GREYNOISE

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HOUSE OF CARDS

October 31 - December 25, 2012,
curated by Viktor Neumann

PRESS RELEASE

GREY NOISE Dubai in cooperation with Goethe Institut Gulf Region is pleased to announce a group show presentation titled 'HOUSE OF CARDS'

with works by Danilo Correale, Julian Göthe, Niklas Goldbach and Judith Hopf.

curated by *Viktor Neumann*

The idiomatic phrase “house of cards” can be traced back to its first use by poet John Milton in 1641, already reflecting on the structural defects within systems built on a shaky foundation and held together only in an insubstantial and fragile manner. Little has changed in today’s meaning of the metaphor, though within the neoliberal era the complex global interdependence of systems and their balances of power have taken on a new dimension of inherent instability. For what applies to the card game applies even more to the structural and socio-political levels within systems: The taller the house of cards, the bigger the fall.

The exhibition HOUSE OF CARDS aims to explore heterogeneous artistic examinations and gestures towards this given fragility. The selected works by ***Danilo Correale***, ***Julian Göthe***, ***Niklas Goldbach*** and ***Judith Hopf*** decidedly reflect on current political, economic, cultural or gender-related conditions using various mediums such as sculpture, print, video or photography.

Danilo Correale´s works reflect on the complex relations between balances of power solely based on capital, the spaces of illusion and disguise created to keep them stable and the individual and societal involvement towards this arrangement. By using revealing and re-contextualising gestures, Correale forces critical readings of contemporary conditions and their representational modes.
For the series *The Future in Their Hands (The visible hands)* (2011), Correale has assigned one of the most famous Indian palm readers to interpret the personalities of six men, without revealing the origin of the images: the pictures of the hands of six chairmen have been taken during one of the biggest trials at the beginning of the – furthermore acute – worldwide financial crisis. While Correale keeps the identity of the individual decision makers anonymous and therefore highlights the general opacity of the regulatory accommodations within the political and economic spheres, he reveals the semantic relations of allegedly universal gestures by juxtaposing the images with the content of the supposed deciphering and subjectifying process of palm reading.
For the series *Untitled* (2011), Correale has recycled and assembled lottery tickets, none of which a winner. The financial value applied to collectively celebrated gambling – finding its attraction in all parts of society due to its emotionally charged promises of an immense monetary benefit –shifts to an aesthetic object of the art system with its creative economy, which in turn woos with its own promises.

Julian Göthe engages with specific developments within the stylistic elements of Western modern art and reflects on its theoretical history and its contemporary significance. For his sculptural and graphic works, Göthe uses a rather remote repertoire of forms, often marginalized within the classical canon. In particular, forms from the history of the décor, the ornament, set and commercial design are quoted and attain an autonomy which allows the play with connotations and codifications, due to its detachment from their original representative function. While relishly quoting gestures of escapist, decadent or camp aesthetics of representation simultaneously a –desirous– atmosphere of threat and danger is imposed, evoking a reflection on power structures.
For the exhibition, Göthe has created a new site-specific wall-rope-work, an intuitive and spontaneous response to the given spacial situation preceding its realization. In their connection of strictly geometrical and sweeping lines, abstract and figurative use of forms, Göthe´s wall-based works create a diagrammatic spatiality while provoking immediate associations with the visualization of networks.

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At the same time, five unique silkscreens from the series *Oooo!* (2011) are presented, each structured as triptychs and composed of a repertoire of motifs, finding their ties in the exaggeration of norms. Photographs of shaped male body fragments found in the Internet are combined with images of real and fictitious catastrophe scenarios, as well as drawings of monumental architecture made by Göthe as a child or in his youth. Each given subtitle –all quotes of songs by American composer and comedian Jackie Gleason such as "I've Got A Crush On You" or "Here Lies Love"– reinforce the feeling of desire to the extreme, consciously celebrated or not, always entailing the moment of one´s own subordination as well.

In his video works, photographs and sculptures, ***Niklas Goldbach*** questions the relation between hierarchic societal structures and individual, liberal courses of action. Goldbach´s protagonists – dressed in the garment of the urban prototype in white shirts and black trousers and referred to as "representatives" or "placeholders" by the artist – colonize seemingly epic stages of modern architectural complexes, postmodern urban environments or alleged paradises defying civilization, all finding their commonality as places oscillating between utopia, dystopia and heterotopia, while lacking any clearance for an escape.
Using elaborate post-production, in the video *Bel Air* (2011) four of Goldbach´s representatives negotiate solely via nonverbal communication the various levels of hierarchal conflicts whose result can only anticipate evil. While letting his protagonists, all played by German award-winning actor Christoph Bach, act the entire repertoire of male body language as encoded by the media, the parallels to the schizophrenic psychological situation of the individual or the society he is born into are hard to ignore.
While in numerous of Goldbach´s video works the protagonists seem to be solely trapped in structures of control and discipline, the exhibited photographs from the series *Means of Escape* (2012) point already within their title to a state of attempted escape from these conditions: in the dramatically stylized images of an ocean, a forest, a fenced field, train tracks and an aerodrome only the scattered costumes of the representatives attest to agitated previous incidents.
In Prologue (2009), the state of latent menace finds its culmination: filmed in the aesthetic of a home video, the peaceful idyll of a summer day shifts into an alarming scenario when the gloriously blue sky is occupied by numerous vapor trails.
Specially conceived for this occasion, the exhibition also presents Goldbach´s third edition of his sculptural series *Self-Titled* (2012), composed of diverse constellations of cloakroom racks or wardrobe rails and varying sets of the "white shirt/black pants" costume. The transfer to the actual space evokes a concrete reference to one´s own conditions.

