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Eberhard Havekost

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Eberhard Havekost does not invent any of the images he paints. There is no ex nihilo creation in his painting. Everything already exists, everything is culled and pillaged from a reality where all the images have already been produced, showned, overused. Eberhard Havekost paintings invent nothing and do not even render a memory he might have had of such and such event, landscape or sensation. Since the early 90's, the German artist's entire output involves reworking preexistent images – photos clipped from newspapers or magazines images drawn from film or video, personal shots – without giving any weight to their original meaning. Moreover, it seems obvious that Eberhard Havekost has chosen his source-images by making sure they are free from overtones, whether political, historical or social, in order to avoid grazing any type of symbolism.

"I'm trying to detect the filters we use in how we perceive ...my painting strives to decipher our filters". Painting what you don't see doesn't mean painting the invisible or the hidden. To the contrary, it affirms that we can only paint what we see of reality, i.e. permanent falsification.

This comprises one of the core aspects of Eberhard Havekost's artwork: filtering reality to the max in order to redesign a reality that is watered down, face-lifted, glossed. His works are disturbingly flattened out; the objects, buildings, faces... do not look as they should if they were meant to accurately portray reality. The painting do not endeavour to represent what is seen. Everything's unfolds as if the painted subjects were disembodied, as if they'd become simple shells with no longer any content other than the most basic data, like a building of a video game where only facades are programmed.

The user interface principle is crucial in Eberhard Havekost's work and acts as a binding concept. His paintings are interfaces addressed to the spectator, and in themselves depict a very partial reality of what they truly are. They conceal their inner workings and meet one's gaze like shallow surfaces that have been designed, in the vein of a broad-spectrum software, to be friendly and easy to use. They serve up a truncated reality and thereby affirm that what we perceive always results from an arrangement with the real world. In other words, Eberhard Havekost paintings are interfaces that reproduce what we do endlessly: filter reality, see things from a subjective and thus necessarily erroneous viewpoint, embark on incessant simplifications of reality, partake in a chain of disparate realities that follow one another like photograms in a film reel.