

Another Magazine Keren Cytter and her 800 Polaroids

— October 22, 2013 —

Keren Cytter's new dual show combines her personal travelogue and a soap opera themed film series...



Keren Cytter MOP (Musuem of Photography) 2012-2013 © Keren Cytter & Pilar Corrias, London

“Well, it was supposed to be something heavier but it turned out to be a soap opera,” says Israeli-born artist Keren Cytter, in reference to her new series of seven short films, collectively entitled, *Vengeance*. Featuring bathos-repelling scenes of young professionals working, socialising, betraying each other, and putting together modular furniture, Cytter insists there are no over-arching themes to be found. “The story is about a guy who moves from one woman to the next and then one of them wants revenge. It’s set in the advertising world but there is nothing going on really. Maybe I don’t have the psychological depth to do something heavier.”

Said half in jest, this seems a fitting statement from an artist whose work feels more like process than anything conceptually driven or over-considered. An approach which ultimately has a depth all its own, as the many accolades she has received for her prolific output – film and video work, performance, books of fiction and poetry – suggest. And like the sagas that play out endlessly in daily soaps, *Vengeance* – equal measures *Mad Men*, *Friends*, and Hal Hartley – captures the melodramatic version of adulthood as children perceive it: full of glamour, reversals of fortune, and intrigue, shuffled somewhat by the artist’s keen eye for overlaying audio and video.

"The series offers an intimate look at Cytter's life: a time capsule of esprit de corps, engagement, and friendship"

Accompanying *Vengeance* at Cytter’s solo show at the Pilar Corrias gallery in London is a series of 800 Polaroids the artist took over a year-long period. The series, entitled, *Museum of Photography (MOP)*, offers an intimate look at Cytter’s life, with images that form an idiosyncratic visual travelogue, a time capsule of *esprit de corps*, engagement, and friendship – “a little time and place thing,” she says. “I was very excited about the Polaroid camera I bought in Berlin, and I arranged the first photos together in squares on the floor,” Cytter adds about the project’s inception. “The joke was that it was like a museum – what a masterpiece each one! Then I just had a lot of them after a while.”

Acting in direct opposition to the plot-laden films, *MOP* is a visual feast without a linear tale: a snap of a painting Cytter made when she was sixteen; the hotel room in Switzerland where she was holed up with actors from her play, *Show Real Drama*; a road trip across the American Southwest; toilets; a photo of the King of Morocco; a group of friends in front of the Atlas mountains; a dog wearing a dark blue suit jacket; a family Passover celebration in Toronto; the Dead Sea. Some of the photos have been added to with fake tattoos, scribblings, or stickers, while others benefit from the Polaroid’s duplicating ‘diamond effect’, as they trace Cytter’s path across the globe. Sometimes comically posed, but gleefully so and without concern

for result, the photos not only remind us that everyone looks better when photographed with a Polaroid, but that story and meaning can take multiple forms – intended or not.

Keren Cytter: MOP Vengeance is at the Pilar Corrias Gallery until November 15.

Text by Ananda Pellerin