



**Christina Calbari - Suspended**

7 May – 25 June 2015

In her forthcoming exhibition “Suspended” at Galerie Françoise Heitsch, Christina Calbari (1975) will show drawings, which revolve around the themes of our childhood, our dark and not yet processed experiences. These images deal with some of our most existential concerns. Naïve at first glance, Calbari attempts to resolve traumas, fears, and the pressure of having to undo compulsive and repetitive behaviour patterns.

Calbari’s enigmatic images convey a past that is familiar to us, yet, simultaneously remains peculiar. The spectator is faced with his/her own personal and entangled experiences. The tender and superficially funny representations conceal the desperate emotional tension of a child’s psyche. Calbari’s works confront us with a creature, which appears to be a child, in reality, however, it is part of our own estranged “I,” whose existence we suppress. A lonely “I,” crushed by the weight of child-like apathy, which it carries within nevertheless. Her images unfailingly represent this double experience of reality: behind joy, lingers fear; apparent freedom is defeated by rules and regulations; danger lies within innocent convulsions. Adaption to society seems inevitable.

Colourful phenomena unfold within the gallery’s upper floor, where watercolour drawings of girls on paper are on display. These little creatures act strange, as if they were exposed to unexpected, psychologically demanding situations: they waft, appear in groups, get trapped, and often, they destroy each other.

The colourful works appear to be very simple at first glance, yet, once these are observed closer, an existential misunderstanding can be conceived. These little girls are tossed about by a persistent tension. They are distinguished by their fears and the hopeless situations of their existence. Their faces are hidden behind their hair. Caught by the feeling of shame, collectively, they have become witnesses to their own painful and abused childhood.

Françoise Heitsch • Amalienstrasse 19 • 80333 München

In the lower level of the gallery, older works (Still life 2006) and photographs, which have been painted over (Unfolding absence 2010) are exhibited. Both series are based on a promotional brochure of a girls' boarding school from the last century.

The series "Still life" shows charcoal drawings on paper. Set within a group dynamic, we see faceless girls in the countryside. They are located within a colourless, foggy place, a place in which time has seemingly come to a halt. In this series, nature, which has come to a standstill, is presented on the same level as these ghostly children, who are scarred by an existential fear, yet slip away from darkness.

The drawings are multi-layered. They leave traces of destruction, which underline the flow of time.

In a similar fashion to the beautiful frames of the shown photographs of "Unfolding absence," the works themselves, too, employ the girls as decorative elements. The artist has painted over these boarding school photographs with black ink. In doing so, she attempts to highlight what has forcefully been hidden behind a beautiful facade: crying faces and suffering bodies. The children's shadows escape from the photographs in order to occupy these spaces anew by reconfiguring and entangling the realms of reality and fantasy.