

Émilie Pitoiset

## **Giselle**

04/27 –06/09/2012

Émilie Pitoiset's work builds itself on a very precise notion and a almost scientific point of view on motion sequences with a fascination for direction, imbalance, unnatural postures and over all a strange balance, particularly as concerns animals and humans. 'Giselle' marks Pitoiset's first solo exhibition in Berlin and shows a cluster of works that centre on this tense feeling of vertigo and fragile equilibrium.

Emilie Pitoiset's predilection for paradoxes and bodies hanging in the balance between two contrary powers furthermore indicates in the juxtaposing of antithetic materiel and thematically positions. As she reinterprets and elevates pre existing resources in a narrative way, the lines between documentary and fiction interfuse, and confronts viewers with their own perceptive faculties and their necessary limitations, such as the obsessive desire to distinguish truth from illusion. Her kinship to minimal and hyperrealist art, and the tender feeling for scenes right before a collapse, create the tension of an unfilled space.

The exhibition 'Giselle' is named after a romantic ballet, premiered in 1841 in Paris, telling the tragic story of the girl Giselle who commits suicide because of her hopeless love to an engaged man and then turns into a dancing ghost. In earlier works Pitoiset already used the ballet as a paradigm since it deals with physical constraints and the human will to overcome own limitations by strength and furthermore combines geometric perfection with vivid bodies. The installation *Giselle* consists of perfectly fitting strings of parallelograms resulting in a three-dimensional structure, seeming almost unreal from the far but a nearer look bears the individual material of leather, which represents a material with a certain capacity of memory. For her collages Émilie Pitoiset uses found photographs – with a favour for the time between the 1920's until 50's – organises and manipulates them and finally prints out contact sheets, which she then displays. However, the exhibition 'Giselle' doesn't give an illustration to the story, it rather uses its kitsch and tragedy in contrast to the monochrome images, which on the other side also own their certain tragic nostalgia since they are lost memories of unknown persons, carrying the ghostly name Giselle instead of their own. The sloping line is nonetheless recurrent in Pitoiset's work, so in her images she traces the line marking the supporting points – where the imbalance is located – and the other one indicating the direction of the body, which consequently is deviating, crossing in the point of an inner balance. The video installation *La Répétition* shows two slender pair of hands dancing the ballet in technical perfection cut together to Émilie Pitoiset's version of 'Giselle', captivating the viewer through it's symmetry.

Yet, what seems to be repeating itself identically is actually brimming with tiny differences that make every repetition an event that is always new and irreconcilable with what happened before. Underlined by the dreamy and playful music of the video shown in loops and the swinging shades of the rattling bamboo curtains, the exhibition spreads a theatrical suspense while the non-tragic beauty of the works appears in diverse perspectives and media, through which it becomes immediately sensible.