

GALERIE FONSWELTERS

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Press release

Galerie Fons Welters

18 January – 01 March 2014

Opening: Saturday 18 January: 5 – 7 pm

Opening hours: Tu-Sa: 1 – 6 pm

Jennifer Tee

Heart Ferment

Galerie Fons Welters is proud to announce Jennifer Tee's solo exhibition 'Heart Ferment'. Tee's sculptures and installations hover between their concrete forms and the anticipation of a moment in which these forms could be activated, or animated in some kind of ritual meditation. Her artistic practice foregrounds the need for both opposition and balance, in order to make sense of the material world and the inner soul. Take for example the titles of a series of ceramic urns that is at the starting point of this exhibition:

'Oracle Bones'; 'Wild Patience'; 'Practical Magic'; 'Occult Geometry'; 'Heart Ferment'

These linguistic pairings seem at once random and essential; together they could even form a concrete poem. The coupling of words triggers a string of associations, which goes beyond our everyday perception of the real. 'Heart Ferment' is the pairing that lends the exhibition its title, leaving us wondering whether this is a moulding or fertilizing heart. These ceramic jars, with their colourful twistings on top and clean cores, find their bases in a wide range of references, as is so typical of Tee's work, which brings different belief systems and attitudes together with the sculptural object. The jars could resemble foxglove flowers; DNA strands; or also Egyptian canopic urns carrying organs to take along to a next life.

Together, this series could serve as a metaphor for the symbols and structures in Tee's exhibition. Taking up the center of the main space are four delicately knitted and hand-dyed floorpieces, surrounded by ceramic cones titled 'Selfhood Meltdown' and 'Sensuous Interiority' and a balancing bamboo sculpture, 'Spirit-Matter'. The rugs' colour schemes form an abstract geometry that immediately goes beyond formalism, but hints at a certain expectation. Their silence seems to anticipate an action, some kind of ceremony or meditation about to take place. In past installations, Tee activated these floorpieces with choreographed performances; now, they will serve as a meeting point during several moments in the exhibition.

As curator Tessa Giblin pointed out, 'the crucial integrity of Jennifer Tee's ongoing body of work, is that although it is informed by all sorts of esoteric ideas, cultural artefacts from her wide wanderings and the theosophical underpinnings of charged matter, it is also a poignant exploration of the fundamental contradictions we are all composed of – the rational and irrational, knowing and not-knowing, believer or sceptic, spirit and matter'.

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This exhibition is a continuation of Jennifer Tee's recent solo show at the Project Arts Centre in Dublin.

Jennifer Tee (born Arnhem, the Netherlands, 1973, lives and works in Amsterdam) studied at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, and recently completed a residency at ISCP, New York. She has exhibited widely, with solo exhibitions at Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2013); Eastside Projects, Birmingham (2010), SAFN Contemporary Art, Reykjavik (2007); Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2003). Recent group exhibitions include Six Possibilities for a Sculpture, La Loge, Brussels (2013); Beyond Imagination, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2012); Secret Societies, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2011); Nether Land, Dutch Culture Center, Shanghai World Expo (2010), Double Dutch, Hudson Valley for Contemporary Art, New York (2009) and the Prague Triennale (2008). In 2004 she represented the Netherlands at the Sao Paulo Biennial.