GALERIE JOCELYN WOLFF

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Tique

publication on contemporary art

Features

William Anastasi

Anastasi is one of the founders of Conceptual Art with, as well, with solid connections in his earliest works to Minimalism. In his work Anastasi delicately dissects the differences between seeing and perceiving. He confronts the issue of presentation and exhibition itself and explores the question of "self-sameness" of objects – with tautological truths and perceptions.

All images Courtesy by the artist and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

Anastasi's practice is interdisciplinary, informed by physics, music and social thought. His sculptures, paintings, photographs have like his drawings consistently helped to define the mediums themselves. Like his close friend John Cage, Anastasi is fascinated by the element of chance in creation.

Since the late 60s Anastasi developed his signature innovation of the use of process in what he refers to as his "unsighted drawings". They were begun in 1963 and are ongoing in continually developing strategies. Anastasi's drawing practice embraces drawing as performance, the incorporation of chance, rigorous focus on the present and the body's relationship to the drawing's execution. His referencing of the body in each of his various drawing strategies is evident from the smallest to the largest works. This is accomplished by a rigorously reduced phenomenological approach where each gesture is tailored to its particular scale and method of execution. A series might begin by folding a paper small enough to fit into a tiny space – the pocket drawing or, in the case of the subway drawing, by placing a small sheet that fits comfortably on his lap while in transit. The viewer later standing before these drawings senses the artist's presence during their execution.

William Anastasi
Passion, 1967 - 2015
photomural, scaffold and pine plank Dimensions variable
Details : Photomural : 152,5 x 365,8 cm
Scaffold and pine plank : 91,4 x 426,7 x 61 cm, unframed
Exhibition view at Galerie Jocelyn Wolf, 2015.
Ph. François Doury

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William Anastasi
Continuum, 1968
gelatin silver prints mounted on aluminium Dimensions variable
Exhibition view at Galerie Jocelyn Wolf, 2015.
Ph. François Doury

William Anastasi
Exhibition view, „Camera aut o controle“ at Centre de la photographie; Genève, 2016
Ph. Centre de la photographie; Genève

William Anastasi
Transfer, 1968
black and white video camera and monitor 25 x 41 x 51 cm
Exhibition view, „Camera aut o controle“ at Centre de la photographie; Genève, 2016
Ph. Centre de la photographie; Genève

William Anastasi
Exhibition view: „La Boîte de Pandore: une histoire de la photographie par Jan Dibbets“, 2016 at Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, 2016
Photo: Pierre Antoine_MAMVP

William Anastasi
Without Title (One Hour Blind Drawing), 2012 pencil on paper
150 x 274.3 cm, unframed
Ph. Chloé Philipp

SONY DSC

William Anastasi
Without Title (Still Drawing, 5.20.12), 2012 graphite on paper
76.5 x 57 cm
framed
90.8 x 70.4 cm

William Anastasi
Without Title (One Gallon of industrial high-gloss enamel, poured), 1966/2013
high gloss enamel paint dimensions variable
Ph. Aurelien Mole

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對世界毫不妥協的直觀探照 文心藝所Miriam Cahn特展

2021-03-09 20:17 聯合報 記者釋俊哲 / 專題即時報導

讚 0 分享

瑞士的絕美風景常讓人印象深刻，但瑞士的巴塞爾（Basel）也以藝術重鎮著稱，每年在歐洲、美洲舉行的Art Basel已是藝術愛好者的重要盛會。想認識來自巴塞爾的重要藝術家？「文心藝所」日前帶來「米里亞姆．卡恩個展（Miriam Cahn LEIB/BODY）」，合計30幅主題殊異的作品，是文心藝所創辦人葉曉甄與好友的藏品聯集，高程度體現藝術家的多面向創作精神，更是一回面向種族議題、性別壓迫、能源政策的多元觀照。

凸顯議題筆觸激進

Miriam Cahn何許人也？1949年於巴塞爾一個猶太移民家庭出生的她，雖然27歲才踏上藝術之路，但她長期關心種族、性別、能源等議題，並以激進筆觸展現對世界毫不妥協的回應。

例如她的畫作常將性器官外顯，以凸顯高張的女性意識，人像中的雙眼常和觀賞者位於同一水平，進行精神的「直球對決」。一幅兩件一套的「atombomben」，色彩則有著飽和色調並似窗上隨意流洩的水滴，定睛欣賞：原來主題是核爆，將蘑菇雲對以鮮豔色調，更顯冷冽。

Miriam Cahn的反核其來有自：1964年的義大利電影「紅色沙漠（Il deserto rosso）」，對其能源立場帶有重大影響，她更在1979年時參與了女性主義和反核運動，將信念在生活中同步實踐。

由觀賞者自行聯想

也由於文心藝所2021年預計將展出四位女性藝術家，創辦人葉曉甄指出所以選擇Miriam Cahn為首個藝術家，因其風格介於當代藝術與現代藝術間，也是葉曉甄目前收藏中年紀最為資深的藝術家。

事實上，Miriam Cahn的展覽所以珍貴，原因之一在於她鮮少接受採訪。藝術收藏家曾文泉觀察，Miriam Cahn以為藝術就是藝術，一旦完成後，箇中的隱射與引涉都將交由觀賞者自行聯想，「她也不寫任何論述，喜歡就喜歡。」同時葉曉甄也指出，「卡恩的作品反應了內心的不安，極度想要逃脫，卻不會讓人感到害怕，這是她作品觸動我心靈的一部分，也是我收藏的原因。」

創作涵蓋七大主題

所以如何進一步認識Miriam Cahn？她在1970年代晚期至1980年代的創作，主題常見為軍艦、戰鬥機、輪船等元素，1985年前後則多為自然風景、動植物與女性和男性；到了1985年後，色彩開始出現在卡恩的世界中，雖然鮮豔飽和，但「原子彈」的主題則鮮明反映著她的能源世界觀。此外本次展出中的「房子」則是另一重要脈絡：彩色房屋有時是難民營、展現對種族主義的控訴，有時則如吳爾芙筆下經典「自己的房間」，是女性不可侵犯、精神與物理的聖殿，有著雙線指涉。

創作年代橫跨1988到2018的30年間，尺寸最小從30.5＊22.5公分的油畫「pflanzenmensch」到最大幅的「fliehen müssen!」，尺寸可達280＊170公分。主題更廣泛涵蓋黑白、原子彈、房間、地標、動物與植物、油畫、身體與肖像、難民等七大主題，完整爬梳Miriam Cahn的世界觀與創作心路。事實上，日本「森美術館（Mori Art Museum）」即將在4月23日開展的「Another Energy」，其集結的16位世界各地女性藝術家正有著Miriam Cahn的身影，或也反應台灣本地收藏家的前衛眼光、美學超前部署。

> ▮米里亞姆．卡恩個展
>
> 展期：即日起~4月25日
>
> 地點：文心藝所 / 台北市內湖區民權東路六段180巷10弄6號
>
> ▮米里亞姆．卡恩（Miriam Cahn）大事記
>
> 1949年，出生於瑞士巴塞爾。
>
> 1977年，代表OFRA參與華沙和平會議、並於Stampa Gallery舉辦首次個展。
>
> 1978年，搬至巴黎工作室。
>
> 1979年，參與女性主義和反核運動。
>
> 1983年，首次於巴塞爾美術館展出大型美術館個展。
>
> 2016年，搬至伯格爾山區。
>
> 2017年，代表瑞士參加第14屆德國卡塞爾文獻展。
>
> 2021年，於文心藝所展出、並將於四月參加日本森美術館所舉辦的16位世界女性藝術家聯展。

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座談會上，由文心藝所創辦人葉曉甄與藝術收藏家曾文泉的對談，為展覽揭開序幕。記者沈昱嘉 / 攝影

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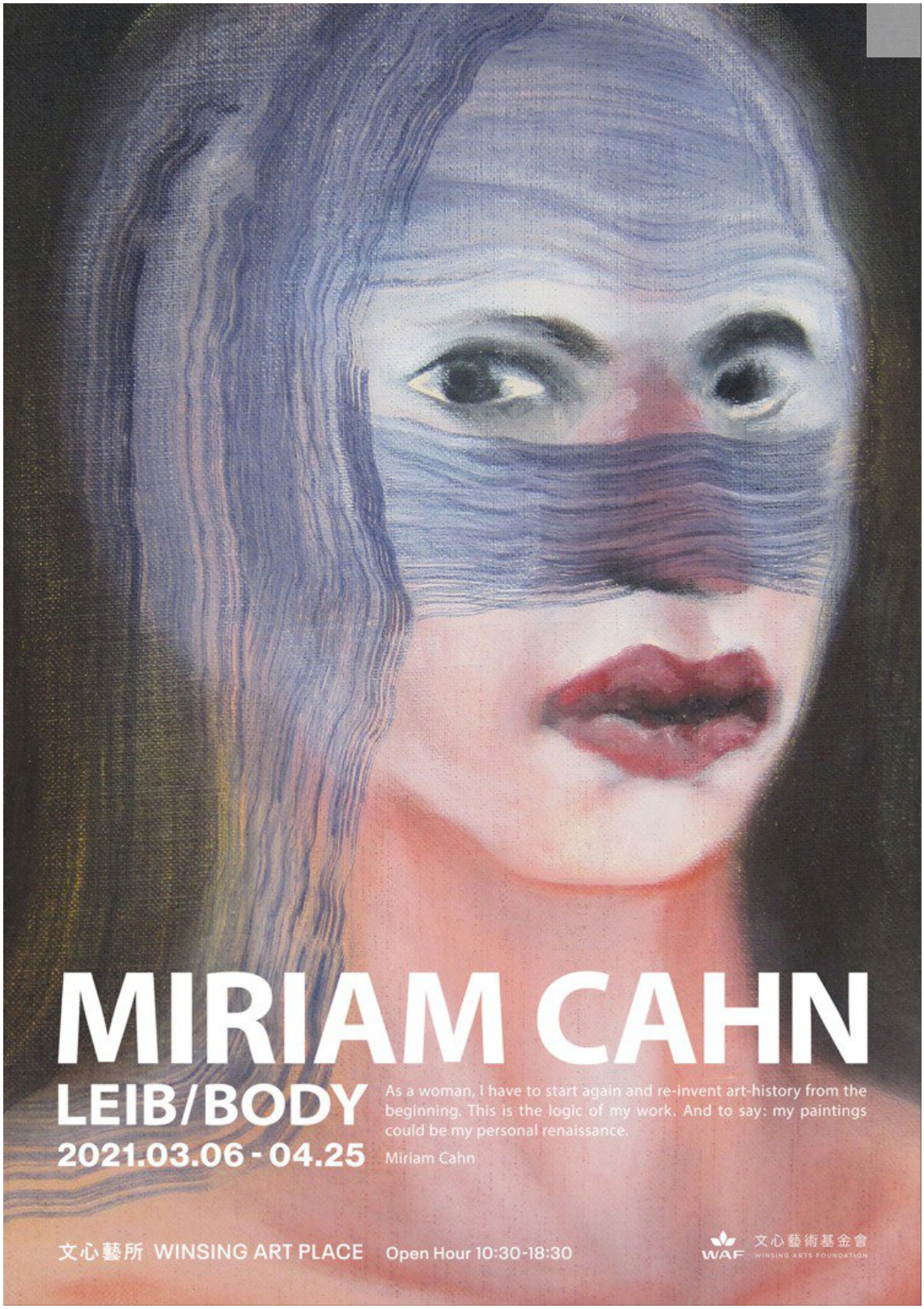

「米里亞姆．卡恩個展（Miriam Cahn LEIB/BODY）」，已於文心藝所從即日開展，展期至2021年4月25日。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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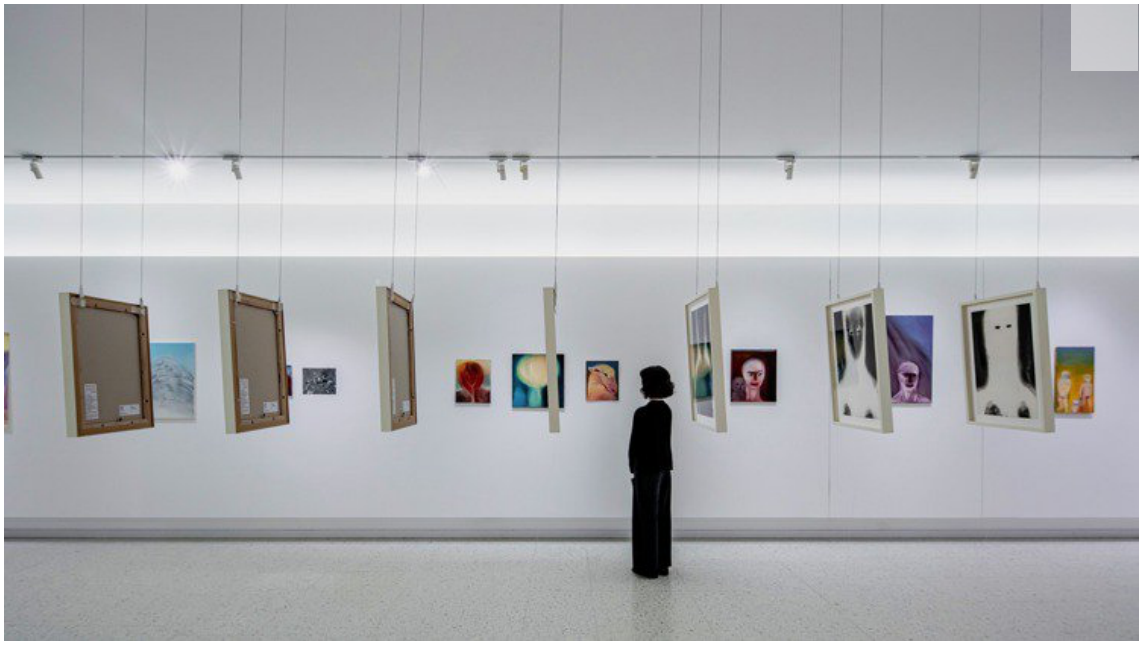

「文心藝所」領先日本森美術館的四月主題展，率先於上周帶來Miriam Cahn個展，展示本地收藏家的前衛美學眼光。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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隱藏、流竄在畫面中的不安，是葉曉甄觀察當代人的共同心結，也是她醉心Miriam Cahn的收藏主因。記者沈昱嘉／攝影

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資深藝術收藏家、評論家曾文泉，為本次的展出進行導覽。記者沈昱嘉 / 攝影

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橫跨藝術家生涯30年的30件大小作品，包含性別、能源、動植物、難民等多個主題。記者沈昱嘉 / 攝影

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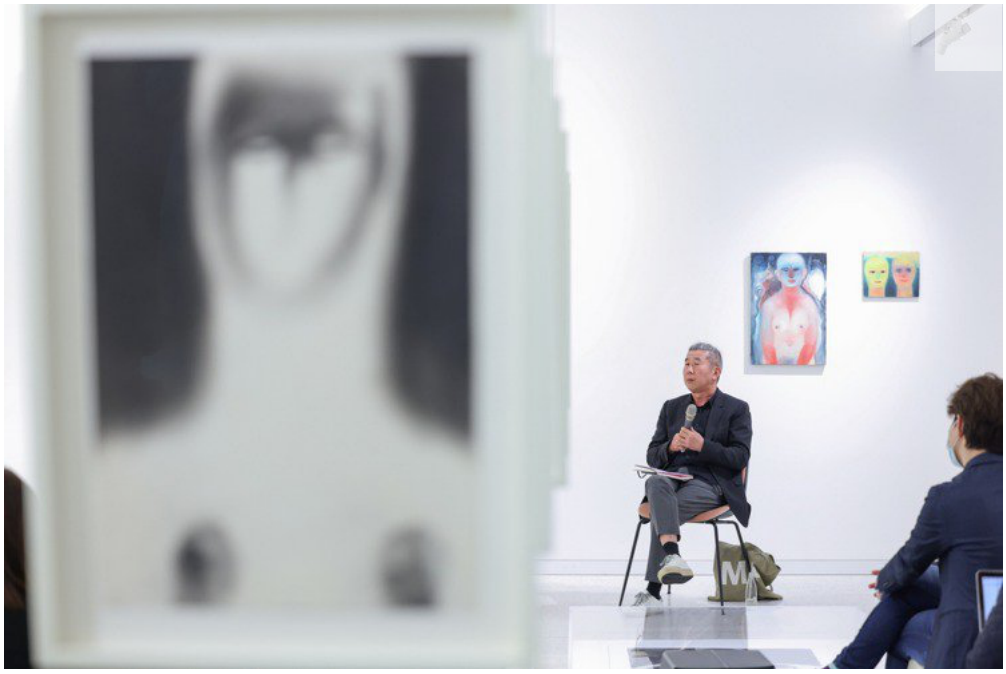

資深藝術收藏家、評論家與策展人曾文泉，為本次的展出進行導覽。記者沈昱嘉／攝影

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於2019年開放的「文心藝所」，是以建築和城市為主題的人文書店、咖啡與展覽空間。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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記者會現場由文心藝所創辦人葉曉甄（右）與資深收藏家曾文泉一同對談導覽。記者沈昱嘉 / 攝影

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2015年繪製的油畫，彩色人像其實是逃亡中的難民，令人格外心碎。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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連續的七幅畫作，以強烈的黑白肖像引人關照探索其背後意涵。記者沈昱嘉／攝影

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順從內心的Miriam Cahn，其筆下的動植物常隨直覺順勢而生。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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早年多以黑白作畫，加上鮮明的女性平權意識，是Miriam Cahn深受收藏家喜愛的風格特色。圖 / 文心藝所提供

