

beate frommelt barbara bühler

february 7 through 28, 2007

opening reception, wednesday,

february 7, 6-8pm

goethe-institut washington

beate frommelt

The medium of drawing serves as the point of departure in Beate Frommelt's (*1973) work. Depending on the project, she reworks sketches on the computer or utilizes them in collages, translates drawings into prints or develops them further with needle and thread. At present, she is working on a series with watercolor and ink concerned with the themes of surfeit and multiplicity.

Under the title 'Hypnos', the god of sleep, Frommelt brings together works that have come about as the result of a long examination of the theme of sleep and death, Hypnos and Thanatos, the twin brothers from Greek mythology. Her search for traces has taken her to a sleep lab and led to encounters with numerous scientists for whom sleep still remains a phenomenon, despite the many findings on the subject and new research methods.

Although sleep is one of the basic human needs, the relationship between people and sleep has always been marked by ambivalence. This level of the incomprehensible, the enigmatic, this condition of being suspended in which individuals are subjected to their environment and their own subconscious, are themes addressed by the artist in this block of works. The exploration of death, sleep's brother, is thus a logical consequence, as the loss of clear consciousness and self-control that occur as we slip off into sleep bear considerable similarities to the moment of death when the soul separates from the body. In both cases, the individual crosses a threshold and yields to an inscrutable, mysterious darkness.

barbara bühler

The individual and the legacy that individuals leave behind are what interest Barbara Bühler (*1968). Their cultural and social environment as reflected in the architecture that surrounds them and in the arrangement of spaces. Pursued from this angle, Bühler conveys her own vision of architecture through photography. Even just in her selection of the image detail, it already becomes clear that it is not primarily about the recognition of existing interior or exterior spaces, but rather about the unseen and secret aspects occurring in these spaces. In these images, human bodies can be sculpturally staged, with the artificial arrangement and ordering standing in contrast to the everyday character of the context. This results in snapshots that neither elucidate nor instruct, but call on the viewer to engage in reflection.

A characteristic of Barbara Bühler's photographs is her work in series. In 2002, the artist traveled for the first time to Indonesia, the world's largest Islamic nation, as part of a cultural exchange, to return there again in 2003. Her encounters with local artists allowed her to conduct an intensive examination of Islam, resulting in a series of contemplative photos of interiors of mosques in and around Yogyakarta, some with human subjects, some deserted.

These are the quiet places where Muslims meet for prayer, far from the turbulent commotion of radical Islamic ideas and extremist fervor. They are images of a different, contemplative Islam; a faith that guides the lives of a majority of the Indonesian population, one that is scarcely registered by the western world amidst the clamor and tumult of fundamentalist groups.

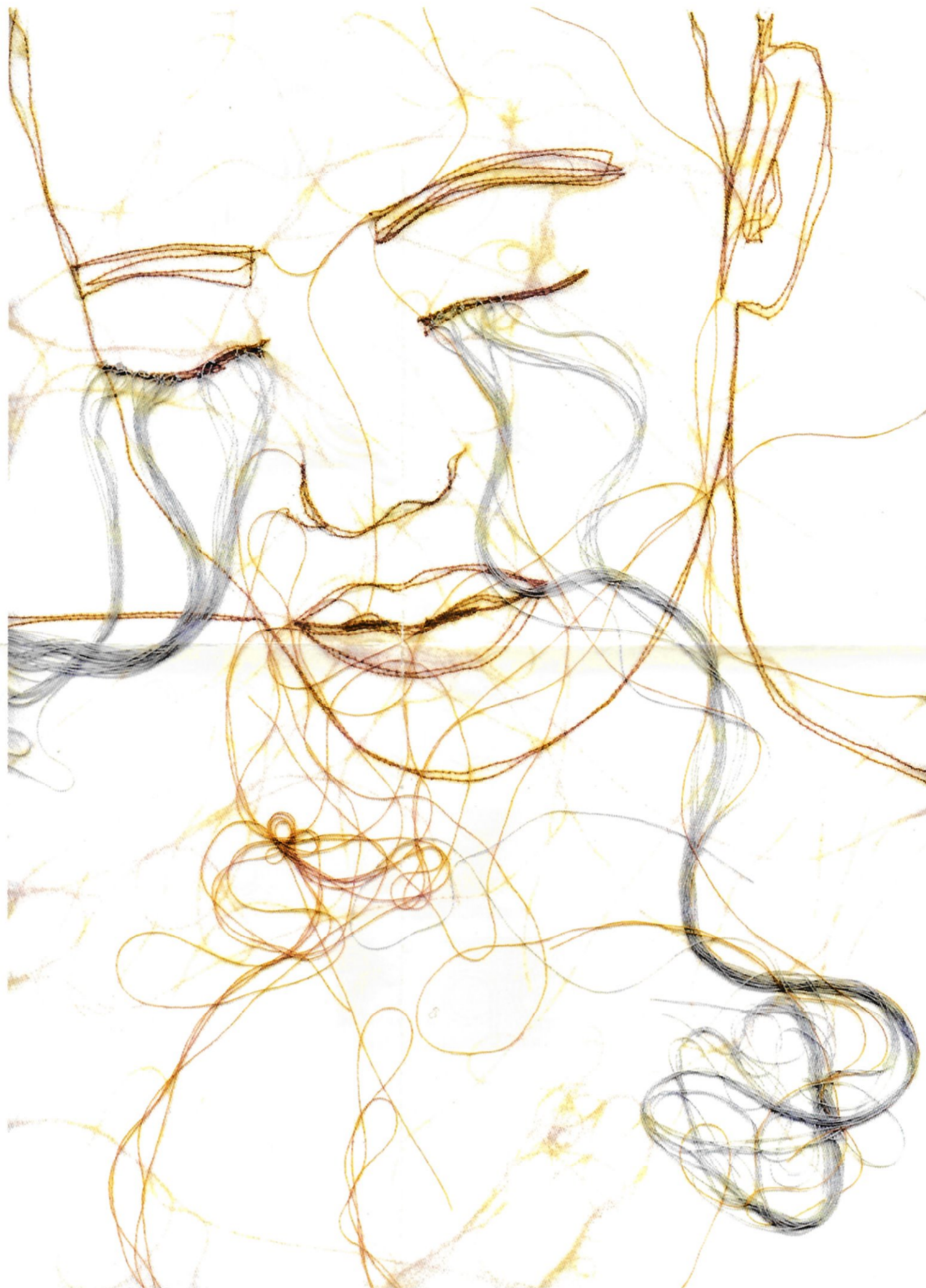
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LIECHTENSTEIN CONTEMPORARY - BEATE FROMMELT, BARBARA BÜHLER
FEBRUARY 7 THROUGH 28, 2007
GOETHE-INSTITUT WASHINGTON
812 SEVENTH STREET NW, WASHINGTON, DC, WWW.GOETHE.DE/WASHINGTON
GALLERY HOURS: MONDAY-THURSDAY 9 TO 5; FRIDAY 9 TO 3
METRO: GALLERY PLACE/CHINATOWN



BEATE FROMMELT
—
HYPNOS, 2006
MIXED MEDIA ON JAPANESE PAPER
29,7 X 42 CM (11¾" X 16½")
© 2006 by ProLitteris



BARBARA BÜHLER
—
MOSCHEEN, 2004
C PRINT ON ALUMINIUM
60 X 60 CM (23¾" X 23¾")
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