal hangs beguilingly on the wall, picked out neatly in lettering fashioned from mirror and wood, the challenge begging the question: who is seeking satisfaction, and why? The vocabulary, borrowed from a performance-fixated society, is resplendent in the form of chain marks on sprayed drawings: *Me* (2009), *Celexia* (2008), *Prozac* (2006) and *Zoloft* (2008). Fragile, yet decked out in punk culture’s aggressive aesthetic, the words are less comforting than the promised effect they imply.

By contrast, the items wrapped in black leather – *Leather Tools* (2009) – pander to lust in an allusion to the tabooed fetish culture of art and art making. Akin to precious jewellery, the finely worked hammer and pliers housed in a display case impute both voyeuristic as well as exhibitionistic motives. A bouquet of fluorescent lights on black cables completely negates the ostensibly sugary intimacy of the living room. The glaring light is dazzling, transforming the muted cosiness into an almost perfectly illuminated scene.

Joshua Callaghan’s installation *Futility Poles* (2008) is splattered across the gallery’s facade. American and living in Los Angeles, Callaghan once studied cultural anthropology: his work demonstrates the fragility of human life through a dysfunctional fusion of nature and architecture. This installation finds him reproducing wooden power poles to scale and affixing them to the facade in a depiction of the destructive effects of a violent hurricane.

Monica Bonvicini (*1965 in Venice) lives and works in Berlin. An exhibition featuring works by Monica Bonvicini und Tom Burr opens at Munich’s Lehnbachhaus on May 30, 2009. This exhibition has been co-curated by the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel, where it can be seen from September 2009.