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藝術家 瑞士 美術館

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2020

Numéro art#2 | Miriam Cahn 我身体里的那个家伙

Numero大都市 昨天

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艺术家Miriam Cahn

传奇在世画家、仍鲜为大众所知的瑞士艺术家Miriam Cahn，自上世纪70年代起，一直在自己独树一帜的绘画道路上孜孜不倦地创作着。尖锐张扬的用色。行将溶解的躯体。她笔下的人物往往带着暴力的姿态，仿佛在向观众尖叫呐喊……《Numéro Art》趁着最近她在巴黎Jocelyn

Wolff画廊展览的契机，在其位于阿尔卑斯山的工作室里见到了艺术家本人。

Miriam Cahn作品《Mare Nostrum》

Miriam Cahn作品《Überlebende (Undarstellbar)》

Miriam Cahn的艺术作品始终与现时现刻的强烈程度紧密呼应。这并不是指她描绘的那些人物、风景或事件是“关注时下热点的”——恰恰相反在今日热点新闻和她用铅笔、石墨、水彩、颜料、油画、扫描仪或录像等媒介进行创作的作品之间，可能会有很长的一段潜伏期。在酝酿过程中，充满了回忆、幻想、幽灵和对恐惧的追溯。

Miriam Cahn 作品《O.t., 24.1.94》

不过最终，当下总会奔向我们、迎接我们：每一幅作品都有一个带上明确日期的标签（当作品没有在一天内完成时，这就成为艺术家自己制定的单日规则的例外情况，因此会写上一组日期；展览则由她亲自指挥如何挂画——即使遭遇新冠疫情，她也会从位于瑞士恩加丁山谷（Engadine Valley）Bragaglia的工作室， 为Jocelyn Wolff的两家（分别位Belleville和Romainville）画廊进行远程指导。 Cahn，每一次都牢牢掌控着节奏。这个过程如同一个能量弧，从创作画作，到布置展览，再到更远的层面 ： 用这些作品的辐射冲击我们的眼睛，令我们浑身动弹不得。如此，我们的身体真正意义上地暴露在这些人形面前、他们炽烈的色彩和他们所体现的生理状态面前。举例来说，在Jocelyn Wolff 位于“美丽城”（Belleville）的画廊里展示的纸上作品，大多创作于 1994年，其中有个不可描述的人形，仿佛用线条和涡纹构成的甲壳形机器，被一个同样由重复的环形画就的手牵引着（o.t.，24.1.94）。仔细观察，观众才意识到事实上这是一张失真的脸，从一个不可能的角度观察。人物的手轻轻地抵在自己的脸颊上，并不是因为这张脸正在浮现，而是它行将消融。这一形象的“物质性”，缺失了身份或社会常规，无疑成为人们总是难以理解其语境的原因之一。

Miriam Cahn作品《Decay》

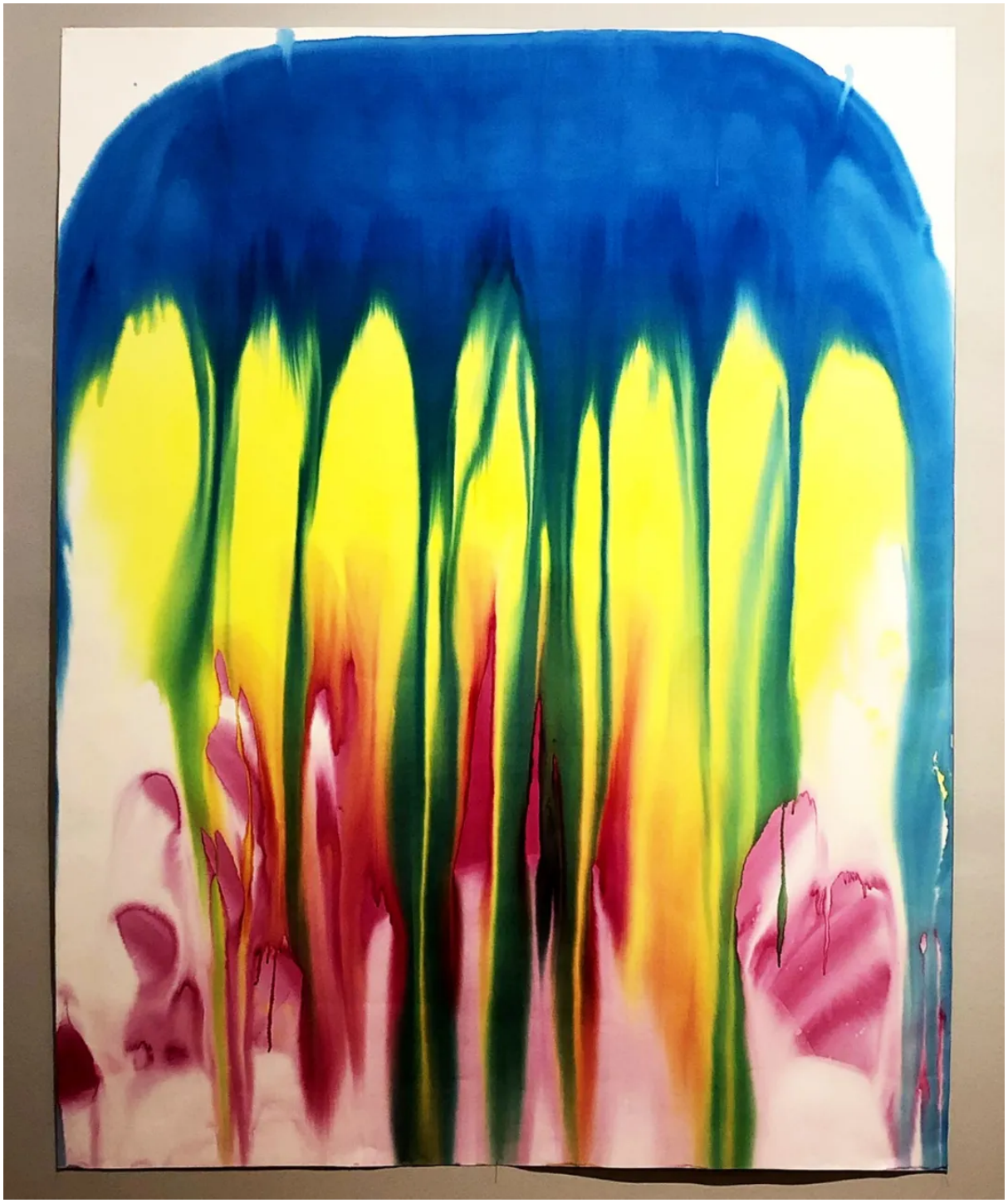
他们在做什么？他们为何赤身裸体、秃顶、布满皱纹，张大嘴，胸部向着不知可谓的地方挺立？他们从哪里来？他们是如何在画布或纸上找到自己？这些疑问弥漫于Jocelyn Wolff位于Romainville的空间里，这里墙上的画无不带着某种暴力，更具压迫性，因为它们从来无法通过语境显得“正常化”。有时这种强迫感异常形象: 诸如，作品《白人至上色情录》（White Supremacy Porn，12/15/19）里的残暴场景。

Miriam Cahn作品《B.t., 10.05》

Cahn的画中，性别常常无从分辨；一个肌肉发达的人向一座耸立的大山送上迎头一拳；一个接一个的剪影沉入深邃海底的色彩痕迹之中。Cahn画笔下的人物，面对着让其躯体剥离自身的种种情形，不发一言，而他们置身的风景色调过于炽热，难以被归入任何一种光谱。这些身体直面自己的抵抗力，以坚定的姿态直立于画布或纸面之上；他们没有逃跑，他们就在此地，此时此刻。Cahn在Jocelyn　Wolff两间画廊举办的展览拥有一个共同的名字：“我们的南方”（Notre Sud），暗示着在排外过程中我们每个人的角色所在，这一过程现在又名“结构的”或“体制的”暴力。Cahn用一种同时高度具象又极度模糊的方法赋予其形象。无论他们的眼睛是否盯着我们看，我们都参与其中。他们穿透了我们，追随着我们，即便我们背过身去，并在很长一段时间里继续这样做。

Miriam Cahn作品《Nichts》

人们用一面国旗包裹着一颗中子炸弹直接扔向太阳。钚辐射拥有8千万年的半衰期；而军事攻占行动带来的愉悦感几乎不会持续超过80秒。千百年来，成千上万的炸弹碎片作为闪耀的军队荣誉勋章栖息在每一个星球。他们宣称失格之人（less-than-human）的躯体是可灭绝的。党派向那些他们认为异端的或不具生产力的口子里插入最厉害的放射碎片：这些碎片通过身体最脆弱的地方进入。帝国将失格之人的身体封印，如此没有任何东西可以再次进入或离开它们。说话的能力也随之消失。皮肤消失。新型的失格之人的肉体暴露在日光之下。



Miriam Cahn作品《Atombombe, 07.09.1991》

它几乎就是液体的形态，获取了钚元素氧化时不同状态的四种颜色：粉、绿、黄，以及最终异变时的磷光蓝。有时，我们可以在同一个身体上同时看到氧化的四个阶段。然后，这具肉身成为了一面荧幕，反射出炸弹的威力。

Miriam Cahn作品《To the right, quick!》

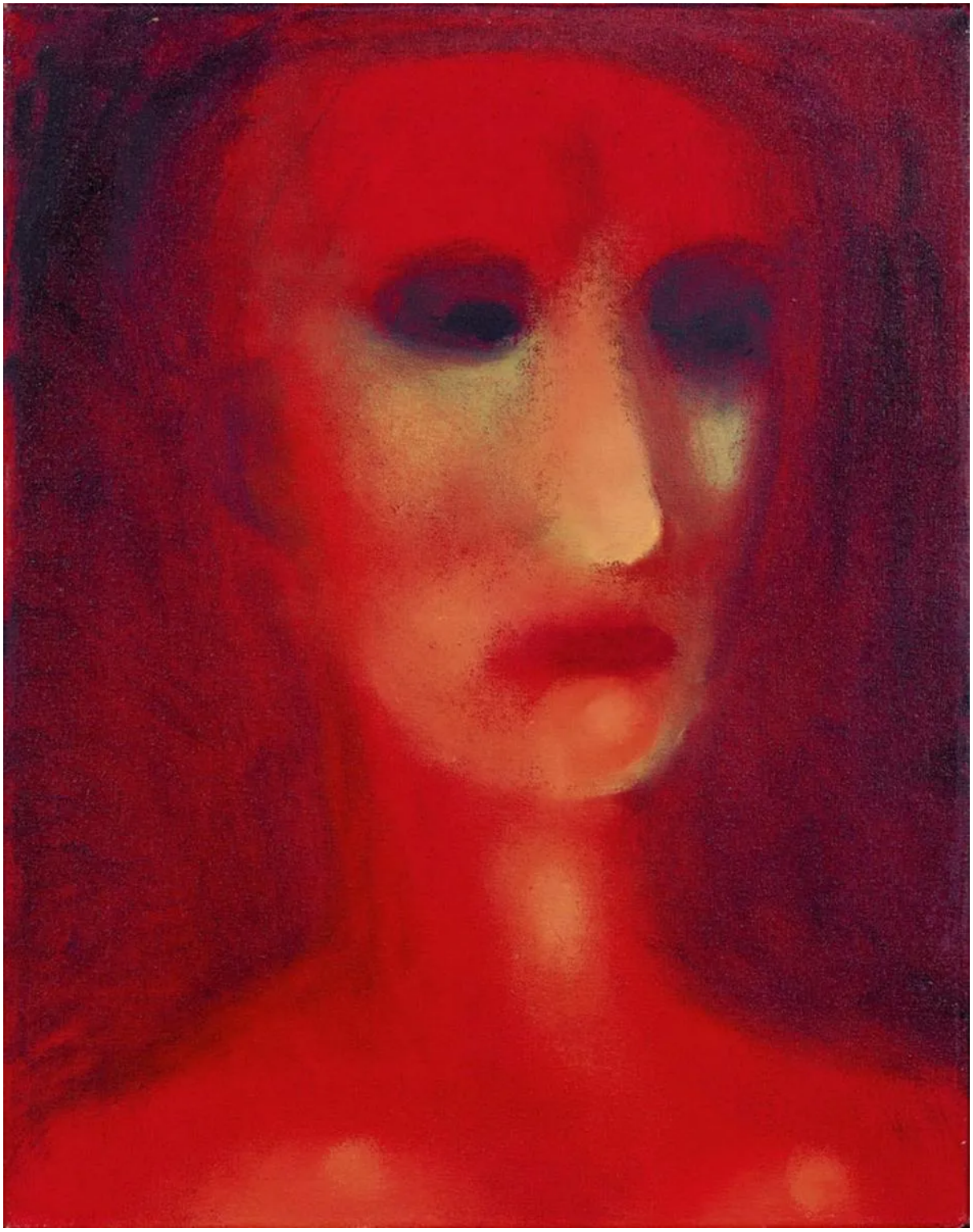
所有这些都被录影、被重新传播：一周7天、24小时可见。边境的另一端，躯体仍被视作是为人，他们宣称自己对所发生的一切毫不知情。辐射掩体是他们的安乐窝，是一个不断增长的初创企业。辐射和经济是世界性的语言。边境成为了唯一的领土。谁会清洗不断溢出血与石灰的大腿内侧？谁会在我们死后谈论我们？当所有的眼睛都被灼伤，谁又将记得熵的速度？谁来为我们的脚步计数，当我们的双脚已不复存在？谁敢驳斥欧盟边防局（Frontex）对我们舌头的速写？我们的牙齿会被一个无人机软件缩减为一串数字吗？我们的脚印会成为巨大的无形服务器的数字内存中闪闪发光的绿色火焰吗？

Miriam Cahn作品《Herumliegen/Fremdkörper》

几个世纪以来，一切行将消逝。没有城市或森林。仅有的动物，是那些在屠宰场里被肢解存活下来的动物。它们穿过一个空旷之地，没有皮肤也没有内脏，但它们有非常警觉的表情。它们是“失格之人”在真实边缘的胎儿。它们等待着边境重新开放，每22小时开放一次的一条极其狭窄的通道。有些通过了。但没有一个回来。边境的另一头什么也没有。它们中的某一个对你说：“我想要你画下我唯一的肖像。”谁会为那些被视作失格之人的生命喝彩？谁会在边境躺下，谁又会将她的身体放在边界所在之处，以收集越过此地的脚印作为证据？谁会捡起那些只用他们的脚逃跑的人丢下的手？尖叫声在画布上炸裂，仿佛一颗炸弹，什么都没有留下，除了向世界展示作为纯粹外在性的身体内部。谁敢制作我们的变异肖像？除了你，还有谁敢创造我们肉体的颜色，当殷勤好客已准备好在市场上明码标价出卖自己？

Miriam Cahn作品《Blau》

你说："我不给任何人画肖像。你难道忘了你已经遗失了你的面孔？"在世界毁灭前12万2　千年的某一天，你决定用一个精确的图像对分解的现实进行转译。真正使你感兴趣的是抹除脸的动作，而不是去描绘它。你从自己不够格的人形开始。关于它的精力过剩、它的阳刚之气、它的叶绿素、它的欲火。与此同时，他们夺取了精神病院和监狱、拘留中心和诊所的档案，他们用人类的脂肪将其黏在一起，搭建出一栋"人性之屋"。永远没有人会住在里面。这将成为他们愤怒的纪念碑。在我们出生之前，谁将创造我们的名字？谁会摇动溺水孩子的水中摇篮？



Miriam Cahn作品，Untitled

我说：“我想要你画出我唯一存在的肖像。我想要你给我画的这幅肖像作为一份合法文件，以此反对政府对我的人生所作的描述。他们会发现我并没有过他们信以为的性生活。他们会留意到，我所拥有的两个手臂之一。他们会看见我的头发其实是发光的海藻。他们不会相信这些。但你会像真理一样创造它们。你将用延续8千万年的钚的痕迹来绘制这幅图像。”你说：“你没

有意识到这不是你的肖像吗？你会把你的脸和任何一个超铀肉体堆相混淆吗？”属于你的蓝色的强度，将引燃这个世界的计算机和正在倾倒的核电站的表面，女人的肚子渐渐浮现。乌托邦或死亡。色彩或死亡。绘画或死亡。

Miriam Cahn作品《Schlafen》

撰文 | Élisabeth Lebovici

翻译 | 钟一 Unezzz

编辑 | 朱东日 Riri Chu

century. On the adjacent wall, a triptych comprised three canvases, each just under a foot square and bearing one black imprint. The work was accompanied by another triptych of the same dimensions, each with one saffron imprint, scattered across the wall. Seen together, the intact and dispersed triptychs, both 2017, evoked the final stage of replication during which newly produced virions burst from their host in search of neighboring cells to infect.

Opposite these apparently infected walls, the juxtaposition of two older paintings on a sliver of wall between two large windows addressed the here and now in more physical terms. Echoing the tall arched windows of the gallery's facade, a small tondo bearing three burgundy imprints (1997) was hung just above an oblong rectangular canvas with six black imprints (2012). The tondo was originally made for a 1997 exhibition at CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux, France, in which Toroni showed numerous similarly painted wine-cask lids. And while this peculiar support and the wine-colored paint connect the tondo to another time and place, this work inevitably takes on a new significance according to its current context. In this case, the visual link that Toroni set up between his paintings and the windows seemed to mock the famous comparison of painting to a window in Leon Battista Alberti's *De pictura* (1435).