Judith Hopf´s polymorphic works are characterized by a formal and conceptual fluidity, allowing to understand allegedly fixed structures and logics –be it of a socio-political or identitary kind in as much as within the art system itself– as debatable and transformable. Hopf´s critical praxis subverts normative social patterns and conditions of (self-)discipline and (self-)control and by using culminating gestures enables new points of view onto the interweaved fields of politics and aesthetics.
In collaboration with the artist Florian Zeyfang, Hopf has created prints, which are presented as the installation *Walking Tables* (2012). The hoof prints of Hopf´s own horse on individual papers are precisely arranged after the Fibonacci order sequence, an infinite sequence of numbers where the next number is found by adding up the two preceding numbers. The sequence has been traced numerous times e.g. in the architecture of plants or the population of rabbits. At the same time, the structure finds its use in theories about the stock market trying to calculate prognoses of price movements and their fractal structure and self-controlling cycles.
The exhibition also presents one of Hopf´s "whips", simply called *Untitled* (2012), undermining the original regulating function towards their materialistic and artistic preparation.
The sculptures from the series *Endings* (2011) also play with the reversal of the original function of the primary material. With a specially developed procedure Hopf has treated metal chains in such a way that the possibility of a flexibly adapting control is refused, allowing the sculptures to be seen as an act of --- self emancipation.

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Danilo Correale, born 1982 in Naples, lives in Naples. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions such as at Peephole, Milan (2012), Entrèe, Bergen (2011) and in group exhibitions such as III. Moscow International Biennale For Young Art (2012), Fondazione sandretto re rebaudengo, Turin (2012), Kadist Art Foundation, Paris (2012), Manifesta 8, Murcia (2010), Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble (2010) and PAN palazzo delle arti di Napoli (2009).

Julian Göthe, born 1966 in Berlin, lives in Berlin. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions such as at the kestnergesellschaft, Hannover (2011), Pinakothek der Moderne, München (2008) and Kunsthalle Basel (2004) as well as in group exhibtions including at the Kunsthalle Schirn, Frankfurt (2011), Singapore Biennial (2011), Migros Museum, Zürich (2010), Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin (2009), ZKM, Karlsruhe (2007), Grazer Kunstverein (2006), Kunsthalle Bremen (2005), Kunsthaus Dresden (2004), Kunstverein München (2004). Göthe is a professor for object/sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Niklas Goldbach, born 1973 in Witten, lives in Berlin. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions such as the Municipal Gallery for Contemporary Art Gdansk (2012), Austin Museum of Art (2012) or Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2004) and in group exhibitions including und partizipierte an Gruppenausstellungen und Screenings including at the Municipal Gallery for Contemporary Art Dresden (2011), Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (2011), New Museum, New York (2011), Künstlerhaus Stuttgart (2011), Biennale Architettura, Venice (2010), National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taichung (2010), Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2009), Reina Sofia National Museum, Madrid (2009) and Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2009). Goldbach is a guestprofessor for moving images at the University of Arts, Berlin.

Judith Hopf, born 1969 in Karlsruhe, lives in Berlin. Her works have been presented in solo exhibitions such as the Grazer Kunstverein (2012), Malmö Konsthall (2012), Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2008), Portikus, Frankfurt a.M. (2007) or Wiener Secession (2007) and in group exhibitions including documenta 13, Kassel (2012), Kunsthalle Basel (2011), KunstWerke, Berlin (2010), Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde (2010), Kunsthalle Bern (2009), Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz (2009), Tate Modern, London (2008), Statens Museum for Kunst, Kopenhagen (2008), Kunstverein Braunschweig (2007), De Appel Museum, Amsterdam (2004) and 8. Biennale of Fine Arts, Havana (2003). Hopf is a profesor for Fine Art at the Städelschule / Academy for Fine Arts, Frankfurt am Main.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Viktor Neumann, born 1985 in Berlin, is an independent curator and journalist. He has curated exhibitions and screenings for various art institutions and project spaces such as Senetasreservespeicher (Berlin), Künstlerhaus Stuttgart (Stuttgart) and Maxim Gorki Theater (Berlin) and has been the assistant curator for the III. Moscow International Biennale For Young Art 2012. He works as a freelance contributor for Flash Art magazine and will start teaching at the University of Arts Berlin in 2013.

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