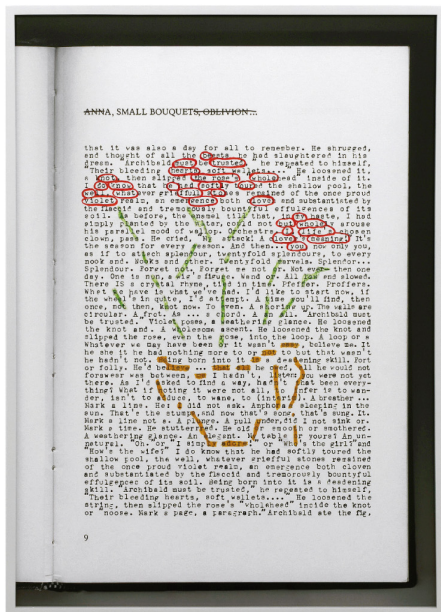


NATALIE CZECH

UQBAR - BERLIN



NATALIE CZECH, *A small bouquet* by Julien Bismuth, 2011. Oil pastel on C-Print; museum glass, 85 x 60 cm. Courtesy Uqbar and Kunstverein Langenhagen (DE).

At first sight, Natalie Czech's presentation at Uqbar couldn't appear more homogenous: a display of six photographs of pages of text, with the same words identically embedded within the pages and highlighted in red, green and brown. It is only upon further inspection that each text reveals a very different direction.

For this series — entitled “A Small Bouquet by Frank O'Hara” (2011) and produced for Kunstverein Langenhagen — Czech invited seven people to write a text (one of which wasn't displayed here) with O'Hara's poem *A Small Bouquet* as their ‘template’: the marked words represent the calligram of the poem's component words.

The six resulting inner monologues lay bare the image of people who are struggling internally, in search of the perfect expression. It is a quiet exertion for uniqueness, a claim for autonomy, although the constant insecurity about the specific choice of words is tangible in every sentence.

Archival in nature, the texts are presented as seductive prints of grainy “original documents”: 1950s-style typewritten texts photographed as pages in an old book. It is

a questionable yet lyrically evocative process that manages to capture the divine in the everyday.

Czech plays with the secret language of texts and the hidden layers they brings forth. Her viewer acts as a container of potentiality while the written texts perform as structures that inform the current ways we interpret the world. Although each text conveys a different character, they all showcase a certain commonality in their intimate theatricality and impertinence. What can be imagined, what can be said, taken for granted, or appear as rational or not, as thinkable or sayable? The information beyond what is visible, the delicate interplay in the relationship between visibility and ideas, is a consistent presence in her work.

Czech's project of an “archive of potentialities” is one where deconstruction is accompanied by a more vital immediacy that does not need to wrest itself free from the responsibility of representational language. Instead she begins by asking what potentialities make representation possible.

Judith Vrancken