

MINI/Goethe-Institut  
Curatorial Residencies

Ludlow  
38

Sarah Szczesny

# Who Framed Sarah Szczesny?

February 15-March 30, 2014

Opening: Saturday, February 15, 6-9 PM

MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38 is very pleased to begin 2014 with the solo exhibition *Who Framed Sarah Szczesny?* by Cologne-based artist Sarah Szczesny.

Szczesny's highly detailed and intricately fabricated works are driven by the ongoing exposure of the ambiguous conditions of painting's materiality, the medium's interferences and restraints in relation to other fields of artistic production, and a general distrust of hierarchies and hasty categorizations. With *Who Framed Sarah Szczesny?* she continues this exploration of material rhetorics, to further unfold painting as an expanded field of production and a process of layering intervals of various materials—a process submitted to construction and deconstruction, transition and appropriation.

Szczesny's new series of works draws its visual repertoire from the work of the American cartoonist Carl Barks (1901-2000), the inventor of Duckburg and most of its protagonists. Extracting small fragments from the linear narrative of his early cartoons, Szczesny creates an archaeology of symbols from a forgotten past. These isolated graphic elements are drawn into the present and reassembled on the surface of her collages, drawings and sculptural objects. Pulled from the comic's pages, any word-image dichotomy is further destabilized: alongside visually inflected words, the images of Szczesny's toontown are equally transformed into pictorial neologisms.

Though Duckburg might be one of the most poignant examples of serialized and industrialized cultural production, Szczesny restages its symbols and partial objects as newly materialized, individuated figurations. *Who Framed Sarah Szczesny?* opens up a space of material negotiation where the tactility of handmade surfaces and a language of imperfection are equally embraced as implementations of mechanical reproduction. Along with this compelling intertwining of technological and crafted visualities, of comic, aesthetic abstraction, and commercial visual culture, Szczesny uses the epitome of mass culture itself to frame the flatness of the painterly canvas. Painting's medium specificity returns through the two-dimensionality of its historical adversary.

Sarah Szczesny studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf, with Rosemarie Trockel. Alongside her individual artistic practice, she has been involved in numerous collaborative projects, including Bar Ornella (2005-2010), an exhibition space in Cologne run by the artists Peter Abs, Bernadette Mittrup, and Gerda Scheepers. Since 2011, she has also designed all the artwork for Cómeme, a label-collective founded by German-Chilean musician Matias Aguyao as an independent platform for non-commercial dance music from Argentina, Chile, Germany, Russia, and other parts of the world.

Ludlow 38 is pleased to introduce Szczesny's activities with Cómeme during a record release party on the occasion of the exhibition's opening. At 10 PM on February 15, musician and Cómeme member Christian S. will present his soon to be released record *Pitch Rider* during a club night at the discotheque Le Bain at the Standard, High Line, 444 W. 13th Street, NY NY 10014.

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