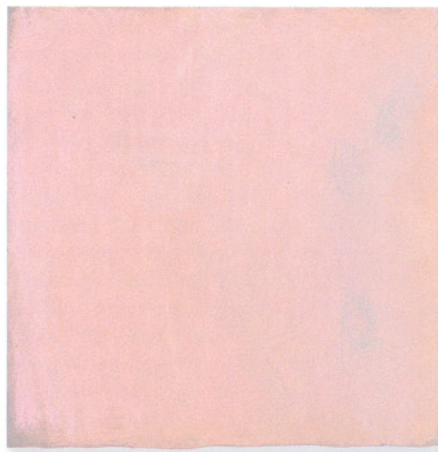


ing, or washing. Taking these as starting points, he then selectively applies traditional painting materials such as oil, acrylic, or pastel in ways that are usually closely intertwined with the fabric's own materiality. Stains, rips, or frayed edges are also used as inspiration, and often what would otherwise be seen as defects become the focal point of a work. The choice of fabric for Jensen is itself a genuinely painterly act: He prefers to use muted shades, which he distinguishes from one another by varying the tonality, texture, and density of the material.

In this exhibition, the supports ranged from the finest silk to the coarsest burlap, although standard canvas was also part of the repertoire. Jensen hung his works (all *Untitled*, 2011) at irregular intervals, sometimes quite close together. Among the techniques used here was the application of color to the reverse side of the material. In one such piece, a pale brown with a blotchy greenish texture was created by painting burlap in monochrome, then turning it over before stretching it, so that the color is visible pressing through the weave of the fabric. The result is an informal, sober, rhythmic surface in which the act of painting and its material seem to have been interwoven in an unplanned artistic process. Such experiences are, for Jensen, ways of avoiding or pointedly outwitting intention. But for all of this seeming dependence on accident, Jensen's techniques are quite sophisticated: He might use several fabrics of varying translucence, or combine the pressed-through colors of his reverse-painting method with contrasting appliqués or colored stitching. In one piece he even goes so far as to make an explicit painterly gesture: A curved mark shines forth from a reverse-painted surface. The effect suggests Polke-esque caprice or can perhaps be read ironically as the supremely vague suggestion of a figure. Other pieces in the exhibition are surprising for their unusually rich, impastoed colors. A large horizontal piece painted in oil was a muted, glinting monochrome of blues; directly next to it, a small square featuring opaque pink pastel provided a harsh contrast. Yet even when availing himself of such relatively "painterly" surfaces, Jensen does everything possible to avoid willful gestures of artistic expression. His characteristically sparse delicacy and refined roughness are not, however, in service to anti-painting or the rejection of the image. Quite the contrary: They stem from Jensen's artistic aim to draw a hitherto unseen beauty directly out of materiality in an intuitive, free, and ultimately radical way.



Sergej Jensen,
Untitled, 2011,
pastel on canvas,
19% x 19%".

—Jens Asthoff

Translated from German by Anne Posten.

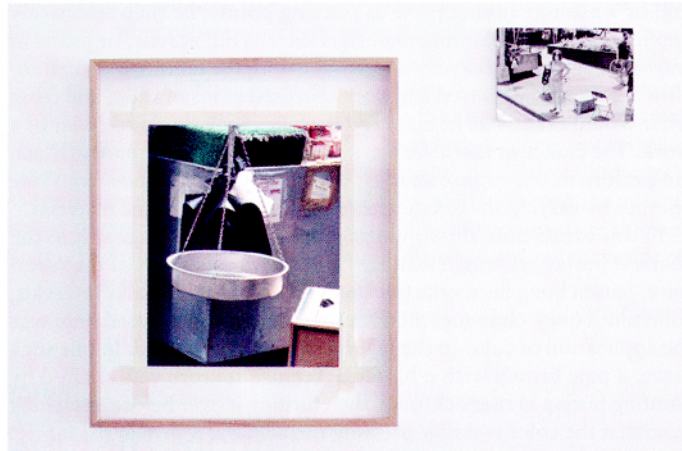
Viktoria Binshtok

KLEMM'S

With the advent of Street View, Google introduced a new logic—if not a new language—to photography. Artists swiftly responded by using this massive image map as a site for appropriation as well as an inspiration for artistic forms and functions. "World of Details," Viktoria Binshtok's contribution to this fruitful dialogue, fluidly incorporates the merits of the new technology and supplements a parallel constellation of images of the artist's own creation. The Russian-born, Berlin-based artist's appropriated images derive from 2009, two years into Street View's history, and depict people on the streets of New York.

REVIEWS

Viktoria Binschtok,
World of Details
(balance + white
woman), 2011,
 framed color photograph
 27 x 22 ½";
 ink-jet print on MDF
 plate, 7 x 10 ¼".



Following the technology's algorithm, the faces of those individuals who turned toward the car-mounted Street View camera when the image was taken appear blurred. There is considerable resonance in the fact that in this moment when one can survey large portions of the world from an online distance, the faces of those returning our virtual gaze are obscured. Binschtok, however, transgressed the divide between the real and the virtual by visiting and rephotographing these scenes. This parallel may not be evident at a first glance because in the process slippages occurred, as if formalizing the translation from Street View's language to the artist's personal photographic language. Time has passed, the individuals originally depicted are no longer present, and the objects setting the scene have moved. And, formally, Binschtok's photographic statements differ markedly from those that informed them.

Each work in this exhibition consists of one small black-and-white ink-jet print and one or two larger color photographs. The images comprising the groupings interact in various ways—both spatially as well as in terms of their interior logic—so it is not always immediately clear how groups are constituted. Hanging above eye level on one wall was a photograph by the artist, which depicts the second story of a building, and hanging at eye level beside it, a Street View screen grab depicting two people standing outside a car garage. The garage is located on the ground floor of a taller building. It takes a moment to realize that the buildings are one and the same, and the vertical displacement of the two images in the gallery space conjures the space represented in the depictions, titled *World of Details (garage + garage)* (all works 2011).

Binschtok clearly attends to the way in which continuity can either register or be suspended in other works as well, as in *World of Details (billiard table + billiard)*. Whereas her photograph pictures a billiard table, one must solve a semiotic puzzle in order to conclude that the accompanying Street View shows the pool hall's outside, since only the bottom half of the letters IARDS can be seen on the awning. In *World of Details (trash #1 + #2 + teens)*, the inclusion in the background of a brick wall layered over with large splotches of paint allows viewers to make the connection between the disparate photos. In the case of this work, the artist takes a step further by adding a second photograph, which depicts a space outside of the field of the Street View, but contains elements similar to the intermediate image of trash cans, a rusty door, a painted-brown brick wall. Elaborating on the exhibition's overall logic, this work presents statements in separate photographic languages and also depicts the concrete reality surrounding one of those statements, thus generating intrigue through the inconsistencies resulting from translation as well as through the possibility of alternate interpretations.

—John Beeson