

Jani Leinonen & Aurora Reinhard
Promises 14.9 - 3.11. 2013



Aurora Reinhard - Promises

Contradictions are at the essence of Aurora Reinhard's art.

Nothing is what it first appears. The piece is on the border, is both ugly and provocative, feminist yet yearning for a man's attention. It can exaggerate, distance; be sensually impure or even animalistic, all at the same time.

At first the viewer is struck with a feeling, but this feeling alone is not enough to explain what lies beneath the surface and how it should be approached. However just merely intellectualizing the piece does not give sufficient answers. The viewer needs to let the conflict take over and give in to the instincts and emotional intelligence.

Especially the photographs portray the artist herself as a model and therefore the work functions as self-portraits. The artist's presence is strong. There she is, with all her contradictions, naked but heavily made-up, wearing a distorting mask. In another picture a naked lower body reveals a giant pussy. The taboos of womanhood are being marched to the scene, but the public is wary of clapping, scared of shaming themselves with wrong timing.

Many artists will cast their demons, problems and issues, as well as the responsibility for the solution to the viewer. Aurora Reinhard is not an arrogant bitch but she is intellectually and physically present, revealing herself both open and hurt and not trying to hide her feelings.

Naturally Reinhard's works have also a gender political level. Her sculptures present female body parts and fetishes as particular great tools of political influence and show that sexual identities and norms are part of a cultural and social structure. However, gender politics is not the starting point for Reinhard's art.

The second prime power in Reinhard's work is their externality. Turning a conflict into an image or a sculpture represents rationality that is often given an almost hyper realistic implementation. However, the extent of externality cannot be calculated. The experience of outsidership shows in the works through irrationality, intuitivity and exaggeration which give them surreal shades. The role of an outsider is connected with the role of womanhood; sometimes all you are left with is to observe when you are not included in any groups and no-one lets you in.

The contradiction and externality in Reinhard's art should not be taken for weakness or emptiness. Her works are a courageous and clever survival strategy in a world that seeks simple answers for the complex question of human existence. We are all made of body, soul and mind; and we all have to face other people to find our place in the world.

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