

## Anne Wenzel & Charlotte Schleiffert

*Beyond Context*

23 January - 5 March, 2016



Charlotte Schleiffert, 2015, *Woman in Indonesia*, mixed techn. on canvas, 200 x 300 cm

In the duo show *Beyond Context*, AKINCI unites two artists whose work cannot be taken lightly. A certain violence applies to both, each drawn to the subject in her own distinct manner. Where Anne Wenzel (1972, Schlütthorf, DE) fearlessly diverts the tradition of ceramics into remarkable sculptures with a brutal sense of decay, Charlotte Schleiffert (1967, Tilburg, NL) addresses crude social themes with a discomfiting elegance in a range of mixed media on canvas. Rather than a dialogue, their individual voices clash and confront one another, challenging the viewer to rethink their spectacle and, instead, become sensible to the pressing subjects that linger beyond.

In *Beyond Context*, Anne Wenzel's monumental florals are displayed. The wreaths, a universal symbol for celebration and the commemoration of war, are frozen in a state of decay. Their blossoms have withered, the colour is leaking down their stems. The ceremony is over (or doomed to begin with). Wenzel: "Everyone knows that the sites where memorial services are held and the rituals they involve are contrived and designed in order to stir people's emotions. I am interested in the personal choice that the individual makes in regard to these mechanisms." Drawing her inspiration from art-historical tradition, Wenzel is intrigued by the symbolic language behind heroism and violence, and the extravagant spectacle that tends to accompany these subjects. Her sculptures are often described as modern-day Vanitas, subsequently undermining their own heroic aura.

Committed to the social and political movements of our global society in general, Charlotte Schleiffert has no intention to compromise or subdue the stories and situations that her paintings refer to, sometimes literally summarized on the canvas with handwritten text. Crude themes are addressed with dynamic brush strokes, life size figures poised with a striking elegance. Abstraction and figuration seem impulsively composed, using a broad combination of media treatment (oil, acrylic, egg tempera, pastel, foil...). With bursting colour Schleiffert depicts the opposition between poverty and wealth, the friction between religions, the immeasurable impact of both male and female rape—strangely glamorous and heart wrenching at once. Throughout all paintings the underlying desperation for love, protection and luxury is both hopeful and unsettling.

Both Anne Wenzel and Charlotte Schleiffert have been selected for the film series 'Dutch Masters of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. Their film portraits will be screened during a special festival on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 10:00—01:00 in EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam. Wenzel's portrait will premiere at 19:15, after the opening at AKINCI.