

Capitain Petzel

KELLEY WALKER

Capitain Petzel, Berlin June 11 - August 28, 2010

Whitney The Greatest Hits - How Will I Know: Arista 2000, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010, 2008

Aluminium stands, mylar, mirror, Epson prints, disco ball with chain, wood, fluorescent tubes, framed record, canvas
with magazine and newspaper
Dimensions variable

Following the first exhibition by Kelley Walker at Capitain Petzel in 2009, Gisela Capitain and Friedrich Petzel are pleased to announce the presentation of an installation work by the artist in the lower ground floor gallery. Whitney The Greatest Hits – How Will I Know: Arista 2000 has previously been exhibited in 2006 at the Powerhouse, Memphis, in 2007 at Le Magazin, Grenoble and in 2008 at Wiels, Brussels.

Each time the work has been presented, Walker has made additions, changes and adjustments to it, leading to developments in the piece and the ways in which it can be understood. For the exhibition at Capitain Petzel, Walker has added to the scale of the installation considerably and has chosen to include a number of new works to complement and create a dialogue with the installation.

Boards on metal stands are used to display 1079 frames from the music video for the Whitney Houston hit 'How will I Know', made in 1986. From the actual length of the video, Walker has taken 1079 screen shots and printed them onto paper sheets in an arbitrary group of bright colours. These images are then stapled to boards in sequence and Walker arranges the boards throughout the gallery to form a journey through the images and space.

Whitney Houston was one of the first pop stars to be subjected to the increased visibility and media saturation heralded by the launch of the MTV music channel. She swiftly became one of the most prominent African American stars and was also one of the most produced, styled and 'manufactured' star-brands of her age. Seen from our viewpoint in 2010, the video for 'How will I Know' is an exercise in 1980s kitsch in its lighting, clothing and choreography and the work which Walker has created introduces a complex dalliance and relationship with camp.

By using screen shots from the video, Walker renders Whitney still, a series of frozen images with the narrative removed. However, the chronological installation of the images in the gallery enables the viewer to have a new narrative relationship with both the star and the work. The blank page arrives already printed with ink – the colour with which it is saturated. Once Walker has printed the pages - put them through his colour printer - an expanded field appears. Blank rectangles of colour go through a process of labour, the printing, at which point Walker starts to make choices and direct the viewer's experience and brings Whitney into the physical world. Some of the boards are covered with blank pages, creating areas in the room where a blankness and flickering effect prevails with a reliance on the material.