

Anne-Marie Schneider

PETER FREEMAN, INC.

Treating her drawing practice like a visual diary, Anne-Marie Schneider uses combinations of watercolor, acrylic, ink, and pencil to routinely document current events, scenes from daily life, and her own mental state. Here a selection of sixty works on paper plus four paintings, all dated between 2009 and 2013, offered an intimate, if fragmented, glimpse into the artist's quotidian experience. Characteristic of Schneider's oeuvre, which also includes sculpture and animation, the simple forms and playful color palette of her drawings—manifested here mainly as purple and red stick figures and multicolored floating heads—are deceptively naive. Masquerading as a grade-school art project pinned unceremoniously to the gallery walls, Schneider's pictographic streams of consciousness revealed themselves to be insightful psychological studies.

Arranged chromatically, passing from shades of green and blue to purplish-reds and finally to orangey-yellows, two dozen anonymous portraits spread across the north side of the gallery's main floor like a rainbow of expressionistic headshots. Working with vertically oriented sheets of paper, which she divides into three horizontal zones, Schneider confines her mark-making to the central section, leaving thick bands of white above and beneath each image. The resulting cinematic aspect ratio (a nod to her animation and other film works) imbues the still images with a sense of ephemerality. Like a random freeze-frame or a page excised from a flip-book, each drawing captures evocative, but hard to pinpoint, intermediary emotions. In one drawing, a set of eyes represented by two cockeyed blue dots—one large and dilute, the other small and precise—give a bald man a perplexing, quizzical, yet

aloof mien. His probing but unfocused gaze suggests an unresolved mental state. In this and other physiognomic studies, which range from masklike visages with double sets of beady red eyes to nervous faces peering out from variegated backgrounds like camouflaged prey, Schneider blends the frank and expressive lines of Saul Steinberg's cartoons with the moody mystique of Marlene Dumas's watercolors.

Installed on the opposite wall, another recent series of untitled drawings (all 2013) was based on mundane observations: women chatting, children playing games, a man riding a bicycle. Here Schneider portrays women in identical purple and red outfits and either leaves her subjects faceless or grants them measly dots and dabs for eyes, nose, and mouth. Since they have no facial expressions to speak of, their well-observed body language is what makes

these stick figures capable of conveying sophisticated emotions. In a scene of two women conversing, a sense of unease comes from the way that the figure on the right, pulling a shopping cart, seems eager to move on. Poised on the balls of her feet and subtly pointing her hip forward, she appears trapped by her acquaintance, whose wide, flat-footed stance suggests she is comfortable having planted herself where she is. In another scene, a schoolgirl hula-hoops as her friend watches. Arms splayed, head cocked, feet apart, the girl exudes youthful merriment and pride in her gyratory pose. Her playmate, meanwhile, appearing eager for a go herself, approaches from behind with elbows determinedly bent. Combining the innocence of children's drawings with a profound understanding of human psychology, Schneider's simple but astute renderings scrupulously distill complex personalities and interpersonal relationships to easily readable, essential forms.

—Mara Hoberman



Anne-Marie Schneider, untitled, 2013, watercolor and pencil on paper, 15 3/4 x 11 1/2".