

PORTRAITS & FACES In the show titled "PORTRAITS & FACES" each individual portrait opens up a world that goes beyond a photographic representation of faces. The starting point for this show are portraits with their symbolic and representational functionality. Portraits emblemize authenticity and identity of the people being portrayed - to use painted portraits in such a way was initiated in the renaissance. Proof of a true representation of the portrayed was literally notarized through the brush strokes of the artist. Portraits were at times painfully accurate since they contained and even highlighted appalling details of physiognomic disadvantages (f.i. hairy warts and the like).

In the course of time the character, essence, preference and idealization of the portrayed predominated the paintings. The focus on individuality boosted the preoccupation with authenticity to end up finally in deconstructing the buildup of intimacy and idealization.

The exhibition introduces portraits and faces in contemporary art and comic art as expression of infinite moments in time. In addition to this the idea of simultaneously juxtaposing contemporary art and comic art was born to highlight the ever recurring discussion about authenticity of art and artist. The 90'ies classified the two genres in "highbrow" and "lowbrow" art which somewhat spurred the discourse about authenticity within the art scene. Are comic artists and their lowbrow art less authentically then representatives of the highbrow arts? Are stories and images of art and comic art processed by the audiences in the same way or are they the result of a different variety of narrative/content strategies?

However, everyone seems to agree that both genres create sustaining imaginative and perceptible worlds with a self sworn in subjective collective around it. On top of this the Facebook phenomenon adds a seemingly whole new facet to the subject altogether. "Faces" as marker for individuality, identity and authenticity are diffuse metaphors in the world of Facebook which frames them with arbitrary and mercantile contexts. Everyone can adopt any identity which in fact resembles the rural use of portraits in the times before the renaissance, the medieval: In those times peoples' portraits weren't realistic copies of their looks but rather painted desires of the way they wanted to be.

Monika Baer, Andre Baschlakow, Thomas Bayrle, John Bock, Charles Burns, Bob Camp, école de François Clouet, Daniel Clowes, Joe Coleman, Robert Crumb, Geof Darrow, Tom of Finland, Larry Hama, Lothar Hempel, David Hockney, Andy Hope 1930, Michael Kunze, Louise Lawler, Bernhard Martin, Keith Mayerson, Dan McCarthy, Igor Mischiyev, Moebius, Jose Munoz, Savage Pencil, Raymund Pettibon, Peter Saul, Jim Shaw, Peter Stauss, Frank Thiel, Marcus Weber, Wally Wood