Sibylle Feucht (*1968, lives in Basel, Switzerland und Pisa, Italy)
(aus: rolf staub, 2001,in: diplomarbeit "mobile home - eine ausstellung" nachdiplomstudium "kunst", universitaet bern)

Home consists of a series of 6 Illfochrome prints (each 100cm x 100cm) and an additional Illfochrome print (200cm x 200cm), which show the home buttons, most widely used in the internet, in an extreme enlargement. We usually know these images only in smaller form and we use them when we click to return home into real space after surfing in cyberspace.

The work of Feucht is based on an investigation into the home buttons used in the WWW, which can be essentially reduced to the seven basic types shown in the work. The investigation was restricted to home buttons found on websites of western industrialized countries as well as to the 2-dimensional representation of homes.

The work of Feucht lets us think about the concept of country (Heimat) and home (Zuhause) in the age of cyberspace. The extreme enlargements of the single images (and the exhibition as a whole) do not only illustrate the iconography of the single buttons but also surprise us by showing us stereotypical middle class houses (partially with a little front garden and flowers in front of the windows) which we click on while surfing the WWW.

According to Marshall McLuhan (in 1964) each form of Media we use is an extension of our bodies[1]. The little hand on the computer screen, which grabs files for us on mouse click, is maybe the best example for how the computer replaces bodily functions. The use of media leads, according to McLuhan, to a self amputation of the replaced body parts and causes stress in the central nervous system, which we have to reduce with alcohol, sport and diversion[2]. In this context `I is the home icons, which Feucht shows as the familiar image of a middle class house which we click after using the WWW and is meant to calm our irritated central nervous system.

As a pursuit of the work *Home*, Feucht created ten home buttons, which are based on house stereotypes of other countries and cultures (such as an igloo, a teepee, a pagode, a zulu-kraal). These home buttons were created to be put on-line so that they could be downloaded for free use.

Orphans (this series is in continuous progress) like the work *Home,* is an investigation into the images generated through the WWW. Though different to *Home* in that Feucht uses images which she directly downloads from the WWW. The work *Home* was essentially dealing with issues of the user and his/her needs for orientation, whereas in the work *Orphans* Feucht is also interested in a third party, in this case in orphans, which are advertised for adoption. Again, Feucht works with the concepts of a set and the enlargement. With a plastic material which are melting beads (brand Hama), she makes portraits of children (56cmx 56cm) which retain the pixel character of images from the WWW. The melting beads are little plastic beads which are placed on an plastic placing mat. They are melted together by heat. The defragmentation of the portraits is supported by the pixel quality of the material. This `pointilism does not relate to the portraits of friends as in the work of Chuck Close but to humans and images becoming consumer items. Plastic rules. The children on the portraits are not only without parents, they also appear homeless and without a history. Like a consumer item, they are available through the click of the mouse.

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[1] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man,* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company: 1964, p. 42.

[2] „Whereas pleasure is a counter-irritant (e.g. sports, entertainment, and alcohol), comfort is the removal of irritants." Vgl. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man,* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company: 1964, p. 43.