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Heike-Karin Föll, *news*, September 9 – October 7, 2016

*Counterparts/The Empress of the Ephemeral*

1.  
(...)

2.  
There is a line in a text by Mallarmé in which he describes the vibratory disappearance of the subject in the act of enunciation. There is also the repeated invocation of perpetual reflections, a cascade of mirrors, in his poetry. And there is Benjamin's reminder, formulated with reference to Brecht's theory and practice of gestures, that not every artform that relies on spatialisation, distancing, and fragmentation – as is the case with Mallarmé, too – is 'reflexive'.

3.  
Heike-Karin Foell's canvases do not emerge from her books – cahiers of notes, scribbles, drawings, exercises – but at this point they have their necessary counterpart in them. One could describe them as probing relations with the ephemeral, as well as plumbing distances in and between media. We might look at these paintings as transposing the conditions of the book to the general spatial situation of the exhibition. But what, exactly, is the equivalent of the page here? Is it the single canvas, on which strokes, shades of color, the occasional interspersed letters figure? Or is it the wall, on which the paintings are mounted? Are we looking at the media-equivalents of several sheets, on which the artist has left her traces, marks, her work? Or, is the entire wall the equivalent of a printed surface, on which individual pictures appear? Is this a sketch book? Or a page in a magazine? Or, even a screen? Whichever way – it surely is this: the becoming ephemeral of the exhibition wall. A case of questioning the monumentalizing ambitions of the painterly project, while confidently placing the medium within what seems a mobile of media – a balancing act, a constellational weighing, a construction, think Calder, but as a model for playing and weighing media against each other. A rare contemporary case of addressing painting's (and drawing's) place within our medial present, while also relating them to other media. A method of positioning them within a media constellational logic, one of layering, flipping a page, holding one interface and its constructional laws against another. (There are figures beyond the network to address (art in) the digital present.)

4.  
(Also think of Raf Simons at Dior, dumping an architectural blob of blue delphiniums in the cour carrée of the Louvre last year, to accommodate what would turn out to be his last show for the Parisian house. The appearance of the organic, and fragile; yet a shelter, and an architecture. The textured surface of this 'tent', that corresponds with the floral embroideries on his oddly classical, yet futuristic dresses. Craft and the technological. Also, think back to the Foell's 2012 show in Basel, which featured a bouquet of blue delphiniums...)

Philipp Ekardt

Heike-Karin Föll graduated at Staatliche Akademie der Künste, Stuttgart, at Freie Universität, Berlin and at the Universität der Künste Berlin. She teaches at Universität der Künste, Berlin. Her work was shown at Mathew, New York/Berlin, at Hacienda, Zurich, Elaine/Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel and at VOX, Montreal.