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Meessen De Clercq

KELLY SCHACHT

Collecting the Alphabet : The Prequel (or how I met W)

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2a Rue de l'Abbaye B 1000 Brussels
meessendeclercq.com

For her second exhibition at the gallery, **Kelly Schacht** (b. 1983) occupies the first floor and develops her investigation of language and monstration. Drawing on the *Book of Questions* by Edmond Jabès and the *Visual Alphabet* by Gilles Deleuze, Schacht cuts into the fabric of the alphabet and produces *mises en scène* of certain letters and gives them the status of full-fledged characters. So the letters P and C welcome the visitor through a video and a letter wrapped in gold leaf on the ground on the one hand, and a printed circuit board of a short list of words beginning with the letter C on the other hand. P seems to be the entry point of poetry, which is the reason for the gilding, like a print, like a seal defining a pact. C enables the artist to establish an initial lexicon which opens the idea of fiction (chapter, character, collage) but also the structure of an idea (catalyst, choice, circulation) or the notion of creation itself (communication, copy, creation). The exhibition's title *Collecting the Alphabet: The Prequel (or how I met W)* suggests that there was something that preceded the alphabet itself, or at least a moment that existed before the enunciation of the letters of the alphabet. So the alphabet is centre-stage, as if language is unfolded or dismembered. The work highlights the vacant space, the void, the interval one might say, as there is a gap between two letters in a word. The importance of the void is clear: in the video, on the walls, between the printed circuit boards. Air - the void - is the place for words in a way, but also a no man's land, a wasteland with inevitable instability, but where anything can happen, or any potential can be expressed. One could say that the work shown by the artist emphasises the plasticity of the void; the various positions of the windbreak help to create constant reflective variations. Each PCB is free-standing and appears to be a character in its own right, as are the windbreak and the shoes. The whole exhibition is transportable, moveable, almost metamorphosable. The artist combines noble materials (gold, marble) and common materials (cardboard, plywood), giving an unexpected contrast to the whole arrangement.

Schacht's work highlights the progression from shapeless to shaped, and vice versa; this occurs in a constant interplay between visible/concealed, back/front, folded/unfolded, right way up and upside-down. The very attentive visitor will even find the word *checkpoint* printed in braille on the page rolled up like a chart, as if this writing which states without saying, which speaks without a voice embodied the silent word. Which epitomizes the art of Kelly Schacht.