

ARTFORUM



View of “The Rustle of Language,” 2009. MILAN

“The Rustle of Language”

KAUFMANN REPETTO

Via di Porta Tenaglia, 7

November 19, 2009–January 25, 2010

Candice Breitz’s *Double Karen (Close to You)*, 1970–2000, best conveys the curatorial conceit of “The Rustle of Language,” a group exhibition featuring twelve international artists. Taken from the series “Four Duets,” 2000, the work consists of two facing monitors that loop fragments of Karen Carpenter

performing “Close to You” (1970) on a television show. (One screen shows Carpenter singing, “Me, me, me,” while the other responds, “You, you, you.”) Through the obsessive and incisive repetition of the pronouns, the overlapping voices construct a sound environment with an impenetrable meaning.

Within this complexity, Breitz’s editing, a tool capable of transforming nonsense into sense, takes center stage. In fact, editing is the theme of this show, which, through a selection of works that are quite different in nature, examines and emphasizes various aspects and meanings of language. Thus Breitz’s work overlaps with other voices evoked by the objects in the gallery, such as the photographs by Christian Marclay (*Ann Arbor*, 2004, and *Seattle*, 2005), as well as the small coins by Roman Ondàk in his *Pocket Money of My Son*, 2007; the acrylic paintings of Lily van der Stokker; and the stratification of multiple personalities in John Stezaker’s collages.

In an adjacent room, the exhibition turns to the viewer, who is called on to read the text in Ricci Albenda’s paintings *pff* and *tsk*, both 2009; the video *Theorists*, 2009, by Fikret Atay; the notebook drawings of Dan Perjovschi; the typewritten signs of Henri Chopin; and the video *Housemeister*, 2008, by Yoshua Okon. In this context, the rustle of language is, as Roland Barthes wrote in the essay to which this exhibition’s title refers, the noise of plural enjoyment: The individual works are a community of bodies, summoned to produce a polyphonic Esperanto, one made up of text, sound, and image.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

— Paola Nicolin