

Woman is truth, beauty, poetry; she is everything; everything once again in the shape of the Other, everything except herself. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 1949.

The work of the Afro-American artist and AIR scholar Glynnis Reed (born in 1976) presented in the exhibition "*Paper Thin Boundaries*" in the *kunstraumarcade Mödling* is not the direct response to personal experience or a political appeal. Instead it focuses in an exemplary manner on the limits of our identity-creating world today. The multi-part photo montages consciously begin at the image-bound definition of female identity between nature and culture. Standing at the centre of a landscape – but isolated – the dressed female body, overlaid with graffiti, is translated into a graphic surface. In the charged atmosphere of contrasts Reed examines the socialization of the individual in terms of sexual conditioning and gender identity by positioning the female subject – in her function as preserver and protector "of our culture" – consciously in a rural and non-domestic environment. At the interface of the ethnic, sexual and social representation of the body, Reed has selected nature as the scenario for investigating the overlap of categories such as race, ethnicity, skin colour, social class, age and other elements in terms of their notionalities. The artist uses her own body to detect in the visual regime of the Other how her identity is determined by others. The exhibition title thus not only refers to the fragility of photo paper or the materials used in collage but also deals thematically with the diversity of our culture and questions the postcolonial and feminist aspects of our society today. The quotation by Simone de Beauvoir is all the more appropriate for Glynnis Reed's work since the ascription of female identity as an autonomous and self-determined subject has to this day been called into question.

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