

The New York Times

January 10, 2010



SCULPTURECENTER

Nina Hoffmann's "Untitled(KS)," in the show "Leopards in the Temple," at SculptureCenter in Queens.

In 1917, the year Franz Kafka found out that he had tuberculosis, he wrote a short parable about the mysterious interplay between form and change:

"Leopards break into the temple and drink to the dregs what is in the sacrificial pitchers; this is repeated over and over again; finally it can be calculated in advance, and it becomes a part of the ceremony."

Beginning Sunday at **SCULPTURECENTER** in Long Island City, Queens, a group show revolving around this haunting Kafkaism — which has had a durable afterlife in epigraph and essay — will present works by a number of up-and-coming European artists like Lucy Skaer, a nominee for the 2009 Turner Prize, and João Maria Gusmão and Pedro Paiva, who represented Portugal at last year's Venice Biennale.

The works in the show, "Leopards in the Temple," all share an interest in "protean moments where materials elide, transform and overlay," as the exhibition's curator, Fionn Meade, described them. Nina Hoffmann, a young artist from Berlin, presents a single slide projection of a photograph showing two young women transformed into one figurative abstraction as their bodies form a positive-negative silhouette. Latifa Echakhch uses tea glasses from her native Morocco as raw material, smashing them to create a multicolored scatter in which the glasses, by becoming broken and useless, are transformed in a gallery setting into a form instantly recognizable as post-Minimalist art.

"In the show," Mr. Meade said, "the artists have returned to various formal vocabularies but always with the adjacent relationship of borrowing rather than a wholesale attempt at remaking or revivifying." *Through March 30, 44-19 Purves Street, (718) 361-1750, sculpture-center.org.*