

Press release: exhibition

Silvie Defraoui
das Bild im Boden / the Image in the Ground, 1989–2010

October 29 through December 18, 2011

at Galerie Susanna Kulli / Dienerstrasse 21 / CH-8004 Zürich

Opening / Friday, October 28, starting at 6pm
Opening hours / Tue–Fri 1pm–6pm / Sat 11am–4pm

Zurich Gallery Weekend / Saturday / Sunday, October 29 / 30, 11am–5pm

Silvie Defraoui's art, which has drawn accolades at numerous exhibitions in Switzerland and abroad and earned major cultural awards, resonates with wide Swiss audiences. As a professor at the École Supérieure d'Art Visuel (ESAV) in Geneva, Defraoui has moreover been a guiding figure for two generations of students. She and her partner Chérif Defraoui (1932–1994) were among the earliest pioneers of video art.

Silvie Defraoui's first solo exhibition at Galerie Susanna Kulli, entitled *the Image in the Ground*, unites ornamental and geometric floor tiles the artist has collected since 1986 in buildings slated for demolition near her second residence in Spain; they form the matrix on which the work is based.

As the artist applies lines and circular shapes to accentuate features, the handmade is no longer clearly distinguishable from the machine-made. Of a visual clarity that recalls pictograms, the works include references to the vocabulary of modernism as well as phenomena of everyday culture while hinting at the imaginary in ornamental Islamic art.

"I am interested in intimations that splinters of the world vouchsafe of how everything is connected," Silvie Defraoui said about her work in an interview in 2006.*

The exhibition *the Image in the Ground*, on display at Galerie Susanna Kulli through December 18, presents a first splinter from the artist's rich oeuvre.

Starting on January 13, 2012, Galerie Susanna Kulli will show new photographs, videos, and neon works by Silvie Defraoui.

Silvie Defraoui,

born in St. Gallen in 1935 / lives and works in Vufflens-le-Château, Switzerland, and Corbera de Llobregat, Spain. Her hometown awarded her the 2006 Culture Award of the City of St. Gallen, followed, in 2007, by the Prix de la Ville de Genève and, in 2008, by the Grand Prix de la Fondation Vaudoise pour la Culture.

From 1960 to 1970, she lives in Spain, with annual stays in Switzerland; she realizes ornamental stoneware and elements for architects / École des Beaux-Arts, Algiers (painting) / École des Arts Décoratifs, Geneva (ceramics). She works with Chérif Defraoui from 1975 to 1994.

In 1975, she begins to teach / with Chérif Defraoui, she founds the studio "Médias Mixtes" at the École Supérieure d'Art Visuel, Geneva / the idea was to use media, whether painting or video, in meaningful ways and to develop methods of "scoring" certain processes / the studio was closed in 1998 / all works since 1975 have been recorded in the chronological register "ARCHIVES DU FUTUR."

Defraoui was a member of the Swiss art commission from 1999 to 2007.

* Silvie Defraoui, "Scherben im Horizont," interview with Ursula Badrutt, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 2006