In a group of six painted collages from 2020, Toroni engaged directly with his own past. An important aspect of his practice, his collages typically feature original photographs, invitations, and other archival ephemera related to the artist's previous exhibitions. In one such piece, Toroni made five orange imprints over a collage of photos taken at four different exhibitions. At the bottom of this composition, a photo depicting a painting Toroni made on a glass wall at Collection Lambert in Avignon, France, in 2004 perfectly illustrated the artist's ability to cleave—in both senses of this word—distinct realms, whether temporal, spatial, material, or social. In the photo, the glass marked by Toroni's imprints separates a Lawrence Weiner text work inside the exhibition space from the donkeys and chickens mingling outside. And yet while it stands between these two scenes, Toroni's painting also incorporates both. Other photos in this collage document a 1978 exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern in Switzerland, a 1992 outdoor installation in Waiblingen, Germany, and a 1993 show at Galerie Tschudi in Glarus, Switzerland. By combining these far-flung souvenirs and then overlaying them with his signature imprints, Toroni effectively collapses many layers of space, memory, and history to create new works of art for a new moment in time.

—*Mara Hoberman*

Miriam Cahn

GALERIE JOCELYN WOLFF

For feminist artists coming of age in the 1970s, painting was mostly a medium to be rejected. Miriam Cahn, for instance, started out drawing, creating large-scale chalk and charcoal pieces on the floor. It was only in the mid-'90s that she took up oil painting. A pair of consecutive but overlapping presentations in Galerie Jocelyn Wolff's two spaces featured almost fifty works: One chapter represented that transitional period of the '90s, presenting the artist's little-known but crucial experiments with painted color; the other displayed her most recent work in oil. Collectively titled "*notre sud*" (Our South), the shows did not so much tell a story of progress as offer different perspectives on Cahn's work.

Chapter one, which comprised color sketches of animals, plants, and humans in diverse painterly mediums that looked like they were glowing from within, engaged with issues of the body, sexuality, nature, and war. What appears to have concerned Cahn in these works, more than exploring the color spectrum, was carrying over the rapid, corporeal, performative working methods and immediacy from the charcoal drawings. This was particularly evident in her work with primary-color pigments, which she had rubbed onto a series of concrete slabs in *KÖRPERLICH* (Physically), 1994, and pushed around paper with fingers and brushes in *was mich anschaut* (Looking at Me), 1994, a sequence of faces mutating from owl to human. For watercolors such as *träumend* (Dreaming), 1995, portraying in profile a recumbent figure with a bright-red phallus and breast resting her head on poisonous yellow ground, Cahn allowed streams of paint to run down the vertically affixed paper, but in oil paintings such as *Sarajevo*, 1995, she layered pigment on canvas to create the intense contrasts and blurred outlines of a veiled face.

Miriam Cahn, *IM DUNKELN* (In the Dark), 2019, oil on canvas, 70⅞ × 55⅛".

Though Cahn's more recent oil paintings on canvas and wood in chapter two were less luminous, they were also larger and more complex, dealing with a wider range of subject matter. Disturbing scenes of barren landscapes with exposed bodies drowning, giving birth, masturbating, or penetrating or punching each other evoked issues highlighted in the media, such as sexual violence or the refugee crisis. Quickly sketched works, which had been temporarily set aside and reworked, as indicated by their multiple dates, also allowed for multiple, incongruous interpretations. In *IM DUNKELN* (In the Dark), 2019, a scene of sexual violence—dim but for the oppressor's bright-red lips, single nipple, and erect phallus—the ghost of an earlier version in the form of another arm still showed through, adding another layer of ambiguity to an image that could not be classified in familiar terms of pleasure or pain, rape or porn. A precisely sequenced digital slideshow, *das serielle denken* (The Serial Thinking), 2020, revealed the various stages of Cahn's paintings. These images made clear that the artist's aim in redoing a painting was not to make it better but to make it different—perhaps to consider excluded possibilities. Though Cahn's layering and reworking relied directly on the material properties of oil paint, the approach also recalled her drawing practice and her writing process. When crafting the text *torture pictures in may 2004*, in which she describes the relationship between one of the infamous 2003 Abu Ghraib torture images—of a female soldier holding the leash of a collapsed prisoner—and a performance by VALIE EXPORT, Cahn restarted eight times.

As epitomized by the title "*notre sud*," which alludes to the body as much as to geopolitics, gender identity and oppressive relations, whether sexual or other, need to be reassessed according to diverse cultural and subjective perspectives. By conflating categories such as personal/political, man/woman, human/animal, and painting/drawing, the artist questions fundamental hierarchies. What made this exhibition satisfying—despite its difficult-to-stomach images—was the way in which Cahn's complex ideas about nonbinary identities emerge from her long-standing, corporeal engagement with her medium: the material realities of color and paint.

—*Elisa Schaar*

KUNSTFORUM 2022

KUNSTFORUM International Bd. 280 März–April 2022

Zukunftsressource Archiv

Kunst als Medium von Erinnerung und Imagination

beide Seiten: Prinz Gholam, *My Sweet Country*, 2014, Performance zur documenta 14, Athen, Foto: Angelos Giotopoulos, Courtesy: Prinz Gholam und Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

PRINZ GHOLAM

Wolfgang Prinz, *1969, Leutkirch
Michel Gholam, *1963, Beirut, Libanon

Performativ stellen Prinz Gholam Posen aus kanonischen Werken der Kunstgeschichte nach. Die Künstler verkörpern meist nacheinander alle Figuren eines Bildes in zeitlupenartig wechselnden Körperhaltungen. Die Orte der Darbietung sind oft kulturell überformt und von touristischem Interesse, etwa an der Ausgrabungsstätte des Odeion des Agrippa in Athen oder in der Hofkirche in Innsbruck. In Recherchen und Studien arbeiten Prinz Gholam Hintergründe und Choreografien aus, gehen den Kompositionen der Figurengruppen nach und setzen sich mit historischen und soziologischen Kontexten auseinander.

Die Rezeption bewunderter Werke „alter Meister" führte in den Akademien bis ins 19. Jahrhundert, teils darüber hinaus, zu relativ ungebrochener Fortführung ähnlicher Posen, die oft mit entsprechenden Vorstellungen davon verbunden waren, wie eine bestimmte Rolle im Bild malerisch „performt" werden sollte. Die Kunstgeschichte zeigt sich, ähnlich wie in Warburgs *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, als Archiv der zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten jeweils als repräsentativ angesehenen Konstellationen zwischen „bildwürdigen" Figuren. In ideeller Nähe zur Psychoanalyse widmen sich Prinz Gholam den großen und den kleinen Gesten,

beide Seiten: Prinz Gholam, *My Sweet Country*, 2014, Performance zur documenta 14, Athen, Foto: Angelos Giotopoulos, Courtesy: Prinz Gholam und Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

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aufgeladen mit individuellen wie kollektiven Sehnsüchten und Ängsten, verkörpert oft in beiläufigsten Bewegungen. Diese werden aus dem Kontext der ursprünglichen Bilderzählung genommen. Die Performances lassen in eine Bildwelt eintauchen, die uns durch einen bestimmten Bildungskanon vermittelt wird – in Gemälden, Fotografie oder Literatur. Sie fügen sich in eine intermedial zwischen Malerei und Theater sich bewegende Tradition der „lebenden Bilder", der *Tableau Vivants*, die besonders im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert die Fülle der Charaktere in vielfigurigen Historiengemälden zum Anlass für populäre Inszenierungen nahmen.

Was bei Prinz Gholam jedoch wegfällt, ist – neben dem exklusiven Rahmen der Vorführung – die Hinführung der Komposition zu einem Helden: die *eine* Figur im Mittelpunkt des Geschehens. Die hierarchisch und mit spezifischen Vorstellungen von zwischenmenschlichen Verhältnissen aufgeladenen Konstellationen werden in eine schlichte Beziehung zwischen zwei Körpern aufgelöst, die mal ineinander verschlungen, dann wieder mit Abstand Raum einnehmen. (EW)

miriam cahn

from the isolated bunker studio she created for herself in a swiss valley near italy, the cult second-wave feminist artist is still fighting for the truth. her visceral paintings and installations are a corporeal performative act, blurring genders and sexual categories, screaming for justice, and attacking masculine toxicity.

INTERVIEW BY OLIVIER ZAHM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
LUKAS WASSMANN

ALL ARTWORK BY MIRIAM CAHN

MIRIAM CAHN, *EREIGNIS*, 2021, OIL ON CANVAS, 31 1/10 X 45 2/5 INCHES, COPYRIGHT AND COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

OLIVIER ZAHM — You've lived through several different periods of contemporary art since the 1970s. And at this stage of your life, you're based in a mountain valley in the Southern Alps, and I have the impression — tell me if I'm mistaken — that you live in a kind of autarky.
MIRIAM CAHN — It's Val Bregaglia, on the Swiss side, on the border with Italy.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Tell me about this place, and your decision to live and work in relative isolation.
MIRIAM CAHN — For me, it's no different from the city. I've lived in a lot of cities — Paris for a year, then four years in Berlin, six months in London. I also lived in Basel. There's no real difference because wherever I am, I always work and live in my studio. But I do go out walking a lot. These days, I enjoy walking in Val Bregaglia because it's very beautiful. But it's just as great to walk around Berlin.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, is your studio like a monastic cell, an isolation zone?
MIRIAM CAHN — No, it's just a workplace. It's not monastic, it's not a cell. The space that I've made here, along the roadside, is huge. It's the best possible setup for working. Besides, it's not completely isolated here. It's not the idyllic cliché of a valley in the Southern Alps. Don't forget that Alberto Giacometti was born here, for example. But it's different from working in the city, that's for sure.

OLIVIER ZAHM — It's a very cool studio — modernist and brutalist.
MIRIAM CAHN — I designed it with the architect Armando Ruinelli, who's a typical Alpine architect but internationally renowned, like Herzog & de Meuron. He's one of those architects who combine contemporary architecture with the specificities of life in the Alps.

OLIVIER ZAHM — It's a Suprematist concrete block, placed in a world of stone and vegetation.
MIRIAM CAHN — I also like the idea, now that I'm older and have rented a lot of studios and traveled a lot, that this should be the last home and the last studio.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Do the mountains influence you? Do you feel a special energy?
MIRIAM CAHN — Because of my family and my childhood, I have always known the mountains. We used to go for epic walks. For me, it's normal that the mountain should be there, facing me. And I do still walk a lot in the mountains. I'm over 70 years old, and I don't walk like I used to, but today, for example, I went for a short wander in my snowshoes. I love it.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Regarding your work, I get the impression that the human or animal figures that feature in your paintings — whichever sex or nondefinition of sex they depict — are very isolated, as if they're at the center of their own solitude. Each of your representations of living beings is like an appeal to the other, for contact…
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes, contact is important. That's why my figures are often the same size as the person looking at them. But what you're saying is a personal interpretation. I wouldn't comment on that.

OLIVIER ZAHM — You once said, "To sleep, to eat, to cook, to paint is all the same: it's life." So, you don't separate painting from everyday life?
MIRIAM CAHN — Those words are exactly right. First of all, I don't just do painting. I'm not a painter — I'm an artist. I also do drawings, photos, etc. I even make texts. In any case, a small drawing is the same as a big painting. And, as I say in that sentence, my life is all one — painting well, cooking well. It's the same.

OLIVIER ZAHM — You're against the hierarchy of values imposed by the art market?
MIRIAM CAHN — There's nothing I can do if a big oil painting sells for a lot more than a drawing. It's good for me because I make more money, but it's just the market. For me, everything has the same value: painting, everyday life, drawings.

OLIVIER ZAHM — And the sun? You're someone who works with bright colors — do you get enough sun in the valley?

MIRIAM CAHN — I'm at the lowest point in the valley, and I haven't had sun for four months now. But on a day like today, when it's lovely and very cold… I don't know how much the sun influences my work. I don't think it does, in fact. Well, maybe a little. But television influences me, too, and what I'm reading. Everything influences me.

OLIVIER ZAHM — And you stay informed on social media?
MIRIAM CAHN — I'm very well informed. I read four local and international newspapers every day. I watch TV, and I listen to the radio. I'm not on social media. I don't want to know what everyone is saying about everyone else. Maybe people get their information like that nowadays, but not me.

OLIVIER ZAHM — No Facebook, Instagram, Twitter?
MIRIAM CAHN — No.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Melanie Klein said, "The world is round." She went into that roundness, and she made a book. So, what is the world, according to Miriam Cahn? And are you angry or optimistic about the state of the world?
MIRIAM CAHN — Of course, I'm angry. When I read, for example, what happened at the Capitol in Washington, with all those people from the far right, naturally it makes me mad. It's only normal. I come from a family that has always been very concerned about politics. So, yes, politics can make me mad. And what's even more serious for me, I think, is the way people here, in Europe — and in Switzerland, even if it's not in Europe — are closing themselves off. That, too, is in my paintings, in my drawings, in everything. I don't understand why they don't let people who want to work here in, why they leave them to drown in the Mediterranean. We can't say both that we have the Rights of Man, that human dignity matters, etc., and then act like that. It's getting really difficult to manage our democracies. It's not working any more.

OLIVIER ZAHM — A lot of your paintings are about those migrants who are adrift, whom we allow to drown at sea.

MIRIAM CAHN — Yes. You asked me about that impression of solitude in my paintings. This is what it's really about: we're always alone, we're left alone, we leave them alone, and then we let them drown, we leave them in the cold snow at customs on their way here. That's what interests me, and it's an existential thing. Perhaps, one day, it'll be our turn, highly privileged people like me and you, not to be able to move, or to have to leave. We're already seeing this in our restricted movements in everyday life with the Covid-19 crisis.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Your painting has a political center, a political heart?
MIRIAM CAHN — There is no center because I'm just as happy to paint animals or plants, say. There is no center with me — it's all one thing. With my work, I provide commentaries on the world.

OLIVIER ZAHM — And these commentaries are channeled by your power of empathy?
MIRIAM CAHN — I don't agree with this kind of distinction between ideas and emotions. It's the same thing. If you don't have any emotions, you can't do politics. If you don't have any empathy, you can't think politically. And then, we must stop saying that artists, and women in particular, do everything out of their emotions, their intuition. The thing that matters is work. And work has certain rules, daily rules; you need technical knowledge, ideas. Intuition annoys me. If you look carefully at my paintings, you can see it's much more complicated than intuition and emotion.

OLIVIER ZAHM — I'm with you there — that art can't be reduced to a precise source.
MIRIAM CAHN — Just drop this idea of art having a source, this idea about some source that artists have and others don't. One thing is certain, which is that it changes every minute. I'm not going to specify the source. You have to look at my works, my art. You have to read my books. If they interest you, if they speak to you, then that's because something is happening, and that's what interests me about art. You can never specify what

you're doing. The artists who do that are bad artists.

OLIVIER ZAHM — I still think that you keep a purity of inspiration, beyond the violence of certain paintings. Whether it's a flower, a house, or a couple.
MIRIAM CAHN — That's what happens every day. It's not pure — it's what happens.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Keeping the door open, you could say, to humanity, to revelations.
MIRIAM CAHN — Always with the big words. I don't use them. These big words don't say anything. Humanity: that doesn't mean anything.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, a flower painted by you is not a symbol of humanity?
MIRIAM CAHN — No, it definitely is not a symbol. It's a flower, not a symbol. And everyone sees what they want to see. If you want to see it as a symbol of humanity, that's your business. It's your own thoughts that make you say that. For me, a flower is a flower, and it stays a flower.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, if a flower is a flower…
MIRIAM CAHN — It can't be a pipe. But what if it wasn't a flower, though? In any case, it's not a symbol of something else, or an idea. That's a lousy idea. It's always a bit complicated to look at art like that because it tries to define something that is not defined, and that you can't define, and that shouldn't be defined.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, if the flower, or the woman, or the couple, or the house in a work by Miriam Cahn is a flower, a woman, a couple, or a house, then perhaps we could say that you are trying to paint the world in the most direct, essential, innocent way.
MIRIAM CAHN — No, it's not innocent.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Life, the immediacy of life.
MIRIAM CAHN — My works are like words. That's why it's important that, as often as possible, I install my own exhibitions myself. It's always very quick, very performative. I always go very fast, and it's always finished very soon. I use my own works, my drawings or oil paintings, as contents, as words. And these contents — house, flower, woman, man, defined or undefined — I combine them like a writer or a poet. I combine words that already exist. That's the way I work, and the interpretation is open, free.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, that means the installation of your paintings is like a commentary preceding the experience of the exhibition?
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes, the exhibition is the place, the space that gives the works an almost performative aspect, that makes the whole thing a kind of commentary on the now.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, painting, as such — just the frame of the picture — is not enough for you?
MIRIAM CAHN — I'd rather you didn't use the word "painting" for my work. I prefer to talk about my works, which can be drawing, photography, texts, too. It's no use thinking in a framework — it's not necessary.

OLIVIER ZAHM — There's no framework.
MIRIAM CAHN — No, no frame. You don't have to think about painting, oil painting, as a priority, to make it into framework. There are thoughts, there is the installation, there's me who is the center of the installation, which I put in place in a physical, corporeal way when I'm the one who makes my installations, in my way. That exists, but it's not the framework of my painting. I stopped being interested in that a long time ago.

OLIVIER ZAHM — I also noticed that, in your videos and in the photos you made for *Purple*, you like to move around with your pictures.
MIRIAM CAHN — Ah, yes, I like that.

OLIVIER ZAHM — It's as if they became mobile.
MIRIAM CAHN — They have to be light, even the big formats. That's why I build my own frames. Even a painting that is 10 feet by 13 feet — I have to be able to carry it myself. That's why you see me carrying these pictures in the photos or videos. It's that: the corporeal, performative content of my installations. I don't take preliminary measurements, I don't work with plans or models. I intervene in space and move the works. I come down, and we install.

OLIVIER ZAHM — So, there's always a bit of a 1970s performance aspect to your work?
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes. When I was a young artist, performance art had a big effect on me. There was a lot of it in Basel. There were lots of artists who came from Germany, Austria, Italy, and the US. These were new ideas and new forms of art that were very important to me, absolutely!

OLIVIER ZAHM — The Viennese Actionists, for example?
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes. They were new forms that got away from the idea of the frame, of oil painting, of composition, etc. This was something new. Naturally, it had to do with the use of video. That was important for a young artist like me, but I never wanted to do performance or video. I wanted to keep the practice of drawing and painting, but I wanted to do it in a way that was intellectually like them.

