

(english)

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Do you believe in the technology of „believing“?

The contrast between two photographs

In this exhibition, colour photographs are displayed in pairs. One of the pair is an ordinary picture of the interior or exterior of a house, including a shot of a person who appears to be the resident. The other half of the pair is an incomprehensible, indefinite shape of what seems to be a blot of light. An ordinary picture of the interior of a room, and an irregular pattern that is incomprehensible...in such a case, we often attempt to figure out how these two things relate to one another. In our daily lives, we are accustomed to assume that all things are securely linked by a certain connection, through a certain rule such as the law of causality. Hence, once we are faced with a situation, where existing concepts do not apply, we enter into a state where our mind is suspended. Because this is art, one assumes that it is probably appropriate to consider that these two photos are paired arbitrarily, under a condition that is totally estranged from such a rule. However, even if that were the case, (no matter how difficult it is to guess the analogy) there should be some relationship or counter-relationship.... Those visitors who step into the exhibition of the young artists from Berlin, Nina Fischer and Maroan el Sani, will experience such a planned dissonance.

The link between the photographs

The link between the photos presents itself through the small remarks (made by the person in the picture) placed next to the photos. We learn that both pictures were taken at the same place, from the same position. Also, the family in the picture, who used to live in the house, had to leave for one reason or another (missing, dead, etc.), but they (all the more) maintain the room even today as a precious place. Further, the indefinite imageries are photographs of the aura of the former resident who went away.

Nina and Maroan call these photos, the Kirlian Photographs. The Kirlian photography is a technology named after the Russian scientist who developed it in 1939 (Nicola Tesla had already been experimenting it in the 1880's). The Kirlian Photography is a technology in which the electronic magnetic waves of an organism are directly transferred onto the picture. Are the photos truly Kirlian Photographs, and are they true auras? Whether we believe in them or not, is not important. What is important is that by contrasting a photograph that has been taken by a camera that captures the world we see, with another kind of photograph, allows us to consider the relativity of the world we believe in, and the potential of the existence of many variants become open to us. We discover that the world image and visual image (and space) in which we have no doubt about, in fact, heavily rely on artificial technology both historically and culturally (the visual image in the pre-modern days must have been totally different from the present).

„The technology of believing“

It can be seen that within the family, which is the familiar subjective, the people in the picture feel the aura as being the virtual substance of the non-existent family member, and that they are living depending on the traces and memories of the lost person. Niklas Luhman, who believes that the complexity of the world is lessened when various possibilities are taken away from the social system, says, „familiarity is the prerequisite of trust“ (Taken from „Trust“). The works displayed here are the „technology of believing“ that is set up in multiple ways, and they show how well the belief serves its function in the lives of the people and the society. Nina and Maroan subtly insert many delicate cracks into that system, making use of the Kirlian photography, that was excluded from the surface of modern science by a certain historical coincidence (or authority).

„The Desire of Making the Invisible Visible“ , solo show by Nina Fischer and Maroan el Sani at P-House Gallery, Tokyo, 1996 / Art Watch Index, Tokyo, Japan, Sep. 17, 1996