

s a y i t l i k e i t i s

The slogan-like title of Kerstin Honeit's first solo-exhibition at cubus-m, suggests two things. Firstly, that a gallery can serve as a site of plain speaking and, thus, offers a forum for political discourse despite its commercial focus. Secondly, the title suggests a close connection between explanatory power and the veracity of spoken language with its potential for political action. "Say it like it really is, do it like it really is" - so a line of lyrics from the socially critical and politically active hip-hop group Public Enemy, who also use their concerts for public protest. The political potential of Honeit's practice lies in the discrepancy between "saying" and "doing" that she stages, and the spaces for action that she thus creates.

Thematically the three video works presented in the exhibition, *Joint Property* (2013), *Pigs in Progress* (2013) and *On & Off* (2010), address the process of gentrification in Berlin, and along with questions of personal property and memory. What unites the works is an examination of the medial embodiment of voice and the implicit process of appropriation and attribution within it. The latter is particularly evident in movie dubbing, a longstanding thematic interest for Honeit. The voice that we hear does not correspond to the body that we see. In the history of cinema, especially in politically volatile times, this has provided an opportunity for manipulation with respect to the actual spoken word, and it still does so today in terms of the gender performance of voice.

Honeit engages with these implications by taking a seemingly neutral position in her work and, as in *Pigs in Progress* and *On & Off*, acts as a medium for borrowed voices of various figures like politics that she reproduces in playbacks and thereby literally embodies.

Conversely, in Honeit's double-projection *Joint Property*, which was produced specifically for this exhibition and can be seen from the street, her own body undergoes a transformation through increasingly absurd props, images of this transformation are projected alternately. In this way not only are clear gender assignments increasingly blurred, but at the same time aspects of desire and longing are invoked. As a consequence processes of attribution and appropriation become almost indistinguishable. This principle of ambiguity manifests itself in the words, such as "economy" and "night out," which are called out in different voices in between images of each transitioning figure and that refer equally to the previous as well as the subsequent figure.

In Kerstin Honeit's work "doing" also always implies "doing gender," which is simultaneously promoted and foiled through "saying (gender)."

Fiona McGovern (2013)