Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger – Double Take

Fotostiftung Schweiz, Winterthur, 2 June to 9 September 2018

For five years, the Zurich-based artist duo Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger worked on a project that not only captivates with its concept, but also through its intricacy and aesthetic power. 'Double Take' plays seductively with iconic images from international photographic history: Pictures imprinted in the collective memory are reproduced as three-dimensional models – a meticulous bricolage of cardboard, sand, wood, fabric, cotton wool and plaster – and photographed so that they in turn represent images that are astonishingly close to the original scene. But the illusion is humorously broken by the inclusion of elements of the studio environment, along with all kind of remnants from reconstructing the scenes. This portrayal of a portrayal of a portrayal of reality becomes a dizzying metaphysical experience: What is real? And can we trust our perception?

'The making of…'
'Double Take' is much more than a dry epistemological exercise. It is instead a highly attractive, ingenious and tongue-in-cheek speculating, with which the artists awaken our curiosity. Their precise, detail-rich large format photography represents an intricate game of discovery and bewilderment, in which you can lose yourself in the details of the original photograph while at the same time wanting to decode the secret of the 'Making of…' with a level of inquisitiveness worthy of a detective. The seemingly randomly neglected equipment and materials convey the impression that the model makers have only just applied their final brushstroke. Their provisional, temporary installation brings the immortalised moment into question, and the timeless myth is broken down to the banal everyday level.

Icons of photographic and contemporary history
On the one hand, Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger concentrate on historically important events: From the Wright brothers' debut flight in 1903, via the Hindenburg disaster 1937 to the mushroom cloud of Nagasaki in 1945 and the terror attack on the Twin Towers in 2001. On the other, they dedicate themselves to photographic works that represent insignificant events but which do not deserve to be omitted from any photographic history: Henri Cartier-Bresson's image of a man jumping over a puddle at Paris's Gare Saint-Lazare station (1932) or Harold Edgerton's bouncing drop of milk which, in the photograph, sets to form a crown (1957). With this parallel guide, the photographers make it clear that their works are not so much based on real events, but primarily on other images – on individual images which go to make up our enormous world of imagery.

Media-critical reflection and joyful prank
Construction, deconstruction, reconstruction: As seductive as it is to envision the past in the form of images and to use these icons to explain the world, the 'truth' of these images is also problematic. The work of Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger playfully and humorously makes clear that photography is fragile, arbitrary and highly manipulable. It is precisely this creative scepticism that lends the project 'Double Take' its great topicality. At a time when media boundaries between fiction and reality

have become blurred and the buzzword 'post-factual' has taken hold, the work challenges us to reexamine our relationship to photography.

The exhibition
For the first time, the exhibition 'Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger – Double Take' gives us a virtually complete overview over the *Icons*' series of work. It presents 42 prints produced for this exhibition, most of which are large format. In the form of groups, dialogues and comparisons, it hints at further planes to the subject: What makes a photograph timeless? Which visual codes – posture, gestures, perspectives, compositions, vivid events – embed themselves in our memory? How do recurring, countless-times-reproduced images condition our way of seeing things, and therefore our concept of reality? What are the societal myths hidden away behind icons? And why is it that the majority of iconic photographs can be assigned to one of three fields of meaning: catastrophes and war, discoveries and achievements as well as beauty and consumption? The act of deconstruction culminates in an arrangement featuring all manner of props and remnants of the three-dimensional reconstructions, as well as film documentation of how the works came into being.

An exhibition of the Fotostiftung Schweiz in cooperation with C/O Berlin.
Curator of the exhibition in Winterthur: Sascha Renner.

Jojakim Cortis, born 1978 in Aachen (Germany), and **Adrian Sonderegger,** born 1980 in Bülach (Switzerland), have lived in Zurich since 2001. Both studied photography at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), where their collaboration began. Since completing their studies in 2006, they have been working as freelance photographers/artists and teaching at various art schools. Their work has been shown at numerous exhibitions in Switzerland and abroad, including the Festival Images in Vevey (CH), the Museum Folkwang in Essen (D), as well as at festivals in Poland and China.

Publication
The exhibition is accompanied by a publication from Lars Müller Publishers (German): Jojakim Cortis, Adrian Sonderegger: *Double Take. Eine wahre Geschichte der Fotografie,* Texts: Christian Caujolle, Florian Ebner, William A. Ewing, 128 pp, CHF 35 (English version from Thames & Hudson).

Special events
Sunday 17 June, 11.30: Tour by the artists Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger.

Wednesday 27 June, 18.30: Tour with Gerhard Paul, senior professor, image historian and publicist, tackling questions of authenticity and iconisation.

Sunday 2 September, 11:30: Tour by the artists Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger.