

Anita Fricke

just wait and see what happens

1999

SIMULTAN. zwei sammlungen österreichischer fotografie

Museum der Moderne Salzburg, 2005

Curator: Urs Stahel

Nahtlos

Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2001

Curators: Forum für Angewandte Kunst Nuremberg

Soho in Ottakring, 1999

Curators: Ula Schneider /

T19 - Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, Vienna

just wait and see what happens is a series of double sided, stitched photographs, made in Sydney in 1999. All of these portraits are of artists, and all are the artist's friends. The photos are intimate and relaxed, and connect real lives with the world of mythology through the text and archetypal attributes stitched over and through them. The photos were sewn with wool, the needle and thread becoming a drawing tool.

Stitching, a traditional female handcraft, pierces the glossy surface of the photograph, overlaying the mechanically constructed gaze of photography with the manual action of the stitching. The stitching carries the signature of the body in its organic, irregular lines, turning the infinitely reproducible photograph into an unique and singular piece. The slow, meditative time of the sewing process also contrasts with the photographs instantaneous mode of production. The photograph conserves time, while the stitching takes time.

The photos were exhibited in pairs glued back to back with the stitching appearing on both sides. In this way the 'beautiful' and the 'ugly' side of the stitching could be seen simultaneously. This revealed the way the 'other' side of the stitching created a non-hierarchical in-between space of language and images. In between the 'right' and the 'wrong' is a place from which these distinctions emerge and in which they dissolve. Coincidence is part of this game, it places the sides into different contexts, once correct and once undone. In this way meaning dances in between our expectations, and the work is playfully freed from our inherited codes. **just wait and see what happens** makes sewing as a signifier for female language visible on a formal level, and activates it politically as a feminine space of creative chance.

The eleven photo-objects were hung from the ceiling. As soon as a person approached the work or passed by, the whole row of pictures began to move in response to their bodies passing. In this way the body movement of the viewers became an important part of the work and underlined the active aspect of the seeing and perceiving process.