OLIVIER ZAHM — What have you kept from performance art, today?
MIRIAM CAHN — Thought, the conceptual approach to art, but also the possibility of using your body as an instrument.

OLIVIER ZAHM — The body is not just in the picture, in the pictorial gesture.
MIRIAM CAHN — No, it's the instrument. We have to put pictorial gesture behind us — it's hopeless, really hopeless. It serves no purpose. It's the whole body that is the instrument, and the result is what it is.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Right. Let's talk about the body and sexuality. One of the things that makes your work extremely relevant today is this impression we have of gender fluidity, that nonbinarity. To be more precise, the genital organs — phallus and vagina — cannot be attributed to a defined gender. Is that something you think about, or does it come out spontaneously?
MIRIAM CAHN — It's a mixture. There are figures or characters where it's not clear if they're men or women, or in between, or something like that, but there are lots where it's very clear. You can see the penis or the clitoris very clearly. The clitoris is something you never see in painting or drawing: it's something that, for a very long time, didn't exist, and that has now started to exist. It's important for me to be specific on that point. Today, I really want diversity to be recognized: there are men and women, and there are people who don't recognize themselves in a gender, who don't know if they're men or women, who refuse to define themselves as one gender or another, not to mention the ones who get an operation. Today, that's how it is. And I'm very happy it's like that.

OLIVIER ZAHM — One can sense that, with you — beyond gender positions, beyond sexual organs, the individual with his phallus, the other with her clitoris — there is this possibility of exchange, that in the end, we're all the same, getting beyond this imposition of gender. Do you agree?
MIRIAM CAHN — Naturally, we are all the same, and that is sexuality! But not in the history of art. If you look at how women are shown, I mean, these individuals with a clitoris and a vagina, I really like what men did, but then, that's the thing — it was done mainly by men! That's why, in art, woman is reduced to sexualized, even pornographic representations. Her identity is also reduced to the mother figure, to the Virgin Mary, or model, or muse. This is changing hugely at the moment, and I think it's really very interesting. I'm a feminist, and as women artists, we have the opportunity to invent new images. New images, not new paintings, and all that shit. With these images, you have to start showing true sexuality. And I do it from my own point of view, with my body as my instrument. This is my commentary on sexuality and on how it can be shown nowadays.

OLIVIER ZAHM — It's a combat for you, as a woman, against representations of the female that are imposed by men.
MIRIAM CAHN — But that's not enough. If women and men really are equal in life,

like in art, and also in the art world, you have to start doing a lot more as a woman artist. And that is highly political. I wouldn't like to be a man artist because they've done it all from their point of view already.

OLIVIER ZAHM — All they're doing is redoing, replaying their fantasies.
MIRIAM CAHN — That's what interests me in art: you're always looking for new images, and you can make some very interesting images about sexuality. The result is that people like you don't always know what to think about the sexuality in my work. I'm exploring. In fact, there are more images of sexuality in my work than in Picasso's, say.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Are you exploring, more particularly, female sexuality? Supposing, of course, that such a thing exists outside the relation between genders and their plurality.
MIRIAM CAHN — I don't know. Things have to be left open. You can't say, "Ah women's sexuality, it's like this or like that." You can't with men's sexuality, either, for that matter. I talk about sexuality as a whole.

OLIVIER ZAHM — But there is less representation of women's sexuality. It isn't translated into images as much as male sexuality is.
MIRIAM CAHN — Exactly. But should they be separated? It's just that, up to now, artists were mainly men. They made magnificent works about sexuality, and I have no problem with that. Today, though, people are trying to look again, to see what is there, in front of us, afresh. That's why performance in the 1970s was so interesting. It was something else, something totally new, and there were a lot of women in those movements!

OLIVIER ZAHM — There were a lot of women doing performances, more than in other artistic practices.
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes, because you could forget, just a little, what men had done. And you had your woman's body — you made art with your body. What I'm saying is very simple, but that was the reality, and it was new. And that produced other kinds of images. Now, things are changing, and we women artists are part of the…

OLIVIER ZAHM — The game?
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes, not completely there yet, but let's say it's going in the right direction.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Are you aware that your work represents something very current for recent transfeminist movements?
MIRIAM CAHN — Yes, I hope so! But what you're saying remains an interpretation of my work. I hope that it's not illustrative, that it's still open to interpretation, like all art worthy of the name. That said, if you ask me if I'm a feminist, yes, I still am. When they asked Pipilotti Rist that question, she replied that it was a matter of honor. I think that's a very good answer. It's a matter of honor.

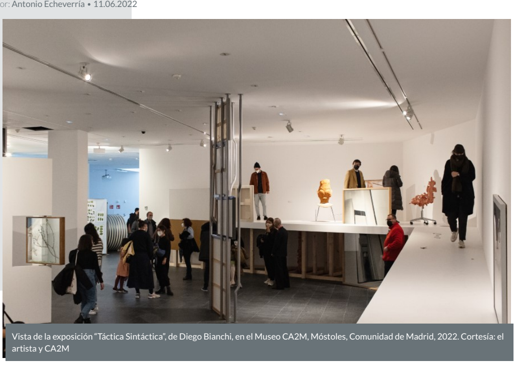
OLIVIER ZAHM — Your work reflects the present, I'm sure of that, but how do you see the future? How do you think the world will evolve?
MIRIAM CAHN — I'm 72 years old, so how do I picture the future? Personally, the future doesn't really interest me because I don't even know myself what I'm going to do tomorrow. I don't know if tomorrow I'll make an animal, a drawing, or a city. We'll see tomorrow.

OLIVIER ZAHM — Seventy-two, but with a punk spirit of revolt and rebellion.
MIRIAM CAHN — You can't not be in revolt mode if you're an artist. It may be old school to think that, but it's right.

END

MIRIAM CAHN, *ORGASM*, 5.12.19, DETAIL, COLOR PENCIL AND PASTEL ON PAPER, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GALERIE JOCELYN WOLFF

Por: Antonio Echeverría • 11.06.2022



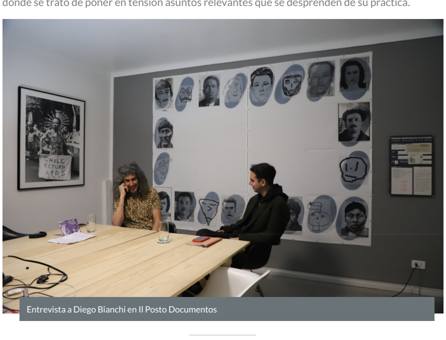
Vista de la exposición "Táctica Sintáctica", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Cortesía: el artista y CA2M

Entrevistas

DIEGO BIANCHI. LA NECESIDAD DE NO SABER

Diego Bianchi (Buenos Aires, 1969) proyecta su práctica artística como un sistema de relaciones sensibles que entrecruzan nociones de cuerpo, urbanidad, escultura en directa observación del contexto, el comportamiento humano y la institucionalidad. Su praxis se sitúa desde el encuentro con lo ajeno y lo desbordado. En aquellas relaciones que Bianchi establece, emerge desde la confusión una forma de conciencia desplegada del mundo. Por medio de la tensión entre lo estable y lo inestable en los sistemas que Bianchi concibe es que aparecen preguntas sobre la fluidez de los cuerpos, el desplazamiento de la identidad y la sensualidad.

Il Posto Documentos, en su tarea de difundir, conservar y estudiar el arte contemporáneo chileno y latinoamericano, invita al artista Diego Bianchi –parte de la **Colección Il Posto**– a visitar Santiago de Chile. Durante su estancia, además de conocer a distintos artistas e instituciones artísticas chilenas, participó en una conversación pública en Il Posto Documentos, donde se trató de poner en tensión asuntos relevantes que se desprenden de su práctica.



Entrevista a Diego Bianchi en Il Posto Documentos

Creo que los museos prefieren trabajar más con artistas muertos que con artistas vivos, que inclusive hay cierto temor a las propuestas de los artistas por complejas problemáticas. Pero creo que es una práctica que se está difundiendo, que hay muchos proyectos en los que invitan a artistas a ponerse en "diálogo" con algunas de las piezas o con alguna colección o con algo del museo. Me parece saludable.

Antonio Echeverría: Dado que acabas de presentar en el CA2M en Madrid tu muestra *Táctica sintáctica*, que desarticula la colección de la institución al entrar en tensión con las piezas y los ejercicios museográficos que creas, me gustaría empezar preguntándote por el de devenir en esta práctica institucional. ¿Cómo se establecen estos vínculos con las colecciones institucionales? y ¿cómo tu práctica ahonda en este ejercicio?

Diego Bianchi: En principio creo que surge como una inquietud de las mismas instituciones. Como instituciones ligadas al arte, atraviesan contradicciones intrínsecas: por un lado, la función de "museificar", cuidar y valorizar lo que poseen, una política en relación a los objetos y, por otro lado, no quedar tan apartadas de las prácticas contemporáneas, tan alejadas del presente, para no convertirse en depósitos, en cementerios casi. Es una contradicción que existe en la misma institución. Una contradicción no resuelta… entonces, en principio, cuando llega este tipo de invitación, este tipo de problema, me generan algún fastidio instintivo, porque siempre es más fácil trabajar en relación con la propia obra, pero enseguida entiendo que el problema es clave, que es interesante lidiar con esta especificidad, y que involucrarse con el tema abre muchísimas posibilidades.

AE: Por eso mismo estaba pensando también quizás que este devenir, que aparece como una práctica institucional, también podría considerarse una práctica contra institucional dentro de los límites de esta. En el fondo, una práctica de desarticulación, de desajuste y de desarme.

DB: Sí, por eso digo que hay una contradicción porque todo lo que se le propone al museo es algo que al museo le provoca recelo, genera cierta intranquilidad. Creo que los museos prefieren trabajar más con artistas muertos que con artistas vivos, que inclusive hay cierto temor a las propuestas de los artistas por complejas problemáticas. Pero creo que es una práctica que se está difundiendo, que hay muchos proyectos en los que invitan a artistas a ponerse en "diálogo" con algunas de las piezas o con alguna colección o con algo del museo. Me parece saludable, porque el museo, que funciona como un archivo, no solamente se encarga de protegerlos, sino que lo pone en circulación y en diálogo con el momento que les toca atravesar.

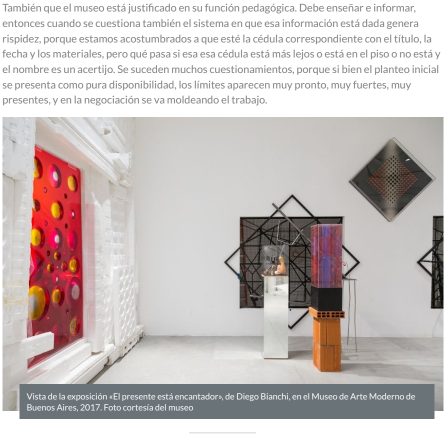
Vistas de la exposición "El presente está encantador", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2017. Cortesía del artista y del museo

AE: ¿Cómo ocurre esta fricción en la práctica? Se enfrentan miradas, por tu parte, estrategias, dispositivos que utilizas para inclinarte hacia una desestabilización de estos sistemas institucionales ¿Cómo se traduce esta clase de resistencia simbólica, si es que existe, por parte de las instituciones?

DB: Sí, no sólo simbólicas, son resistencias reales. También la institución tiene todo un aparato burocrático sobre el que se establece, entonces entra en fricción todo el sistema del museo, desde el tema de seguridad, hasta cuestiones legales, económicas, laborales, etc. Aparecen millones de problemas. Por ejemplo, en *El presente está encantador* se planteaba generar con el espacio residual que rodeaba la sala un larguísimo pasillo con determinadas características para que las personas que lo transitaban atravesaran diferentes relaciones con la arquitectura. Entonces, planteaba leves distorsiones en el ancho del pasillo que yo pretendía que se ensanchara y angostara en diferentes tramos, o que los escalones variaran progresivamente su medida, todas ideas que eran por supuesto imposibles de implementar ya que ya todo está reglamentado y el museo es la institución perfecta que debe cumplir con absolutamente todo lo reglamentado.

Hay muchos ejemplos, desde la situación de iluminación, la distancia que hay entre las obras y todas esas cosas que parecen que no son simbólicas, pero sí lo son, porque están basadas en convenciones en relación a cómo debe apreciarse el arte. Algo que fuimos aprendiendo a lo largo de más de doscientos años de historia de la institución museo. La lectura de las obras es variable porque una obra es sensible a la relación con otra obra, a la altura en que está situada, a las distancias, al baño de color… cambiar la relación aparente y física también transforma la relación simbólica.

También que el museo está justificado en su función pedagógica. Debe enseñar e informar, entonces cuando se cuestiona también el sistema en que esa información está dada genera rispidez, porque estamos acostumbrados a que esté la cédula correspondiente con el título, la fecha y los materiales, pero qué pasa si esa esa cédula está más lejos o está en el piso o no está y el nombre es un acertijo. Se suceden muchos cuestionamientos, porque si bien el planteo inicial se presenta como pura disponibilidad, los límites aparecen muy pronto, muy fuertes, muy presentes, y en la negociación se va moldeando el trabajo.



Vista de la exposición «El presente está encantador», de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2017. Foto cortesía del museo

Vivimos con los objetos, compartimos tiempo, experiencias, intimidad, para luego descartarlos sin reparo. Yo siento cierta responsabilidad con los objetos que utilizo, con los que consumo, con los que encuentro en la calle, como si fueran casi mascotas perdidas (risas). No sé, creo que tengo la obligación de llevármelos.

AE: En ese sentido, en la relación específica que hay con los objetos, me parece que existe una cierta práctica de animismo. Es decir, de afecto por los objetos con los que te encuentras, con los que trabajas. De ser así, ¿cuál es el tipo de afecto particular que surge con estos objetos ya institucionalizados, que tienen estatutos distintos a los objetos con los que comúnmente te encuentras? ¿De qué manera eso transforma la relación sensible con la que te relacionas con ellos?

DB: Para poder trabajar intento no hacer diferencia entre objetos comunes y objetos "especiales". La relación no es afectiva en principio: se vuelve afectiva como consecuencia de una experiencia en común con el objeto… suceden varias etapas de acercamiento y observación. Ante cualquier objeto se presenta una observación básica, formal, que tiene que ver con el color, el peso, la textura, el material, que después puede pasar a otro nivel de observación más deductivo y tiene que ver con el uso de ese objeto, cómo fue fabricado, de dónde viene, cuánto tiempo hace que existe, etc. Y podemos extender esa percepción de los objetos considerándolos en un nivel más poético, pensando a qué se parece, a qué nos recuerda, a qué cosas no se parece, o cuáles son sus antagonismos. Toda esa información está dando vueltas y está ahí presente cuando trabajamos con objetos de cualquier categoría. Cuando trabajo trato de considerar el objeto de arte fuera de su categoría especial para poder trabajar con él, para poder conectar desde distinto lugar.

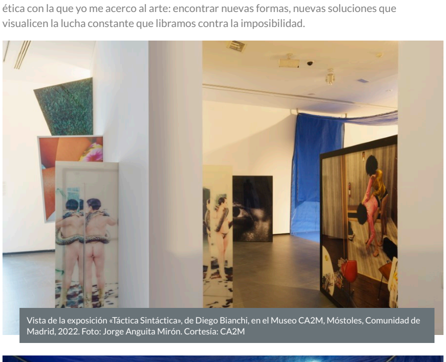
Creo que los humanos tenemos mucha relación con los objetos que nos rodean, estamos en contacto directo y constante con ellos, los tocamos permanentemente, es hasta erótica la relación que establecemos. Hace poco vi a un hombre que orinaba en un mingitorio y sostenía con una mano su pene, mientras que con la otra mano posteaba en Instagram… es gracioso ver todas las asociaciones posibles que pueden hacerse.

Vivimos con los objetos, compartimos tiempo, experiencias, intimidad, para luego descartarlos sin reparo. Yo siento cierta responsabilidad con los objetos que utilizo, con los que consumo, con los que encuentro en la calle, como si fueran casi mascotas perdidas (risas). No sé, creo que tengo la obligación de llevármelos. Pienso, "esto va a entrar en otro sistema donde va a ser útil", y lo que estaba tirado en la vereda va a terminar… no sé, lejos, en otro sistema de valor, o generando una sensación estética y convirtiéndose en la clave de algo. Cierta empatía con la categoría de lo bajo, con lo que está descartado, con lo que está a punto de desaparecer, con la esperanza de poder redimirlos.

AE: Al prestarle atención a tantas cosas comienzan a aparecer problemas. Esta abundancia de cosas, de objetos, de encuentros, de dispositivos, etcétera, supone también la necesidad de tomar decisiones respecto al equilibrio, el desequilibrio, el control y el caos en relación a ellos. Todos estos contrapuntos que se encuentran en tu trabajo, en el fondo, son fundamentales, son los que producen la experiencia. En ese sentido, y habiendo leído un texto en donde se hablaba sobre las máximas de Bianchi, me parece súper interesante pensar en ello. ¿Crees que existe algún tipo de ética relacionada a tu práctica, de decisiones, de jerarquía?

DB: No sé si nombrarlo como ética. Hay un modo de entender la práctica, una especie de filosofía que se puede definir como continua, porque no tiene objetivo ni fin, sino que más bien se trata de establecer la relatividad como norma, como una posibilidad de variación de todo lo existente. Esto me permite acercarme a las cosas, a los materiales, a las situaciones, al trabajo de los otros con una disponibilidad especial.

