

PARALLEL WORLDS

Simone Haack's figures seem to step right out of family albums: Bonfire Night, a walk into the woods, school photographs. And yet there's something not quite right about them, something downright creepy.

In *Attrappen* (2013) two boys in matching clothes pose on a path in a park, hair slicked down and shoes polished. Haack's palette is near monochromatic, a nod towards the black-and-white photograph this scene was most probably inspired by. Their feet meet the ground solidly, but further up their bodies start to fade, the pale icy landscape showing through their chests, their faces. Like ghosts with saucer eyes and hunched shoulders they stand still, staring at us, never blinking. In *Feuer* (2011) another pair of young children stand in the twilight in front of a bonfire. But the fire is raging out of control as one girl turns, hand outstretched to her twin, a lit firework burning brightly within it.

Like stills from David Lynch or Stanley Kubrick films there is a palpable tension in all her paintings, a sense of quietened horror in each protagonist's paleness, their clothes, their awkward poses, their gaze. All of Haack's work presents disturbed atmospheres, feelings of unease. Darkness crowds in, twilight descends, dreams turn to nightmares. We look behind ourselves and switch the light on.

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