

## **Everything passes, there is something to hold on to**

This exhibition, images, faces, aphorisms, phrases, is only here as a result of a fiction invented by Catherine Gfeller. These spoken vision update what the artist chooses to inaugurate from a dialogue with herself, the city, others and us. Catherine Gfeller captures the presence of women in their sensitive fleshly being, in their suspended, furtive moments. At no time does she favour a rule which she herself might impose.

It is the face which suggests in its personal attitude the way it is retained and maintained. Capturing an image means giving art up to a chance encounter. The absence of rules, the absence of a standard frame allow a glimpse of a type of anonymity which is abandoned to the crossing of phrases.

Projecting faces in a continuous loop re-creates another crowd, exacerbated, reconstructed, pruned, lopped off, which continues to parade past. The crowd returns in another form, the shapeless babble is lost, allowing another voice to be heard.

The faces appear on the edge of abstraction, sometimes close up, sometimes blurred, sometimes cut off, sometimes complete.

For Catherine Gfeller the faces are not the medium for an identity nor testimony to a reality but a deliberate projection of an imaginary woman who crosses these faces.

The adjacent phrases are written in the present tense. This present frees them from the past and leaves the future to the future. A present which liberates from any context, from any narrative; it is a moment of meaning which shoots up in the gap between the photograph and the text. Each fragment thrown out to meet the other brings the artist closer to these faces, to these women. Reading them is another way of looking at them. These faces, not because of their number, but because of their tone, their plasticity, their fluidity, their paste, are linked to aphorisms and lose their identity, becoming embodied as words. The photograph and the text do not fill a figurative or narrative space, they open up to the freedom of spontaneity and chance. In this way it invites the moment of neutrality which, according to Blanchot, is closest to the other but also furthest away.

It is perhaps thanks to the artist that this woman comes towards us without our ever being able to grasp her. She comes from elsewhere, crosses the city and surprises Catherine Gfeller out loud. Now we can only let ourselves be carried by this spoken and speaking word and by these faces filing past. At every moment this story stops in

phrases and images and then starts again. Between a woman and her doubles, an image and its fantasies, a silence and an aphorism: the inexpressible nothing.

This woman leaves without our ever forgetting her because she is already ahead of her own destiny, at random in the exhibition we have lost and found her in the shattered mirror of the artist.

Bernard Salignon, February 2003