Antes nombraba los problemas, sobre todo en nuestros contextos latinoamericanos, que siempre los entendemos como una imposibilidad constante que nos separa de lo que tenemos deseo de hacer, como lo que se interpone entre la voluntad y los objetivos. Pero cuando entiendo que el objetivo es difuso, el problema también se debilita y puede llegar a ser incluso una herramienta que me aleje de mi intención inicial para conducirme a resoluciones que no conocía de antemano, que exigen toda mi capacidad para sortearlo, y me parece que esa es la ética con la que yo me acerco al arte: encontrar nuevas formas, nuevas soluciones que visualicen la lucha constante que libramos contra la imposibilidad.



Vista de la exposición «Táctica Sintáctica», de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Foto: Jorge Anguita Mirón. Cortesía: CA2M

Vista de la exposición «Táctica Sintáctica», de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Foto: Jorge Anguita Mirón. Cortesía: CA2M

Me parece muy necesario saber atravesar esos momentos de no control, esos momentos de no saber o de incertidumbre. No me interesan en general las obras que no atraviesan ese proceso porque siento que no sucedió lo alquímico propio del arte, lo que para mí permite un encuentro inédito, una sorpresa aún para su autor.

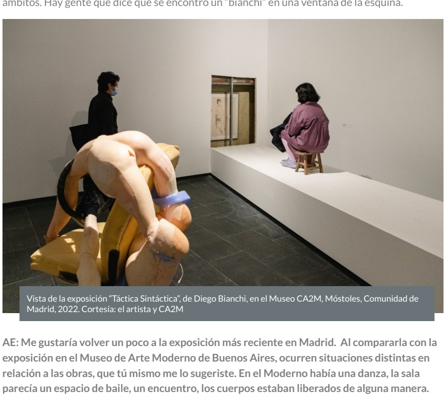
AE: Lo que dijiste me parece muy importante. O sea, lo difuso no es una cuestión que podamos evitar al hablar de tu trabajo y a mí me gustaría preguntarte por la idea de la confusión. La confusión que creo que se devela en dos situaciones. Una es la confusión como parte de la práctica, como una manera en la que aparecen estos objetos y situaciones, como una postura en tu práctica, y por otro lado, la confusión que se produce con el espectador en el encuentro con las obras.

DB: Por un lado, generar confusión me parece en principio atractivo, si bien nunca me lo planteo como objetivo sino más bien lo contrario… por lo menos que el arte genere confusión me parece como un buen primer paso. Creo que mi trabajo atraviesa, y yo mismo atravieso, muchos momentos de confusión. Me parece muy necesario saber atravesar esos momentos de no control, esos momentos de no saber o de incertidumbre.

No me interesan en general las obras que no atraviesan ese proceso porque siento que no sucedió lo alquímico propio del arte, lo que para mí permite un encuentro inédito, una sorpresa aún para su autor. Y generar confusión en el público es en parte hacerlo partícipe de esta situación. En general, en las instalaciones genero un tipo de "bombardeo" de estímulos; a veces más sutil, a veces más evidente; creo que estimular los sentidos, activar el cuerpo con determinadas cuestiones sensoriales, predispone la observación, para después sí conectar con los indicios, los sentidos, las claves con las que se puede desentramar el aparente caos. Hay mucha diagramación en cualquiera de mis trabajos, hay muchas leyes, muchas seriaciones, muchas situaciones sintácticas que me impongo para trabajar y me gusta que estén visibles; no me interesa ocultar datos, más bien lo contrario. Me gusta que la gente perciba esas puntas de ovillos de las ideas, que entienda que eso conduce de una cosa a otra, que hay relaciones e interrelación entre el arte y la realidad. A veces es algo a nivel perceptivo. Me interesa mucho trabajar en el nivel perceptivo y en el nivel físico también, que los cuerpos entiendan cosas, y que el arte no se reduzca a un proceso mental, sino que los cuerpos generen reacciones, lecturas también, que aparezcan la vergüenza, el asco, la risa… ¿Será parte de la "confusión"? Puede ser, pero una confusión positiva que genera una apertura perceptiva que permite conectar a varios niveles.

AE: También hay un tema que tiene que ver con los recuerdos de las exposiciones. Aparentemente, por algunos textos que se han escrito, se sugiere también que cuando uno ve una exposición tuya, como por tal abundancia de cosas, uno tiende a priorizar quedarse con algunas de ellas, mientras que otras simplemente se olvidan e incluso pueden aparecer en sueños, etcétera. Como que entran en otra dimensión sensible, una dimensión psíquica incluso.

DB: Recibo a veces mensajes de personas que me dicen que soñaron con alguna exposición mía y cuando me empiezan a contar suele ser algo fantástico, pero completamente alejado de mí. Pero hay algo que conecta con un recuerdo físico y experiencial que se lleva en el cuerpo, y que vuelve de otra forma. Otro comentario lindo que a veces recibo como respuesta es que, después de ver una exposición mía, la siguen viendo por la calle, como expandida en la ciudad y en otros ámbitos. Hay gente que dice que se encontró un "bianchi" en una ventana de la esquina.



Vista de la exposición "Táctica Sintáctica", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Cortesía: el artista y CA2M

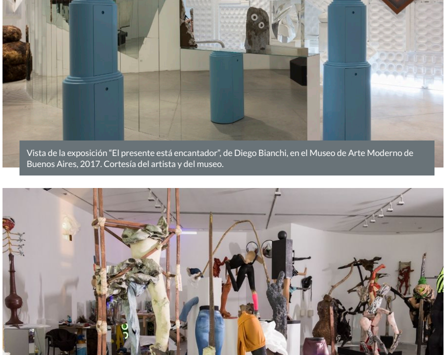
AE: Me gustaría volver un poco a la exposición más reciente en Madrid. Al compararla con la exposición en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, ocurren situaciones distintas en relación a las obras, que tú mismo me lo sugeriste. En el Moderno había una danza, la sala parecía un espacio de baile, un encuentro, los cuerpos estaban liberados de alguna manera. En el caso del CA2M, me parece que ocurre una cuestión que es distinta, o al menos se expresa en una dimensión que difiere un poco de eso, que tiene que ver con que las obras de la colección se encuentran atrapadas entre objetos, atrapadas en dispositivos. También hay situaciones que son más frías, aparentemente parecen más calculadas. En ese sentido, ¿cómo cambia la sensibilidad específica con la que tú te aproximas a la colección dependiendo de la especificidad técnica de la colección, entendiendo que la colección del Moderno es muy distinta a la del CA2M?

DB: Especificidad es una palabra que me resulta clave porque entiendo que no hay una fórmula para acercarse a cada problema. Cada circunstancia exige una respuesta especial. Por eso es que cuando se comparan las dos muestras resultan completamente distintas, si bien partieron de un planteo similar. En el caso del Moderno, la selección estaba sobre todo centrada en esculturas, donde en la mayoría se representaba el cuerpo humano. La acumulación de estas esculturas en el espacio central de la exhibición con distancias mínimas entre ellas, sumada a cuestiones lumínicas de oscuridad y estrobos que generaban sombras cambiantes, así como las paredes espejadas y facetadas, generaban un ambiente que se podía asociar a la pista de una discoteca poblada de presencias deformes. Esta idea se volvió central y me ayudó a organizar el resto del espacio.

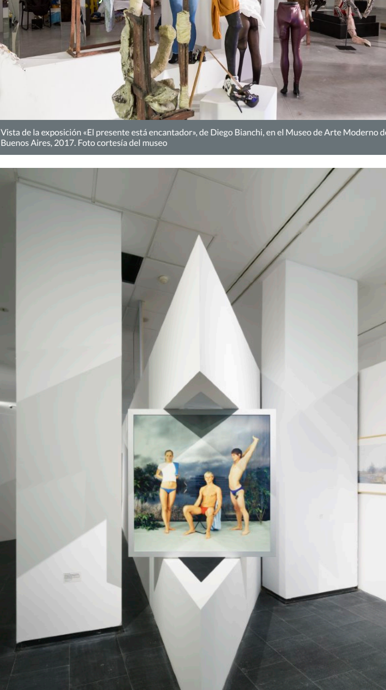
En el caso de Madrid fue completamente distinto. Primero no tenía relación afectiva, podría decir, con los artistas que participaban. A la mayoría de las obras no las conocía previamente. Además, el museo tiene una colección muy grande de fotografías de los años 90 en formatos grandes. Era obvio que había que focalizarse en esa particularidad. Eso provocaba un punto de partida completamente distinto al anterior. El tipo de displays y los formatos grandes generaban situaciones espaciales que exigían trabajar de otra manera. Mucho del proceso se realizó a distancia y a partir de una maqueta en escala. Esto hizo que el proceso incluyera una parte proyectual más desarrollada, y es por eso que a simple vista pueda parecer calculado y frío. Pero, transitándola, había muchos detalles para descubrir y se proponía al espectador una observación casi performática, ya que su misma presencia circulando por rampas, plataformas, escenarios, o indagando en los recortes o descubriendo obras ocultas, generaba situaciones para el resto de los visitantes.

Las obras fueron elegidas en principio en base a temáticas que tenían que ver con el cuerpo, la arquitectura o el mobiliario; después eso se fue ampliando y también apareció una atención especial a los formatos, para que fueran grandes en general. Luego, en otra etapa, la disposición, la escala y la tensión con que cada obra aparecía generaron situaciones arquitectónicas espaciales en relación a cada una de ellas. Cuestionándonos qué podría suceder si el museo no es solo un soporte pasivo, sino que el museo puede ser flexible y modificarse en relación con las obras, generando espacios y modificando la arquitectura.

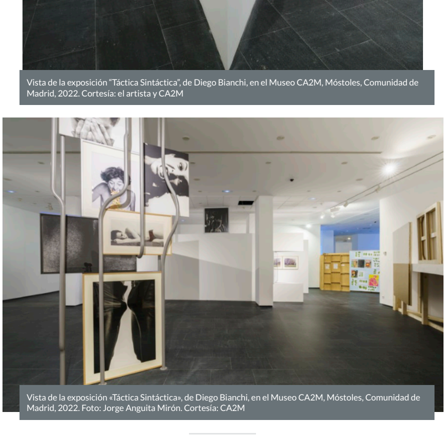
Vista de la exposición "El presente está encantador", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2017. Cortesía del artista y del museo.



Vista de la exposición «El presente está encantador», de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2017. Foto cortesía del museo



Vista de la exposición "Táctica Sintáctica", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Cortesía: el artista y CA2M



Vista de la exposición «Táctica Sintáctica», de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Foto: Jorge Anguita Mirón. Cortesía: CA2M

Pensaba que, con la incorporación de materiales blandos, materiales que apelaran a la tactilidad, además de cuerpos flexionados, o cosas que se pudieran estar pudriendo o modificando durante la exhibición, iba a devolverles esa fisicalidad a los cuerpos que estaban encerrados dentro de las fotografías y dentro de los marcos. También en la forma de disponerlas en el espacio; procuré que fuera siempre en una relación de tensión con el espacio, exigidas como si las mismas obras estuvieran ejercitándose.

AE: Surge también la pregunta por la fotografía en sí misma como género, que hace aparecer la detención o atrapamiento en el que se encuentran los cuerpos o lugares retratados.

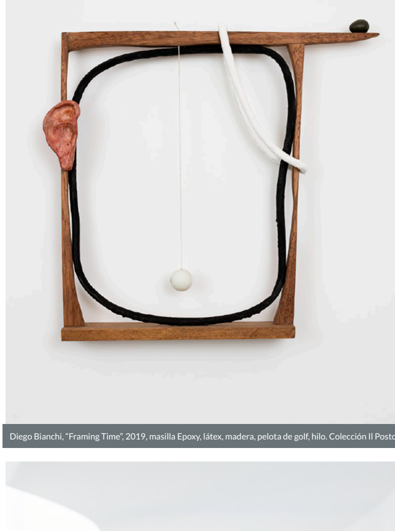
DB: Sí, esa sensación a la que te referís fue el pequeño hilo desde el que tiré para generar mi trabajo escultórico. Si bien muchas de las fotografías hacían referencia al cuerpo, el tipo de display y las características de la fotografía en sí misma generan cierta distancia y frialdad, y lo que yo pretendía hacer con mi trabajo era devolverle cierta carnalidad o cierta sensación de corporeidad a estas piezas. Pensaba que, con la incorporación de materiales blandos, materiales que apelaran a la tactilidad, además de cuerpos flexionados, o cosas que se pudieran estar pudriendo o modificando durante la exhibición, iba a devolverles esa fisicalidad a los cuerpos que estaban encerrados dentro de las fotografías y dentro de los marcos. También en la forma de disponerlas en el espacio; procuré que fuera siempre en una relación de tensión con el espacio, exigidas como si las mismas obras estuvieran ejercitándose.

AE: Están incómodas.

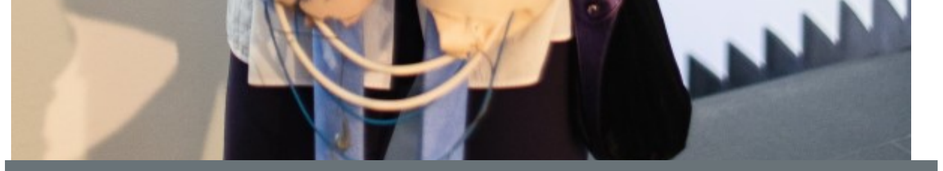
DB: Si, están incómodas, levemente incómodas. Esa incomodidad genera una fricción, una invitación a "bueno, a ver… a despertarse". A ver si es posible hacerlas reaccionar o no.

AE: En ese sentido también me parece que pensar un poco en el nombre de la exposición tiene sentido. O sea, *Táctica sintáctica*. Yo pensaba en la palabra táctica en dos sentidos: uno táctica de lo táctil, en relación al sentido, lo que se siente, pero táctica también como una operación. Lo imaginas también como, en el fondo, esta relación con el cuerpo, pero no solamente el cuerpo que aparece como forma, sino que también aparece como operación, como estrategia.

DB: Claro. Y la estrategia tiene que ver con la sintaxis. Si bien el título es ambiguo porque contiene esas dos acepciones, clarificaba la estrategia de acercamiento a las obras que tenía menos que ver con el contenido semántico que con el display, con el material del marco, con el tipo de vidrio que tiene por delante, con la forma que tiene de colgarse, con las proporciones. Con eso me refiero a sintaxis como el mecanismo en el que están insertas las obras y se combina con el mensaje simbólico que sostiene. Intentamos con el curador cambiar el eje para relacionarnos con estas obras. Para no relacionarnos desde lo simbólico, sino desde lo sintáctico. A su vez, en la proposición escultórica que presenté estaba la relación táctil con el mundo. Ahí estaba el doble sentido del título que clarificaba una postura, pero se agarraba del sentido secundario de la palabra para generar el trabajo escultórico.



Diego Bianchi, "Framing Time", 2019, masilla Epoxy, látex, madera, pelota de golf, hilo. Colección Il Posto.



Vista de la exposición "Táctica Sintáctica", de Diego Bianchi, en el Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Comunidad de Madrid, 2022. Cortesía: el artista y CA2M

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COLLETTORS AGENDA
2022

In the Studio

Christoph Weber, Vienna

»I dissect concrete.«

Thrust, jerked, thrown, wrapped, rolled – in Christoph Weber's hands, concrete, the commonplace material par excellence, finds constantly new and surprising forms. His works are the result of a long-term experimental approach and the unexpected poetry of the material. During the interview in his spacious studio in Vienna's Favoriten district, the artist tells us how he approached the contradictions of concrete and how he works beyond them.

Christoph, your art has something earthbound to it. Could one put it that way?

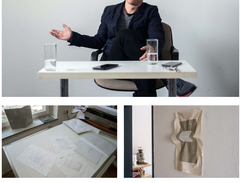
Concrete has a certain grounded quality to it, also its weight and the pull towards the earth, plays a role of course. But above all, I'm interested in the contrast between the solidity and the fragility of the material. I look for moments in which it breaks, for the moment in which it flows and if I can, with "concrete is a material that constantly defies classification."

Concrete is typically characterized by its robustness. What other aspect would you want to show?

Concrete is not only robust and durable, but at the same time it also quite brittle. I intend to fight against the grey, dull impression that concrete represents. To do so, I use colour, I try to make it shine, I try to make it flow, I try to make it look like clay the same. Or I conceive it instantly in such an abstract fluid way, that as it sets, the fragility is in the foreground, this way, I don't have to break the concrete first in order to create spaces through contrast.

It sounds as if concrete's acknowledged strength means it is spoiled for you. Concrete is also a material that is very durable.

Exactly! Concrete is also one of the materials that rules the Anthropocene epoch. From a geological point of view, it is already clear that concrete – along with other anthropogenic materials – will be the material that will be found in a near future of stone. We produce an insane amount of concrete. 30 million tons of concrete are produced every year in Austria alone. Vienna's Danube City project by Jean Zaborowska is a renowned geologist dedicated to this compelling topic.



To move from the ecological impact of concrete to the artistic one. As a contemporary artist, you deliberately engage with a material that has a good sustainability rank that nature has given to us, in contrast to the textile or wood.

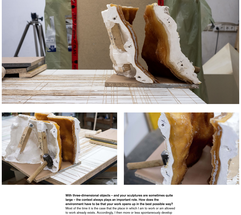
Yes, that's impossible – for me, concrete is more fire and textile. Textile has always been the material to subtype. Concrete is actually not a modern equivalent of it. Some of my series, which are also in stage, flow with the movement of the material, like a piece of textile would, for example, when I hang it in a museum and, suspended, it speaks to viewers by revealing its inner world. Concrete is also a material that can be shaped like textile.

Do you remember how you began to deal with concrete and to think it through as a material?

It was triggered by my preoccupation with the geopolitical crisis of the Middle East and the Arab Spring. I felt that I could no longer produce paintings that spoke, on the material that stands so much for the supremacy of the West. The desire to fight an industrial society that seals itself off with massive barriers was the trigger for my engagement with the material. I was looking for a material that also stunned the witness of concrete. But once you start working with concrete, you realize how incredibly fragile it can be. So, now we are back where we started, I'm back to the fragility of concrete. Concrete and fragile are geochemical cycle always come to the fore.

