

## **Tears, sweat and eye shadow**

**Kaarst** (barni) Marianne Reiners-Maaz from Viersen/Germany and Rick Levinson from Arizona/USA present faces in the exhibition entitled “en face/about face“ at the *Galerie Splettstößer im Alten Rathaus* Though their works are quite different from one another, they have one thing in common: The German and the American artist have both interpreted a well-known topic in an unusual, very individual and partly quite depressing way.

15 years ago Rick Levinson had already had an exhibition at the “gallery 44” of Helme Prinzen (recently deceased) and later also at the *Städtische Galerie im Rathaus Büttgen*. One of Levinson’s works is city-owned and is displayed in the town hall in Kaarst. The shadow the mask casts on the wall causes a somewhat eerie sensation. At that time Levinson’s masks were primarily made of filigree wire mesh.

Rick Levinson, born 1943, also makes use of his experiences as a doctor. While his early works express the moment of transition from life to death, his recent works are also “deadly serious”. However, they also express hope. At her gallery Dr, Brigitte Splettstößer shows part of the exhibition which was held at the Museo Nacional de la Estampa in Mexico-City in the year before. The masks that are in the centre of attention now are much more compact than those made of wire mesh had been. They are masks which were worn by patients with brain tumor during their radiation therapy treatment. Rick Levinson does not alter the masks, but he arranges them in a specific way, so that the masks for example seem to communicate with each other. Tragic about it is the fact that the masks wear traces of those patients who put on the masks. Tears, sweat, but also eye shadow and make-up, tell us about the patients’ suffering. However, these traces also remind us of the patients’ unbreakable spirit to live. That’s why looking at the masks is a very moving experience.

Marianne Reiners-Maaz has already painted more than 600 faces by using a specific method – 40 of these pictures are presented at the “Galerie Splettstößer”. The 59-year old artist, who has a university degree in educational science and art, leaves out the hair in her miniature watercolour paintings. Thus the shapes of the heads are extremely different from one another. Reiners-Maaz pictures are based on photographs of people in the newspaper.

In her work “Gespinsten” the artist shows that, apart from their individuality, human beings are also part of a social network that tie them to each other. In some pictures vehement communication seems to take place. It is Reiners-Maaz’s intention to express as much emotion as possible by using only simple methods. The picture “Menschenstrom” by Reiners-Maaz has already been displayed at the “Berliner Parlamentsredaktion der Rheinischen Post”. As an exception some heads of prominent politicians are seen in this picture.

*Neuss-Grevenbroicher Zeitung: 23-Jan-2008*