

KUNKEL FINE ART

Zeichnungen, Gemälde und Skulpturen
des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts

Kristin Kolb

1962 Brunswick – lives in Berlin

Berlin-based artist Kristin Kolb's imagery is inherently realistic but it also has a touch of the surreal – on the one hand it seems familiar, but on the other, oddly unsettling. She sources her subject matter in the animal world, basing her drawings on the meticulous study of native and exotic species. A qualified pharmacist, she displays a sure hand and unerring powers of observation. The old-masterly precision of her draughtsmanship and her virtuoso incorporation of art-historical references are remarkable.

Kolb frequently uses antiquarian books as supports for her drawings. Working with coloured crayon, acrylic and Indian ink she incorporates their covers, spines and endpapers as compositional elements, achieving striking visual effects. Signs of wear and age play a major role in the aesthetic impact of her work. The colour, ornamental design and typography of the books not only serve as integral elements of the composition but are also the key to understanding its underlying concept. Authors' names and book titles play an equally important role, triggering associations and suggesting different levels of meaning.

The vitality of Kolb's work is striking. Although her depiction of the physical appearance of animals is always accurate and true to life she decontextualizes her subjects, sometimes to surreal effect. Many of her drawings depict complex grotesqueries of animals, often with a narrative element. Her mix of cheerful tongue-in-cheek wit and dark humour may prompt the occasional smile but can also encourage deeper reflection. Her fantastical visual images create a multifaceted view of the relationship between animals and humans – although humans are never in evidence.



Kristin Kolb, 2020