What interactions with the material has that let you in?

I'm very much into the physicality of the material and its work, which for example, I'm working on together with Nikolaus Eckhardt on a project in Israel. But the whole nature-culture continuum – Rosi Braidotti talks about it in her book "Transpositions" – is very important to me. Concrete is a natural and artificial about the material? Concrete is 98 % natural material, at the same time it is highly artificial, not least because resource extraction is often heedless of the ecological consequences. I'm also interested in the fact that it is a discourse that increasingly concerns me. In addition to this, what has always been important to me is the material's ability to be shaped in a fluid way. That's another reason why, out of psychosomatic curiosity, I have always tried to dissect concrete and to see what it looks like on the inside. In the last 10 years, the tools I've already learned to dissect concrete have led me to more serious aspects of this confrontation with a simple gesture, as for example in my exhibition project »Chaos Discover« which appeared in a 2020 edition of »Collectors Agenda«.



In the past, especially in your more process-oriented works, to give concrete a shape, you used wooden formwork and molds.

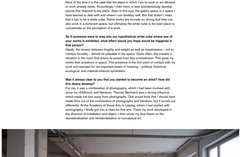
I have had a strong desire to do away with the wooden formwork for the last decade. I wanted to free the material from the wooden formwork, because wooden formwork leaves its unmistakable traces on the material. What I became aware of in the process of my work with concrete was that I'm actually not a fan of visually loud and busy patterns. I'm more into a clear, calm, and quiet aesthetic. Concrete is also a material that can be shaped like textile. Where the material is in a certain degree seeks its own form.

That sounds as if it would all work by itself. Actually working with concrete is a very complex process that requires a lot of knowledge and skills. Is it easier to use for large-scale concrete objects that may weigh many tons?

Quite. Working the weight also requires increased concentration, which is sometimes very exhausting. Sometimes I'm also working with a team, but I also like very satisfying to simply move a piece from A to B or turn it over to take a different position. Scaling really becomes a fulfilling activity that very sometimes also requires a team and a crane to be realized.

What does the production of one of your objects in the studio actually look like?

Well, I calculate what kind of volume is needed. How quickly should the concrete harden? This depends on whether or not I want to manipulate the casting while it still plastic. Then it's off to the woodshop. There, I build a mold and then I fill it with the concrete mixture. Then I wait. Then I'm off to the shop about working with fresh concrete castings so that I'm relatively quick and you don't have to be very precise. It can be that the idea for a work comes up in the morning and I'm already working on it in the afternoon. It can also be that it's a lot of tinkering very quickly. Build the form, cover it, let it rot, and then I'm working with the material. It can also be that I'm working on a piece for sometimes slowly. I sometimes work without any concrete at all, or even at work that is very complex, related to concrete.



With three-dimensional objects – and your sculptures are sometimes quite large – the contact always plays an important role. How does the environment have to be that your work opens up to the best possible way? Do you also have to be in a certain mood to be able to work with concrete?

In work already works. Accordingly, I'm currently in a less spontaneously destroy pieces that respond to the place. Given in the way, the gallery space is a space I have to deal with and I'm currently working on a piece for a gallery in Berlin. And it has to be a white cube. Some works are formally so strong that they can only be shown in a white cube. In other cases, a white cube is the best place to concentrate on the perception of a work.

So if someone were to ship me hypothetical white cube where one of your works is exhibited, what effect would you hope would be triggered in the viewer?

Ideally, the tension between fragility and weight as well as impermanence – not to mention textility – should be palpable in the space. Quite often, this creates a tension between the work and the space, which I'm very happy about. Some works their presence in space. The presence in the first point of contact with my work and requires for me important levels of meaning – political, historical, philosophical, and psychosomatic.

Was it always clear to you that you wanted to become an artist? Does not this desire stem?

No, I came from a background of photography, which I had been involved with since my childhood, and Nachlass Thomas Bernhard was a strong influence, which made me turn away from photography. One would think that I should have turned to the pen, but I felt that photography was a medium that I could use differently. At the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig, where I had studied photography, I finally got into a class by the artist. There my work developed in a very conceptual direction and I was very lucky to be in a class in the deconstruction and reconstruction of conceptual art.

Untitled (Fragments), 2018-2020, Concrete, 3 parts, overall 180 × 130 cm, Courtesy Galerie Ausder Weiß, studio view, Photo: Christoph Weber

As someone who comes from Vienna, went abroad to study, and eventually returned to Vienna, how do you perceive the city's art scene? Is it a good place?

It was a relatively pragmatic decision to return to Vienna from Leipzig, rather than, say, going to Berlin. It was much easier for me to find a well-paid job in my profession in Vienna than in Berlin. I'm very happy about the art scene here in Germany, but Joseph Beuys's Free Vienna is the ideal place for production. Vienna is a very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very reasonable studio. The land of the city is dead. You can get everything, but it's very expensive. Vienna is also a very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very,

Crack Stop Motion Contact Sheet, Photo work, Photo: Christoph Weber

béton brut matrix, 2017, wood, steel, 72,6 x 161 x 80 cm; Drawing: Pencil, cement, glue on paper, 41 x 33 cm, Courtesy ProjecteSD, Barcelona, Exhibition view: On Fold, ProjecteSD, Barcelona, 2017, Photo: Christoph Weber

Cast and Uncast, 2018, Concrete, rope, Dimensions variable, each slab 70 x 100 x 15 cm, Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Exhibition view: Contact, Ibid, Los Angeles, 2018, Photo: Christoph Weber

not yet titled, 2019, Concrete, steel, 34 x 40 x 40 cm, Courtesy Galerie nächst St. Stephan - Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Studio View, Photo: Christoph Weber

Beton (gestoßen), 2016, Concrete, 2 parts, 30 x 155 x 110 cm, Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Exhibition view: Carton / pierre, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, 2016, Photo: Christoph Weber

Interview: Gabriel Roland
Photos: Maximilian Pramatarov

Links:
→ Christoph Weber's website
→ Galerie nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna
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#male #sculpture #concrete #installation #conceptual #vienna

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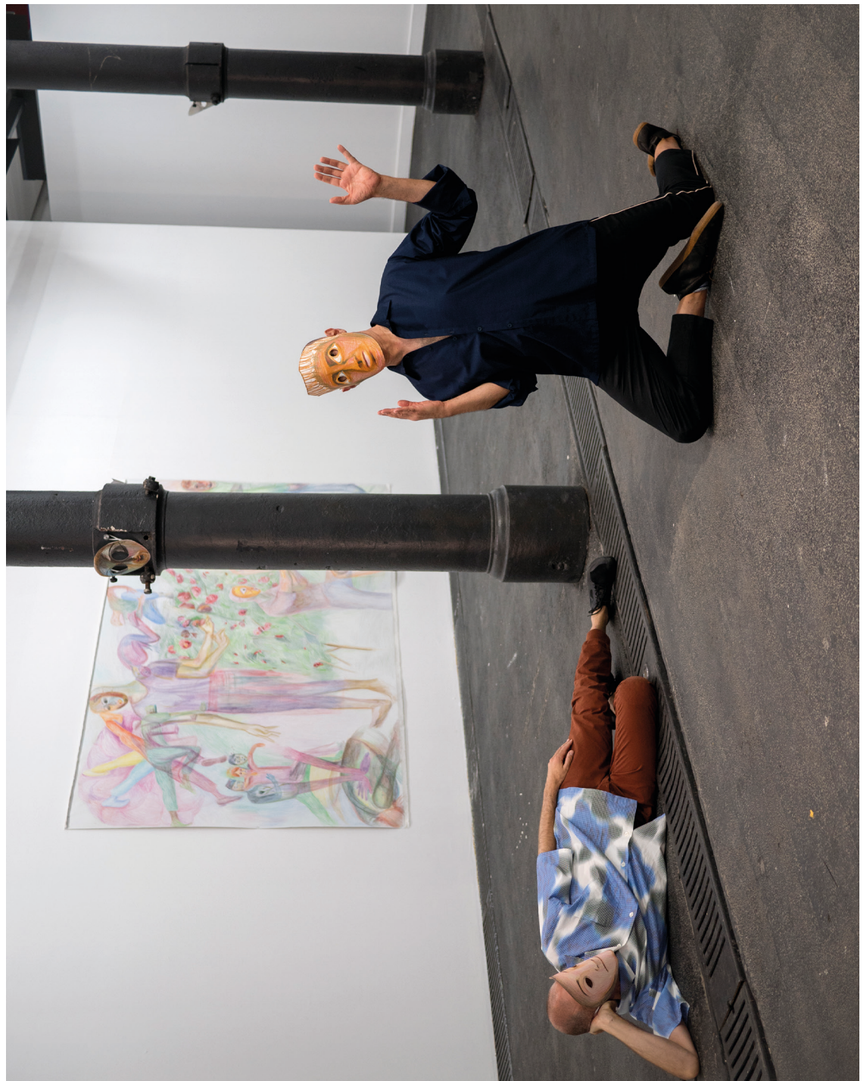
PRINZ GHOLAM

Interview Fabio Cherstich

Prinz Gholam comes from Wolfgang Prinz (Leutkirch im Allgäu, 1969) and Michel Gholam (Beirut, 1963), artists of different origins and cultures who have come together in life and art. For 20 years, Prinz Gholam have developed their heterogeneous aesthetic practice (performance, photography, video, drawing) which uses the body to reinterpret diverse cultural references, from ancient sculptures to paintings, to contemporary art, film and media imagery. Their work, often created in locations of historic relevance like museums, archaeological sites or public spaces, suggests and reveals how our existence is influenced by the processes of cultural assimilation. A series of gradual or sudden absorptions that push individuals or groups towards the progressive and passive abandonment of their own culture, in order to try to assume the dominant culture, considered more sophisticated or prestigious than their own, leading to the loss of many or all of the cultural characteristics that made the group different and distinguishable. From different cultures themselves - one German and one Lebanese, Prinz Gholam are using minimal, reduced, subtle and choreographed actions to investigate how the normative and formal standards recognised in the field of aesthetics and mythology are formed, rendering our fascination and attachment to certain prevalent cultural canons visible. I met them in Rome in late June, in the splendid studio at Villa Massimo provided by the German Academy where they were able to spend a year creating an important body of work recently on show at the Mattatoio in Testaccio.



"While Being Other", performance and exhibition at Mattatoio, Rome - 2021

«We began working outside in the city which was quite empty. This experience was crucial in order to do the drawings and to create the masks that we used for the first time in the performance at Palazzo Altemps.»

When did your Roman adventure begin and where has it taken you?
W: We arrived in Rome at the beginning of September 2020. We were Rome Prize fellows at the German Academy Villa Massimo until the end of June 2021. Our stay immediately started with work for a performance at Palazzo Altemps which we were very lucky to show in October right before the lockdown. This triggered an intense work process in the studio. Towards the end of our stay, we received an invitation for a solo show at Mattatoio in Testaccio which opened on 13 July with works we made during this very productive year.

You spent the lockdown in your studio at Villa Massimo. Did this have an influence on your work?
M: The lockdown is precisely what it says '*lock*' and '*down*'. At the same time, it meant we engaged with 'being' in Rome. Not just having Rome as a base while going to explore Italy's other major cities. We had to be right here, to work and experience time in this very spot. We met many people who became dear friends, as we were all engaging in the here and the now together.

W: We started very large drawings on canvas over a period of 8 months. We also began working outside in the city which was quite empty. This experience was crucial in order to do the drawings and to create the masks that we used for the first time in the performance at Palazzo Altemps.

What relationship do you have with the past? History has a fairly heavy weight here in Rome…
M: One of our drawings is titled "Now and the Past". It epitomises the way we perceive the interchange between the weight of history and its influence on us now.
Our work manifests itself purposely under the influence of culture. The now is very important. This is where experience happens.

I know that your practice consists in observing the reality around you, what of your observations of Rome has remained in your work?
W: So many elements have come from what we have seen. In the first few days of our stay, we saw the Pyramid of Cestius, and we were fascinated by this strong architectural form that you hardly ever see in cities but very often in historical depictions in art.

The streets and contemporary anthropology nourish your work as much as history, art and tradition. How do you relate to the exterior when closed in the studio or a room in a museum? Isn't that a paradox?
W: We saw an empty Rome during the lockdown. It looked like a theatre set to us, sometimes heavy and oppressing, but also very fascinating. We began taking photographs with the masks in the streets. It became an artistic project that lasted months. For the final presentation at Villa Massimo in June, we used two of these photographs for large billboards in the streets, using a public media form normally reserved for advertising.

M: We used to go for our walks, taking a selection of two or three masks with us. At any given moment, a place would suddenly feel important enough to be captured. As if we would be reminded of another situation in another place. We would set up our camera and wear the masks. Then as quickly as possible we took many photographs until we felt we had tried out the possibilities.
Our work is always inclusive. When we work, we have to consider everything. When we work, our perception and sensitivity are highly active and so the impulses we have are valuable. We follow those instincts and evaluate later.

We almost never perceive culture or institution as isolated and hermetic. That is why we do the work the way we do it. The inside of the museum is only a place which people get to by passing through the outside. So the outdoors is very important.

Our first performance was held outdoors on a lot in the city.

Do you have any favourite places in Rome or anything you particularly like to do here?
M: I am thinking of the dreamlike aspect. I have

«Our work manifests itself purposely under the influence of culture. The now is very important. This is where experience happens.»

"While Being Other"
Studio1, Villa Massimo, Rome - 2021

"L'esprit de notre temps"
Via Firenze, Rome - 2021

"L'esprit de notre temps"
Studio1, Villa Massimo, Rome - 2021

“Pavilion of Wild Pinks”
color pencil on canvas, 215 x 345 cm - 2021
Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

“PG Monogatari” (public garden)
colour pencil on paper, 50 x 70 cm - 2021
Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff

«We feel that our work always develops in relation to a specific situation, so it is very open as to what we will do next.»

“L’esprit de notre temps”
Villa Aldobrandini, Rome - 2021

«We are so much in the now that the future is something very hypothetical and far from us.»

“L’esprit de notre temps”
Viale del Campo Boario, Rome - 2021

to say that during the lockdown our walks were the most precious experience. How can you forget suddenly entering the park at Villa Aldobrandini and seeing the old Camelia trees and bushes in full blossom in early March? These frail and fragile flowers that drop to the floor so easily. The Villa floating at a height. I cannot imagine any other place at that time which had such an impact on us. This subject appears in our drawing "Pavilion of Wild Pinks".

«Our work is always related to the image, as are our performances. Images are very telling, they reveal what they are, you can read them, see their intentions and implications.»

What are you working on and what would you like to explore in the future?
W: We have two bigger exhibition projects planned for next year, a solo show at Musée de Rochechouart in France for example. We feel that our work always develops in relation to a specific situation, so it is very open as to what we will do next.

M: We are so much in the now that the future is something very hypothetical and far from us. Palazzo Altemps was a place we always felt we wanted to do something in. When we visited it in 2009, we left saying, this would be a place we would love to do things in. We never told anyone. But 11 years later, in 2020, we received an invitation to develop some work there.

As visual artists, do you still believe in the power of images? What role do they have?
M: An ethical role, a moral role. It is much harder to make an image that is consistent, but it is possible.

W: Our work is always related to the image, as are our performances. Images are very telling, they reveal what they are, you can read them, see their intentions and implications.

Performance art made you famous. Is performance still an act of resistance against the art market?
W: We weren't thinking in those terms when we started doing live performances in 2004. It was a necessary part of the work we did together, but we think it has a strong political impact, especially when it comes to questions of identity.

I think your work embodies a unique formal grace… Was that your goal?
W: It is very difficult for us to speak about that, as we don't have the distance. We work without a preconceived idea of how it will look in the end. We work naturally with the ancestral and the new because we do not separate them. So, what you describe is linked to our sensibility and how we respond to our situation. Don't forget, it is work done by two people. This is absolutely crucial, we are one creator together. It is the result of a long relationship.

Masks feature in all your work from Rome. Masks applied to drawings, worn by you and performers at the Mattatoio space. It feels as though these are an important new feature!
W: Yes, it started with the work at Palazzo Altemps at the end of October 2020. Two weeks before the performance, we were told that we had to wear masks. We couldn't imagine wearing the medical masks and had to find a solution: we drew real masks for the whole face. It was very intuitive. We have since discovered all the many meanings and stories related to masks. The masks are always specific and related to what we have looked at, but they don't take on the role of specific characters. In the performance, we often change our masks in order to show different expressions, like appearances of cultural and historical memories.

What role does the public have in your work?

Do you think about the people watching you? About your audience?
W: In the performance, the audience is more like a witness to a situation we have created, but there is also a very energetic confrontation. In the public space, the public is less definable and calculable. People are sometimes there without really being aware of what is happening. We believe that the work can also affect people subconsciously.

What is your relationship with fashion?
M: In my youth, I loved the theatre costumes and drawings of Jean-Pierre Delifer, an Armenian/Lebanese designer who mixed eastern and western styles in a very special and cool way. This was the threshold to the visual arts for me. We both like the idea that someone conceives clothes with thought and an intuition for momentum. That is important for our practice. We give a lot of thought to what we wear. It has to feel right. But this feeling changes. So, it is a vital activity.

What will it be like returning to Berlin, where you have always lived together?
W: We changed during our year in Rome and our work changed too. There is a gap: something necessary for our artistic practice to evolve.

«We almost never perceive culture or institution as isolated and hermetic. That is why we do the work the way we do it.»

