

Zenita Komad. Be Light unto the World

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'*Sei Licht für die Welt*' [Be Light for the World], Zenita Komad's central installation at the Galerie Gölles, captures, within the four courtyard corners of the this renowned exhibition space in the eastern part of the Oststeiermark region, the epiphanic light of the sun from the heavens and sends its rays radiating through the walls of the gallery. These, in turn, lead toward various rooms within the space, thereby distinguishing, on a purely formal level, other various stages of work by the internationally and particularly successful young artist (born in 1980). Parallel to the selections included from various cycles of work that have been realised through a wide variety of significantly disparate mediums (collage, drawing, sand sculpture, material image and room installation), Zenita Komad has invited six additional artists to contribute to the exhibition with existing or newly created works by addressing the theme of light. Extended Universe II is the artist's designation for the cosmos she has created in order to overstep the narrow boundaries of the artistic self to embrace the work of other colleagues who have devoted their energies to a shared topic. In so doing, the roles of artist and curator have been deliberately kept out of focus, as the emphasis ought not to be placed upon the self but rather upon the theme at hand.

The teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in the Christian Bible—'You are the salt of the Earth. [...] You are the light of the world. [...] No one lights a candle and puts it under a bowl.' (Mt 5, 13-16)—are answered by Komad with the imperative call to action: 'Be Light for the World'. Whoever has had the opportunity of meeting the artist first hand is likely to have established that there are no in-betweens with Komad—no weighing of advantages and no room for hesitation. To the contrary, a yes should be yes and a no should be no; there is no time for burying the dead. The weighty force of her presence, however, is quickly dissolved into sweet melodiousness when one is prepared to follow her inspirations and imperatives, or, in short: ready to provide her 'Extended Universe' with space. Over the course of her artistic life (which would seem much longer than her age would numerically allow for), she has already traversed a multitude of fields—having taken people of the most various disciplines along on the journey—and thereby learned to play with the system of 'art' in multi-spectral and near-immaculately perfect terms. Confined to a format of 150x110 cm, her panel pieces are full of life—comprised of articles of clothing, letters of the alphabet and passages of text. Her still *more playful* and *more combined* handling of the histories of art, gender and the written word, in fact, remains the only bridge toward the resulting bricolage works (P. Gorsen), packed as they are with three and still more times the potency—only, in turn, to be washed back out by a well-nigh hetairistically suggestive strategy of divulgence. Whoever might believe themselves secure in their interpretational abilities ought better to look again. From Man Ray's renowned back of a nude female figure, a clothed and pregnant *Woman* Ray is want to emerge. Yet, rays are also what, indeed, fail to transfer the narcissism of that same cult-icon into the present time but, instead, extend the half-lives of this other sort of radiation by light years. Whatever it may be, Zenita Komad does not fail to find within it, and among so many other fields of thought, the endless possibilities that are to be drawn from the wealth of recorded thought, to be separated into parts and reassembled into a new whole. Light, at any rate, is inseparable from radiation. This element is fundamentally unique in a particular way to the art of Zenita Komad. Her resolute steps toward leaving, or, yet better said, expanding the system of art as it has commonly been perceived of, may leave some onlookers wavering. The decisiveness of the call, however, that she has reiterated in title of this exhibition, leaves them behind, amongst the

realm shadows—the exact opposite of which is, indeed, integral to her appeal.