



Jan de Cock

Untitled

19.01–04.03.2006

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Jan De Cock conceives his photos in a filmic way, works on them with a photographer, whom he refers to as the “camera operator”, positions the characters and choreographs a kind of performance. Each image is shot using a strict 3-second exposure that allows him to capture the movement of, for example, readers in a library, who are made to mimic gestures, creating what has been described as “real time paintings”. In his first one-person show in Madrid at the Galería Helga de Alvear he is presenting light-boxes related with some of his latest works.

In a text on the Belgian artist Jan de Cock (1976), Amanda Coulson wrote “Paul Klee, while teaching at the Bauhaus in Dessau, claimed that artists do not show space but rather create it. Such a statement certainly holds true for the work of young Belgian artist Jan De Cock, whose sculpture redefines space, using intricate, modular structures made from inexpensive materials such as chip-board, plywood and naff wood-effect linoleum.” His constructions couple a constructivist aesthetic with industrial materials and have occupied space in museums (Tate Modern, London, 2005), galleries (Luis Campaña, Cologne, Germany 2004), stores (Comme des Garçons, Tokyo, 2005), libraries (Henry van de Velde Library, Ghent, 2004) or industrial spaces (Manifesta 5, Pasajes/Guipúzcoa, Spain 2004). In this way he creates what he calls “*Denkmal*” a German word meaning both “monument” and “memorial”—knowingly alluding to Adolf Loos’s famous quip in 1909 that the tomb (Grabmal) and the monument (Denkmal) were the only architectural forms that could rightfully be considered art. The reference clearly makes a statement regarding the artist’s clean and austere aesthetic leanings.

In all his interventions the resultant photographs are more than a mere process of documentation. De Cock conceives them in a filmic way, works on them with a photographer, whom he refers to as the “camera operator”, positions the characters and choreographs a kind of performance. Each image is shot using a strict 3-second

exposure that allows him to capture the movement of, for example, readers in a library, who are made to mimic gestures, creating what has been described as “real time paintings”.

In his first one-person show in Madrid at the Galería Helga de Alvear he is presenting light-boxes related with some of his latest works. *Denkmal 9* (2004) was constructed in the Henry van de Velde Library in Ghent, a building designed by this architect in the 1930s as a “tower of books” to challenge the towers of churches. De Cock’s construction serves as a shelf for books or a desk for readers configuring a new interior space. The photos/light-boxes are often placed later in the very same space in which the constructions were made, thus setting up a play with the idea of memory and space.

These light-boxes are combined in diptychs or triptychs creating an effect of cinematographic sequence like, for instance, in the images taken in the piece made for *Manifesta 5* (Pasajes/Guipúzcoa, Spain): a colossal construction that occupies the interior and exterior of a former shipyard. The industrial space is then transformed into public space while at once serving as housing for the people who look after its maintenance.

Practical Information:

19 January - 22 March 2006

Opening: 19 January 2006, 20:00 h.

Galería Helga de Alvear
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galeria@helgadealvear.com

Opening Hours:

Tuesday - Saturday: 11:00 -14:00 h. | 16:30 - 20:30 h.



Denkmal # 2 (detail)
2004
Triptyc: light box



Untitled
2006
Exhibition view
Courtesy the Artist & Galería
Helga de Alvear, Madrid
Foto: Rafa Suárez



Denkmal # 2
2004
Triptyc: light box
180 x 180 x 20 cm each



Denkmal # 2
2004
Triptyc: light box
180 x 180 x 20 cm each



Untitled
2006
Exhibition view
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Denkmal # 2
2004
Triptyc: light box
180 x 180 x 20 cm each



Untitled
2006
Exhibition view
Courtesy the Artist & Galería
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**Denkmal # 9. Henry van de
Velde School of Arts**
2004
Light box
180 x 300 cm



**Denkmal # 9. Henry van de
Velde School of Arts**
2004
Light box
180 x 300 cm



Untitled
2006
Exhibition view
Courtesy the Artist & Galería
Helga de Alvear, Madrid
Foto: Rafa Suárez



Denkmal # 47. Stella Lohaus Gallery
2004
Diptyc: light box
100 x 100 cm each