"My heart is a poised cithara" (portrait) performance at Palazzo Altemps, Rome - 2020

"My heart is a poised cithara" performance at Palazzo Altemps, Rome - 2020

art

DAS KUNSTMAGAZIN // MÄRZ 2020

Starker Stoff

München zeigt das faszinierende Lebenswerk von Franz Erhard Walther

DONALD JUDD: Auf den Spuren des Cowboys der Minimal Art

SEMPERGALERIE: Dresdens Altmeister kehren zurück

D € 12,00 // **A** € 13,70 // **CH** sfr 19,00 //
P (cont.), **I, E** € 15,80 // **B, NL, LUX** € 14,00

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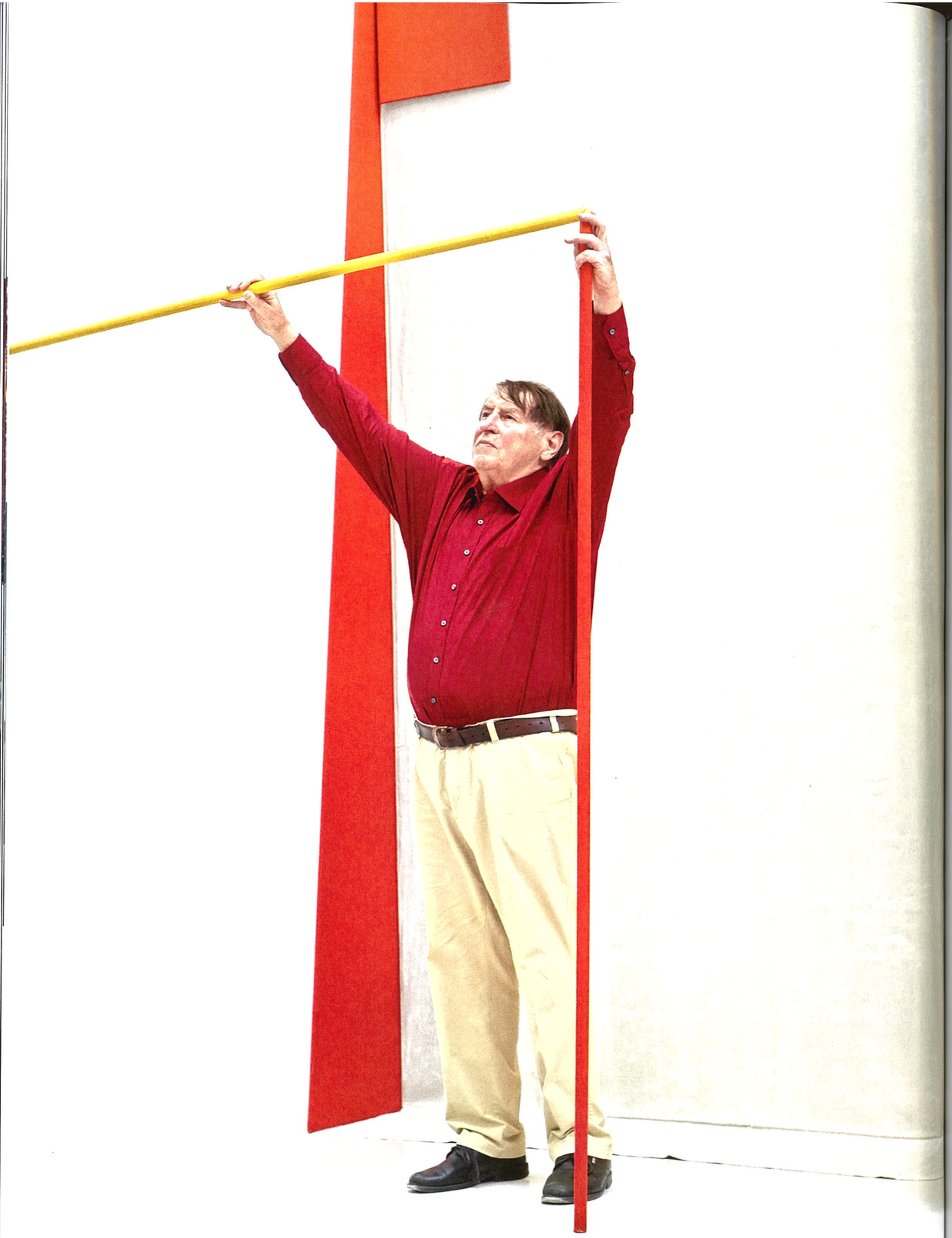
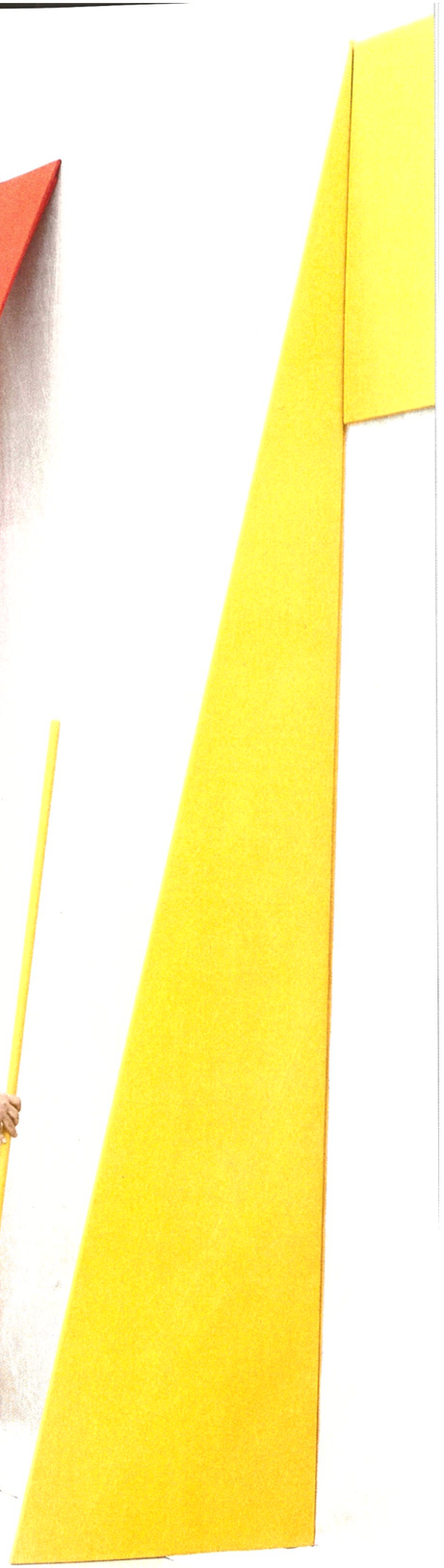


Stoff & Handlung

Früh verkannt – und spät geehrt: Eine große Schau im Haus der Kunst in München würdigt den Künstler **Franz Erhard Walther** als Visionär. Ein Studiobesuch bei dem 80-Jährigen zeigt ihn als unkonventionellen und hellwachen Denker

TEXT: TANJA BEUTHIEN



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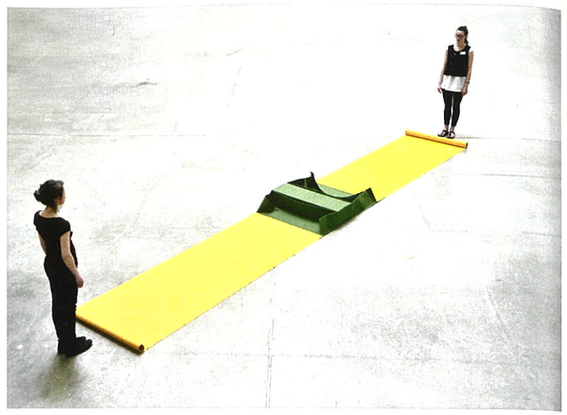
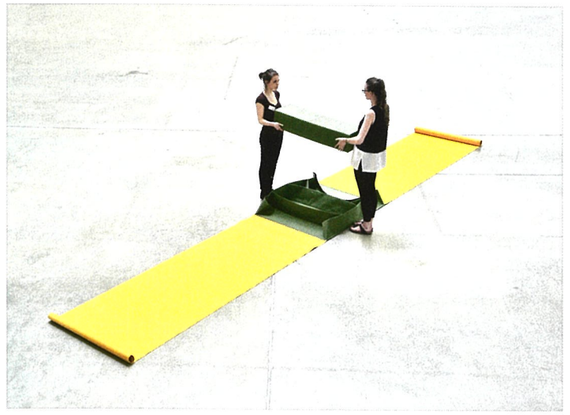
Alles eine Frage des Standpunkts: Franz Erhard Walther in Interaktion mit seinem Werk 2014 im Museum Wiels in Brüssel

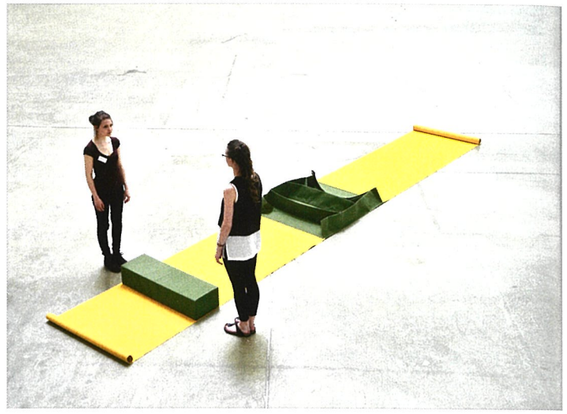
NEUERE GESCHICHTE ERWEITERT, 1981/82, 360 X 600 X 80 CM

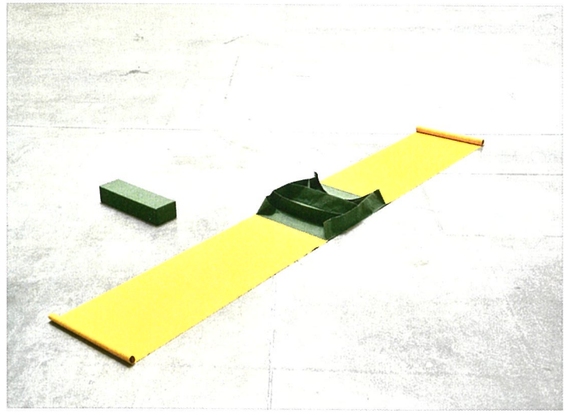
Das Museo Jumex in Mexiko-Stadt widmete Walther 2018 eine große Ausstellung, in dem Walthers »1. Werksatz« im Mittelpunkt stand

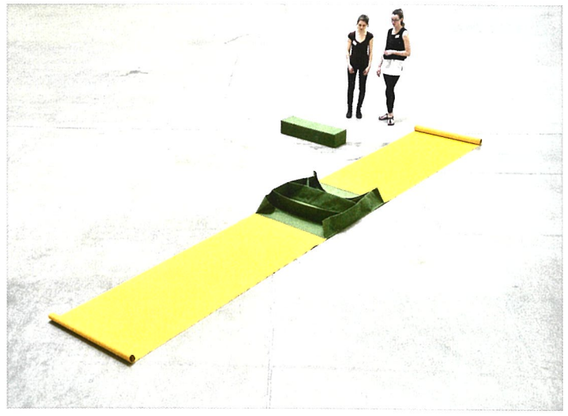
INSTALLATIONS-ANSICHT: OBJECTS TO USE/INSTRUMENTS FOR PROCESSES, 2018











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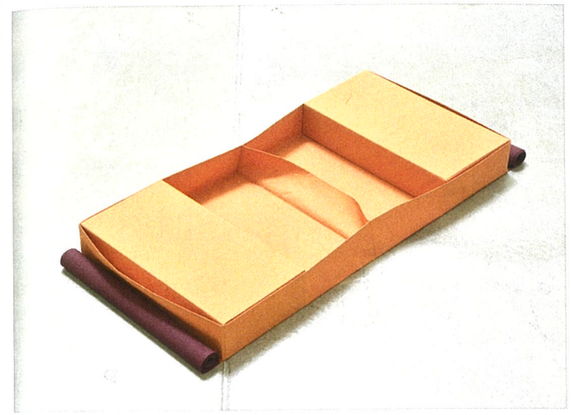
Franz Erhard Walthers Objekte aus gefärbtem Baumwollstoff sind falt- und rollbar und funktionieren oft wie flexible Bausätze

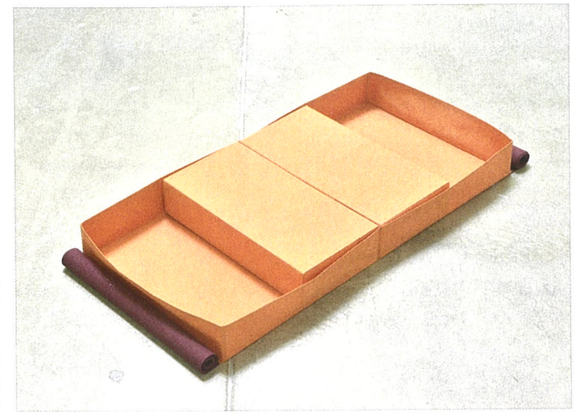
HANDLUNGSBAHN #39, 1996–2003

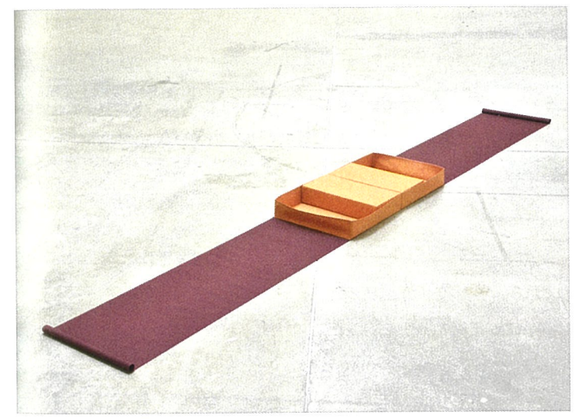
Schon in frühen Arbeiten ist die Essenz seines Werks angelegt: Partizipation des Betrachters

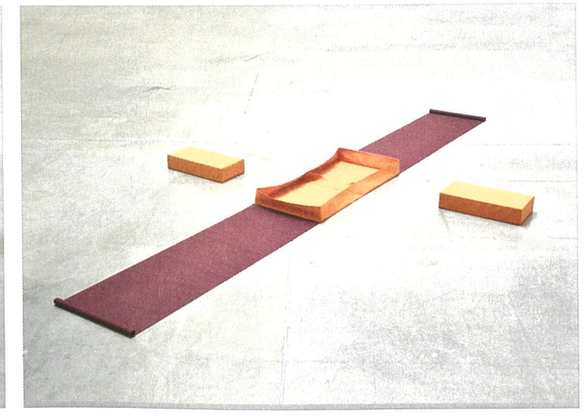
v
Teamwork: Im Marta-Museum in Herford konnten 2011 Besucher der Ausstellung »Die Erinnerung der Form« Handlungen an Walthers Bodenarbeiten vornehmen

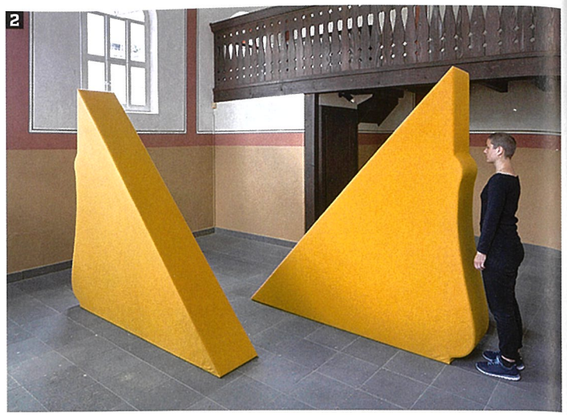
HANDLUNGSBAHN #37, 1996–2003

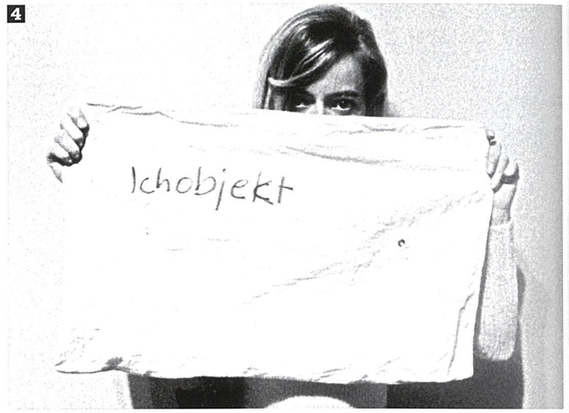












1. Der Künstler als Springbrunnen
SPEIER AUS DER SERIE VERSUCH, EINE SKULPTUR ZU SEIN, 1958

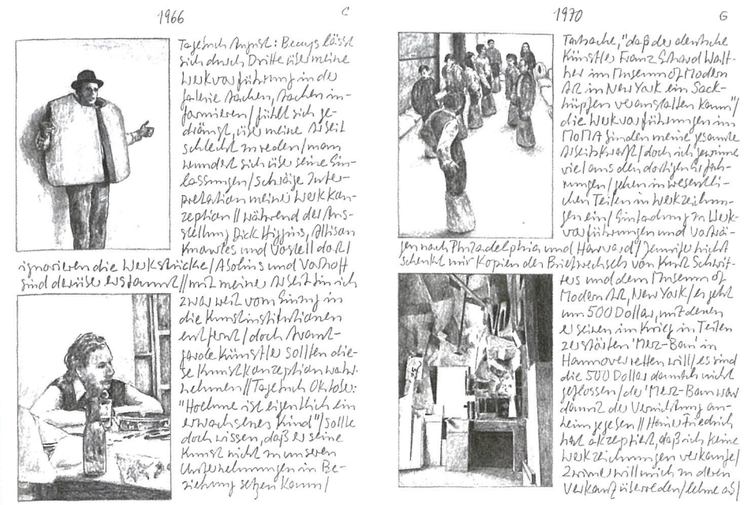
2. Kurvige Schaumstoffblöcke in der Synagoge Stommeln
ZWEI KÖRPERFORMEN GELB, 2012, 219 X 219 X 40 CM

3. Nach seiner Typografenlehre schuf Walther plakative Wortbilder
ICH WAR DRAUSSEN, 1958

4. Eine Künstlerfreundin posiert mit Walthers Text-Stoff-Arbeit
ICHOBJEKT (ANGELIKA PLATEN), 1969

5. In Aktion: Franz Erhard Walther 1970 bei einer Performance in Hamburg
FOTO: ANGELIKA PLATEN

6. Große Bodenarbeit in der Unlimited-Sektion der Art Basel 2009
55 ACTION PATHS, 2003–09



< In diesem tagebuchartigen Zeichnungszyklus hält Walther Szenen aus den sechziger und siebziger Jahren fest – und resümiert den Konflikt mit Joseph Beuys

STERNENSTAUB, 2007–09, 525 BLÄTTER, JE 30 X 21 CM

Den eigenen Standpunkt ausloten: Eigentlich hat Franz Erhard Walther nie etwas anderes getan. Missverstanden – oft. Unverstanden – noch häufiger. Als er auf der BIENNALE mit dem Goldenen Löwen für den »radikalen und komplexen Charakter seiner Werke« ausgezeichnet wird, kann er es nicht fassen. Noch jetzt, drei Jahre später, amüsiert ihn das. Er lacht. Wischt sich die Augen. Ungläubig immer noch. Dabei wollte er gar nicht nach Venedig fahren. Wozu auch. Wenn einer den Kunstzirkus kennt, dann er. Düsseldorf, in den Sechzigern mit Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, Jörg Immendorff. Die Ausstellung im MOMA mit Dan Flavin und Robert Morris, gerade 30 Jahre war er da. Die DOCUMENTA in Kassel, mehrfach. Dann ab 1971 die Lehrtätigkeit als Professor an der HOCHSCHULE FÜR BILDENDE KÜNSTE in Hamburg, mit Schülern wie Jonathan Meese und Martin Kippenberger. Die Schauen der letzten Jahre in Madrid, Mexiko, New York.

