

The Critique at Second Glance

Carmen Hay Kolodzey shows impressive works at the Büttgen Town Hall

By Annemarie Jaax

Kaarst. "10 Years in New York" is the title of a remarkable show on view at the municipal gallery Kaarst situated at the town hall Büttgen. Images of spectacular sky-scrappers of atmospheric vividness come to mind. But only to the people who until now did not know the Duisburg born artist Carmen Hay Kolodzey

However, experts and art admirers know that the title of the show refers to the artistic and creative time span: Carmen Hay Kolodzey, who has lived in New York since 1990, achieved (rather unusually for an European, and guaranteeing for the high quality of the artistic work) much recognition in the American art world. Her success can surely be attributed to her single-mindedness with which she pursues her highly individual method of working. Her works show an outstanding degree of a very personal character, almost impossible to assign to any popular trend. Influenced by her studies of art and textile at the university of Essen with Martel Wiegand, the artist combines textile materials with metaphorical images. Her work impresses by its brightness of the colors used and the clarity of the lines. An effusive zest for life instead of a quiet melancholy, continuous color fields instead of pictorial dissociation.

Nevertheless, we are not dealing with easily manageable, unreflected, consumable art. The pillow objects, at first seemingly inconspicuous, comprise at a closer look a socio-critical impetus.

The same holds for the oversized dress objects, which underlying political message is aimed at the inhumane production conditions in the world wide textile industry. Their particular attraction lies in the tension of the different textile materials used.

The altogether very much worth seeing, aesthetically impressive and intellectually provoking exhibition is on view in the gallery until May 16.

¹ Westdeutsche Zeitung, April 27, 1999