

## Canadian Artist Shannon Bool's Most Important Sources of Inspiration at Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst



Shannon Bool, *The Inverted Harem I*, 2010. Ausstellungsansicht. Foto: Tobias Hübel

BREMEN.- Everyday life, literature, psychology, music, and art history are Canadian artist Shannon Bool's most important sources of inspiration. Her paintings, photograms, collages, carpets, murals, and objects explore contextual shifts and reassignments of meaning. Bool (born 1972, currently based in Berlin) is fascinated by the recurrence of ideas across different cultures and ages, and the revitalisation of quotidian phenomena and historico-cultural references through the excavation of their original meanings. Drawing on a diverse range of references and epochs, Bool creates images that blend historical and contemporary motives, materials, and themes. Form and content figure accordingly as equal peers in her artistic practice.

Bool's exhibition at the GAK is titled *The Inverted Harem I*. Evoking exoticism's stubbornly persistent vision of the harem as a site of mystery, the exhibition explores the contrasts between Western projections and the reality of the East, our fascination with the harem as a private space, and the transfer of meaning through materials, along with notions of femininity, eroticism and the Orient, and their treatment in the arts. Bool's carpets, for instance, uncover Western perceptions of Oriental ornamentation by revisiting 15th century Dutch tablecloths and English pub furnishings, which in turn drew

on Middle Eastern patterns. Moving deftly between cultures, Bool's drawings combine elements taken from paintings and pub floors in designs which are brought to life in the visually stunning works of traditional Turkish carpet makers.

Elsewhere a series of poles cut across the exhibition space, blending the imagery of the striptease with art historical references to Barnett Newman and Minimalism. In another work, the bedroom designed by Adolf Loos for his wife becomes a space that is defined by its material contrasts, and the site of a reinterpretation of femininity. Meanwhile, Bool's paintings are conglomerates of painterly clichés (silk painting meets both abstraction and graphic representation), as she explores the three-dimensional nature of art by accentuating our awareness of the wall behind and the space before her works, and presents viewers with a plethora of art historical references that ranges from Giotto to Jasper Johns.

With its linear structure, *The Inverted Harem I* guides visitors step-by-step from an open space of social interaction (represented by a "user-friendly" sculpture complete with champagne and fresh fruit) through towards an increasingly closed and intimate space.

Previously presented at national and international group exhibitions, this showing of Shannon Bool's *The Inverted Harem I* at the GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst is her first institutional solo exhibition in Germany. Besides the GAK is showing the JAHRESGABEN 2010 / 2011 with works by Shannon Bool, Carol Bove, Alois Godinat, Michael Hakimi, Manfred Holtfrerich, Florian Hüttner, Patricia Lambertus, Katrin Mayer, Kate Newby and Sarah Ortmeier. Showing: 27 November 2010 through 30 January 2011 Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst | Shannon Bool | Bremen | "The Inverted Harem I. Evoking" |

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