

It is already there, a frame surrounding me, in the shape of a built structure. It is hard to tell, though, whether it is under construction or undergoing a demolition. Only one thing is sure: I am witness to a transformation. This feeling of a fractious tension between construction and destruction is the first thing to arise, when introduced to the work of visual artist, Sara Glahn, a contribution that takes shape through various medias such as photography, sculpture, installation, text, drawing, etc.

We find this tension present when themes like the artistic process itself, the institution, legacy and authority are called into question, through a language that constantly balances the gravity of substance and the lightness of irony.

This act of balance is especially articulate in *The Museums* when the role of the institution as the guarantor for the status of the work of art is debated. What is the work of art opposed to other objects and how does the frame offered by the institution influence the way we maintain such distinction? Those are the questions at stake when Glahn puts herself at play in the caricatured role of the artist, namely as the one who insists on the question in preference to the answer.

As such, the artist becomes the one who rebels against the given structures, and breaks the frames surrounding not just the work of art, but also the social agent. Where the institution retains a specific interpretation of how we are to understand a work of art, the artist splits apart that framework and displays the work of art as a collection of materials, as shown in the works *My Dad is an Artist* and *My Collection*. Here we are presented with an understanding of the work of art that embraces a radical instability as it points towards the verb *to work*, rather than the noun *a work*. As a collection of materials the temporality of the work of art is highlighted, and we get the impression of a movement, of something provisional, like the image of a kaleidoscope. Particularly the repeated motif of the hand contributes to this idea of an eternal playful activity.

A collection of materials is first of all a potential, something that points forward. However, a collection is per definition a result of a history, and as such it signals a destiny, something given. Many circumstances are decisive to this – family relations; institutional establishments; the way the world we inhabit is furnished due to an already defined logic we are required to get comfortable with, or redefine, as shown in *By the Square*.

In other words, the circle is closed and we are back to the foundational question regarding the meaning of the frame as it articulates itself as a tension between something already created and the ambition to create something new. However, this theme takes a new level in the work *Graduations*, when institutions are brought back to attention, in this case the art academy as the chrysalis for the emerging artist. What we find here is yet another collection, namely an archival collection portraying that specific type of destiny we call “the artist”. As pure potential, or as a collection of materials, young souls are brought into and given shape by a set of frames defined by the art academy. Still, becoming an artist means to question and defy the given, and that is exactly what Glahn does herself, when she uses the archive as an incentive for storytelling and puts us in a situation where the lines between fiction and facts are blurred. “Will I become an artist?” is the central question, raised by one of the fictive graduates.

When we consider the entire contribution from Glahn, the answer insinuated is a rejection of the idea of a final state and an accentuation of the becoming, the eternal process. To be an artist means to constantly become an artist. Likewise with the work of art, impossible to frame, always in play with you, like a collection of possibilities.