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Anna Malagrida
Shop Windows

Opening: Friday, November 18, 2011 at 7.00 pm, the artist will be present

Exhibition: November 19, 2011 through January 14, 2012

Anna Malagrida (*1970, Barcelona, lives in Paris) works since 1998 with the media photography and video. Her works often refer to the dialectical opposition of inside and outside. The viewer is asked to participate actively in the process of reception of her pieces: the coherent but also highly dynamic compositions are loaded with subtle allusions and unanswered questions.

In the series *Shop Windows* (2008 and 2009) Malagrida shows displays of Parisian shops, shot from the street. The windows, however, are whitened, obscured by reflections or objects behind the windowpanes. The viewer's gaze is consequently blocked, it is not possible to look inside the stores. Malagrida has thus created a surface of projection for her compositions on the level of the windowpane. The frames of the windows are more or less congruent with the frames of the photographs and connect the view on the photograph with the view on the window. And they frame narrations as – for instance – in *Rue de Charenton* of 2008: the gaze of the viewer meanders continuously, guided by changing structures in white and by objects behind the pane, objects that cannot be discerned and that – thus – become abstract areas that block the gaze, which is pushed back to the center by the (window-)frame being – again – part of the photograph. Anna Malagrida tests – thereby – the limits of the media. She finds a level where seemingly real things are melted with objects of the image and is questioning the binding nature of reality, which is challenged by the imagination of the viewer.

Rue Riboutté or *Rue de Châteaudun* (both 2008) also show the melting of different image levels: inside of the windows the white paint has been scratched away and written-on (by a third party, because these are *objets trouvés*). Mirror-inverted letters allude to narrations that are never led to an understandable end. Facades of houses across the street are reflected: what is outside suddenly is part of the image. The viewer is confronted with something odd and the size of the photographs that is approximately the size of the shop windows adds to the vigor of the works.

Different and very complex levels of reading can be discerned particularly in *Rue Riboutté*: the frame of the window, the reflection of a house, the white color with its sgraffitos behind the window pane, and – finally – the spotlights inside the store can be seen as fragments that are creating as such the final composition. On the other side, they are separate signs that refer to the different levels of the image. Finally, the fact that the facade of the house opposite the street is reflected in the window can be read as a metaphor for photography itself: the photographic depiction/reflection of reality on film material (or a light-sensitive digital surface), a technical process, is paralleled in the reflection on the windowpane.

While the photographs show a high degree of presence, they cannot only be defined as "heavy": there can be seen also a certain irony, for instance in the work *Rue Saint-Charles* (2009). The shop window that has been whitened all-over – and lets us thus think of a painting – shows the reflection of a traffic sign in the upper right corner. The "no entry"-sign reveals a double negation: neither are the cars allowed to enter the street, nor can the viewer look through the white color inside the shop. He is not – however – seeing nothing.

Malagrida's photographs and videos have a poetic power that melts opposite elements and brings them together on a transcendent level. The interaction with the viewer is – thus – not only possible but becomes an integral element of her work.

For more information and/or images please contact the gallery.