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James Turrell
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Van Gogh and the Colors of the Night
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Vincent van Gogh: *The Starry Night* (detail), 1889. Oil on canvas. The Museum of Modern Art. Acquired through the Little P.B. Bequest!



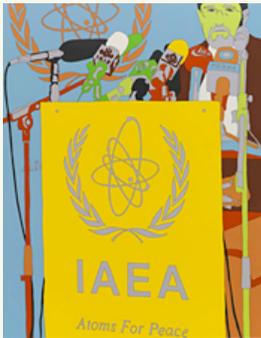
MOMA



Lisa Ruyter
A Moment Passing
2008
Georg Kargl Fine Arts

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE by Charlie Finch

The new serious meaning of art in a sober world receives its first jolt in Lisa Ruyter's "Atoms for Peace" at Georg Kargl Fine Arts in Vienna, a documentation of the bureaucrats of the International Atomic Energy Agency and their efforts with books and brains to stop an imminent nuclear war.



Lisa Ruyter
Atoms for Peace
2008
Georg Kargl Fine Arts

In a recent discussion, a prominent writer penning a book on nuclear strategy indicated to me that, within the last year, we have twice come far closer to a nuclear war than publicly realized, as both Syrian and Iranian military personnel, at the mid-level, misinterpreted military maneuvers by Western powers, which nearly set off a hair-trigger response.

Thus, although I cannot see the show at Kargl in person, I am doing everything in my power to spread these images around. Ruyter's work is replete with her usual wry humor, applied to a deadly topic, and the familiar radiation of her glorious palette corresponds exactly with her powerful subject, as if imagining a war of colors and creation replacing a world bent on its own annihilation. When Vice-President-Elect Biden remarked during the campaign that President Obama would be tested, and that "at first, you will not understand his response," some in the intelligence community interpreted this to mean that the United States would not automatically respond to the localized use of a nuclear device with massive atomic retaliation, and instead would rely on the revulsion of the world to condemn the attacker, succor the victims and pursue disarmament in earnest.



Lisa Ruyter
Send Me No Flowers
2008
Georg Kargl Fine Arts

It boggles the mind that such a pacifist response would actually happen, but it may be the only humane answer in a world in which Third World powers wish to prick holes in the nuclear umbrella with their own radioactive rain. In the mean time, let us contemplate Ruyter's courageous efforts and pass her images around in much the same way that images of President Obama uplifted the recent campaign.



Lisa Ruyter, "Atoms for Peace," installation view, Georg Kargl Fine Arts

Lisa Ruyter, "Atoms for Peace," Nov. 14, 2008-Jan. 11, 2009, at Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Schleifmühlgasse 5, Vienna.

CHARLIE FINCH is co-author of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula* (Smart Art Press).

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