

Auszug aus dem Text von Richard Birkett (assistant curator, ICA London).
(Textquelle: »Strawberry Camouflage«, Nought to Sixty, ICA London, 10. Juni 2008).

Thomas Kratz

In many respects, the work of Thomas Kratz (born Waiblingen, 1972, lives in Berlin) defies summation. Kratz operates across a variety of media, and his approaches can appear cyclical - not necessarily generating an ordered structure but one in which reoccurring facets are placed alongside one another across spaces, exhibitions and works. Kratz has an interest in the early twentieth-century Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who devised a means of writing from multiple points of view.

These different identities are heteronyms - rather than simple »nom de plumes« - as he gave them distinct characters, each with its own biography and physical characteristics. Kratz does not go so far as to nominate plural identities from which his work emanates, yet his approach to making art is founded on a set of positions, each with clear material and conceptual characteristics. (...) Objects, both constructed and pre-existing, are reincarnated throughout Kratz's work. Bicycles appear frequently: propped against the gallery wall, as if offering a means of escape; or leant against a set of glass doors, preventing entry to the gallery beyond. The layering of such elements creates a ritualistic amplification, taken to the point of overload, and Strawberry Camouflage forms an almost perverse extension of How I Explain Pictures..., with Kratz »in communion« with a hybrid hare/android figure in garish Beuysian garb. Kratz' action, however, is also a poised, aesthetic composition that revels in the communicative possibilities of an archive of objects and gestures. This style of identity formation - drawing on sources that range from visceral painting to refined architecture - is recurrent throughout the artist's work, often highlighting the false constructions that commonly occur within art and exhibitions. Kratz creates a language of objects and gestures that is highly diverse, but which in total speaks of the contingencies and rituals of art.

Richard Birkett