Inzwischen lebt und arbeitet er wieder im hessischen Fulda, seiner Heimatstadt. Zurückgekehrt sei er nicht, sagt er. Das Atelier zu finden, ein Gebäude aus dem 18. Jahrhundert, der Blick aus den zehn großen Fenstern auf Weinberg und Stadt, das alles sei ein wunderbarer Zufall gewesen. Früher gab es hier Tanz und Musik. Licht und leicht ist die Atmosphäre immer noch. Sein langer hölzerner Arbeitstisch durchteilt den Raum, steht zwischen den Ausstellungsplakaten an der Wand und dem Bücherregal gegenüber, markiert den Standpunkt zwischen eigenem Kunstschaffen und Kunstgeschichte. Hier zeichnet er bis in die Nacht hinein. Immer noch. Manisch und detailversessen. »In Fulda hieß es noch in den siebziger und achtziger Jahren über mich: der Spinner, der Verrückte, der Scharlatan.« Heute sind sie stolz auf den berühmten Sohn der Stadt – »auch wenn sie mein Werk noch immer nicht ganz verstehen«.

AUSSTELLUNG

Das Haus der Kunst in München zeigt »Franz Erhard Walther. Shifting Perspective« vom 6. März bis 2. August. Am 4. Juli findet ein Symposium mit Podiumsgespräch statt. Der Katalog erscheint Mitte April bei Hatje Cantz zum Preis von 39 Euro.

Im Unverstandensein hat er Erfahrung: »jahrzehntelang«, wie der heute 80-Jährige sagt. Er holt weit aus beim Erzählen, auch in den Gesten. Er bittet seine Frau Susanne, die bei unserem Gespräch dabei ist, um Bücher und Anschauungsmaterial. Sie leitet die FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER FOUNDATION und managt Künstler und Werk. Auch er steht immer wieder auf, bringt Fotos, Kataloge, Briefe an den Tisch. Beweglich, genau wie im Kopf. Dass er anders denkt, anders tickt als andere, habe er zum ersten Mal mit 16 Jahren gemerkt. An der Volkshochschule belegte er damals einen Zeichenkurs – und präsentierte stolz seine Köpfe, die nur aus Umrisslinien bestanden. »Ich habe mir überlegt, dass der Betrachter die Binnenfläche imaginativ füllt, also handelt – aber mein Lehrer hat gesagt: Mit Kunst hat das nix zu tun.« Zu Hause soll er in den Bäckereibetrieb der Eltern einsteigen, Juniorchef einer geplanten Keksfabrik werden. Doch er »haut einfach ab«. Studiert an der Werkkunstschule in Offenbach Typografie. Fertigt leuchtende Bilder – »Wortbilder«, wie er sie nennt. Schreibt: »ITALIEN«, graue Schrift auf leuchtendem Gelb. »Durch die Hintergrundfarbe wollte ich Sonne, Wärme, Zitronen assoziieren, durch die Schriftfarbe an historische Monumente erinnern. Und das Ganze in der Schriftart Italienne.« Er grinst jetzt. »Noch etwas unbeholfen, aber ambitioniert.«

In diesen frühen Arbeiten ist die Quintessenz seiner späteren Werke schon angelegt: Die Erweiterung des Bildraums, die Partizipation des Betrachters, sogar die Farben, von denen er selbst erst Jahrzehnte später erkennt, dass er sie immer wieder verwendet. »Schon da zeigt er sich als präziser, scharfsinniger und kritischer Denker«, sagt Jana Baumann, die am Münchner HAUS DER KUNST die große Franz-Erhard-Walther-Ausstellung kuratiert. Einige der Werke seien in all den Jahrzehnten selten oder noch nie gezeigt worden. Zu oft habe man versucht, Walthers unterschiedliche Arbeiten immer in eine Schublade zu stecken, ohne die Besonderheit und deren Einzigartigkeit zu erkennen. So habe man lange nicht gesehen, »wie er die

In Fulda galt er früher als der Spinner, heute sind sie stolz auf den berühmten Sohn der Stadt

Know-how: Textiltechnikerin Johanna Walther, Franz Erhard Walthers erste Ehefrau, näht bis heute alle Stoffobjekte des Künstlers

FOTOS: MARKUS HINTZEN

Gattungen miteinander verwebt, wie er Sprache, Körper, Skulptur, Malerei, wie er Konzeptkunst und Bild verbindet«. Walther sei durchaus ein »institutionskritischer Geist, der mit seiner Kunst die Orte verändert, den White Cube regelrecht herausfordert«.

Das kam bei der Institution nicht gut an. An der Frankfurter STÄDELSCHULE wird Walther wenig später zwangsexmatrikuliert. Die Arbeiten waren einer »Kunsthochschule nicht gemäß«, vermutet er. Walther experimentiert mit Materialklebungen, ummantelt Holzteile mit Nesselstoff, ganz im Sinne des Informel. Der Grundgedanke war für ihn auch hier derselbe wie schon bei den »Wortbildern«: »Wenn diese Bilder tatsächlich ohne Form, also informell sind, dann muss der Betrachter ihnen Form geben, sie interpretieren, handeln.« 1959 hatte Walther auf der DOCUMENTA in Kassel ein Bild von Barnett Newman und die Leinwandaufschlitzungen von Lucio Fontana gesehen. »Danach war nichts mehr wie zuvor.«

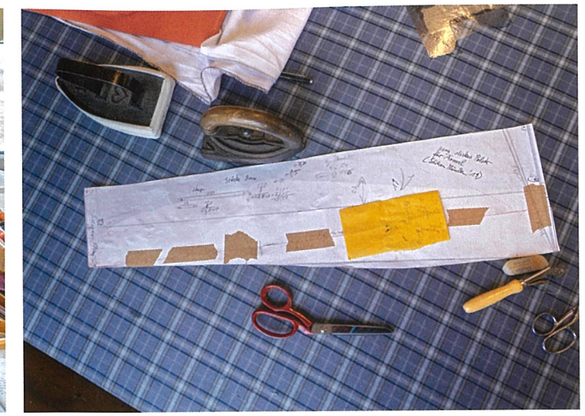
Walther springt jetzt auf in seinem Atelier, holt eine Aktennotiz der STÄDELSCHULE von 1961, die vergrößert und gerahmt an der Wand lehnt. Er liest vor: Walther habe »seit drei Monaten Bilder ohne jede Form gemalt«, außerdem lasse er »keine andere Meinung gelten und nehme nichts an«. Er lässt den Bilderrahmen sinken. »Mit 20 habe ich realisiert, dass das, was ich künstlerisch will, mit Malerei nicht zu machen ist. Das war ein Drama für mich, denn ich habe die Malerei geliebt – und das ist bis heute so geblieben. All meine großen Wandformationen sind ohne bildhaftes Denken nicht möglich.«

Beim Schneider hat Walther den entscheidenden Einfall: Nähen ist die Technik für seine Kunst!

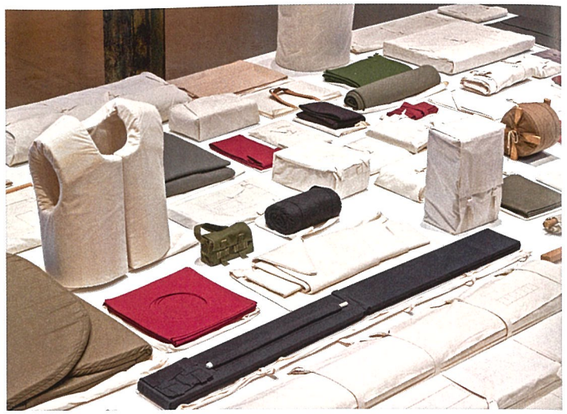
Auch Kuratorin Baumann konstatiert, man habe Franz Erhard Walther zu lange nur im Kontext der Bildhauerei gesehen. »Dabei war und ist die Reibung mit der Malerei ein ganz wichtiger Antrieb. Er schafft Gegenbilder zum Bild.« 1962 zieht Walther weiter, an die legendäre Kunsthochschule in Düsseldorf, trifft dort auf Jörg Immendorff, Sigmar Polke und Gerhard Richter, die mit ihm studieren. »Das war die kritische Masse, die ich brauchte«. Doch auch hier eckt Walther an, gerät in eine Auseinandersetzung mit Joseph Beuys. Dieser bezeichnet seine Packpapierarbeiten als »Aktendeckel« und »Beamtenkunst«. »Er hat einfach nicht verstanden, was ich wollte, meine Konzeption war ihm völlig fremd. Denn seine Objekte steckten immer voller Bedeutung, aber meine Werkstücke durften ja gerade keine Bedeutung enthalten, da diese erst in der Handlung entstehen sollte.« Walther schweigt. »Das war nicht lustig. Beuys hat unter anderem eine Ausstellung von mir in der Galerie Alfred Schmela verhindert. ›Wenn du das Arschloch ausstellst, kriegst du meine Ausstellung nicht‹, soll er gesagt haben. Dabei habe ich ihn geschätzt, er war einer der interessantesten Köpfe in der Akademie.«

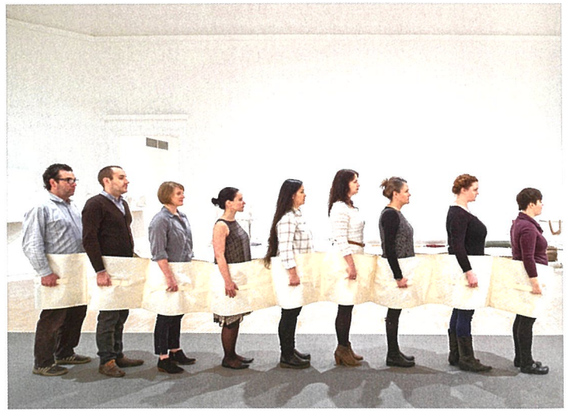
Walther macht weiter. Allein. Er arbeitet mit seinen Papierstapeln, die er umblättert, wieder aufeinanderlegt. »Irgendwann habe ich dann gedacht: Was wäre, wenn das Umblättern Teil der Handlung wäre – das habe ich dann zu meinem Thema gemacht.« Doch das Papier und die Klebung erinnern ihn noch zu sehr an die Collage, die Collage erinnert zu sehr an das Bild. In der Schneiderwerkstatt seiner zukünftigen Schwiegereltern entdeckt er eines Tages ein paar Glanzkissen, die benutzt wurden, um Brust- und Schulterpartien auszubügeln: »Heureka, das Nähen, eine noch nie gebrauchte Technik in der Kunst.« Seine erste Frau Johanna, gelernte Textiltechnikerin, setzt die Nähungen um. Ein »Glücksfall«, wie Walther sagt. Und für Johanna Walther der Beginn ihrer jahrzehntelangen künstlerischen Tätigkeit.

Noch heute näht die 77-Jährige alle Formen und Objekte für Walther – und das, obwohl sie schon lange geschieden sind. Weiterzumachen – das war immer ihre eigene Entscheidung. »Die Sache trägt einfach.« Wir treffen sie in ihrer Werkstatt in einem kleinen Ort, außerhalb von Fulda, draußen vor dem Fenster: Wiesen, Äcker, Waldrand. Es ist kühl hier und still, fast meditativ. Johanna Walther arbeitet an den Ausstellungsstücken für die Münchner Schau. Im Wandregal stehen die Stoffreste, zusammengerollt und nach Größe geordnet: rot, gelb, blau, braun. Wie eine Partitur zu Walthers Wandformationen. »Viele Gespräche« hätten sie damals in der Anfangszeit geführt, erzählt Johanna Walther. »Dann haben wir die Form gefunden für Kissenformen aus Nessel und schwar-



In Johanna Walthers Werkstatt in der Nähe von Fulda entstanden auch die Ausstellungstücke für die Münchner Schau; ein wichtiges Utensil ist das Glanzkissen (Mitte links), mit dem Stoffe in Form gebügelt werden





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Walthers »Werksatz«, bestehend aus 58 Stoffobjekten, wird von Ausstellungsbesuchern in Mexiko und Seattle aktiviert

1. WERKSATZ, GELAGERT UND FOLGENDE ELEMENTE IM EINSATZ: FORM FÜR KÖRPER, POSITIONEN, SEHKANAL, SAMMELOBJEKT (NEUN), 1963–69

<
Franz Erhard Walther und Ehefrau Susanne beim ART-Gespräch in seinem Atelier in Fulda: »Was ich will, war mit Malerei nicht zu machen«

zem Stoff – das Material haben wir einfach aus der Werkstatt meiner Eltern genommen.«

Kennengelernt haben sie sich über den Jungen Kunstkreis Fulda. In Düsseldorf sorgte Johanna Walther in den ersten Jahren für den Lebensunterhalt und zog dann 1967 mit ihrem Mann und den beiden kleinen Söhnen nach New York. Während Walther die Familie als Tortendekorateur in einer Konditorei über Wasser hielt, nähte sie den *1. Werksatz* – eine Zusammenstellung aus 58 Einzelelementen, die von Ausstellungsbesuchern »aktiviert«, also benutzt, behandelt, belebt werden sollen. Die Akteure werden selbst zur Skulptur, zum Teil der Arbeit, zu Bedeutungsträgern. 1969 stellte Walther den *1. Werksatz* im MOMA aus – gemeinsam mit den ebenfalls noch unbekannten Künstlern Dan Flavin und Robert Morris.

»Donald Judd hat damals gesagt: I like your pieces – but without people«, erinnert sich Franz Erhard Walther noch heute. Er profitierte damals vom Austausch mit Künstlern wie Barnett Newman, Judd oder Walter De Maria. »Diese Größe, Freiheit, Großzügigkeit« spiegelt sich zunehmend auch in seinen raumgreifenden Projekten. In den *Schreitsockeln* oder in den *Wandformationen* der siebziger Jahre, die durch ihre »Aktivierung« den Betrachter zur Skulptur machen. Später in den *Körperformen* aus Schaumstoff, Baumwolle und Nesselstoff, die frei im Raum stehen und die menschliche Gestalt spiegeln.

Johanna Walther sagt, sie habe »nie die Zeit gehabt«, zu den Ausstellungen ihres Mannes zu gehen. »Ich habe meine eigenen Erfahrungen mit den Arbeiten, und die sind intensiv.« Die Haptik und Optik der Objekte, ihre Ausstrahlung und Präsenz, ist ohne ihre exakten Anfertigungen und ohne ihr Gefühl für das Skulpturale schlicht nicht denkbar. »Johanna ist nicht ersetzbar«, weiß auch Franz Erhard Walther. Vieles hätte er nicht verwirklichen können ohne sie. Jede seiner Stoffarbeiten entsteht in intensiver Auseinandersetzung mit ihr. Im Augenblick arbeiten sie an einem weiteren Projekt: das *Neue Alphabet*. Alle 26 Buchstaben entstehen aus leuchtend gelbem Stoff, 2,20 Meter hoch. Sie wirken in ihrer Farbigkeit wie eine Reminiszenz an die Pop Art und dabei in ihrer Form doch ungesehen und neu.

Die Buchstaben hat Walther im eigenen Werk von 1958 wiederentdeckt: plastische Körper, im Studium gezeichnet, voluminös und ohne jede Diagonale. So holt ihn seine Kunst immer wieder ein, die Formen, Farben, Handlungen. »Es ist merkwürdig: Dabei habe ich nie biografisch gearbeitet.« Um seinen eigenen Standpunkt zu finden, um eine Erklärung zu geben für sein Denken, hat er allerdings das Projekt *Sternenstaub* realisiert. Darin sind, wie in einem künstlerischen Tagebuch, die prägendsten Erlebnisse und Episoden aus seinem Leben aufgeführt. Text und Zeichnung ergänzen sich. Walther beschreibt darin seine Kriegserlebnisse. Die Nächte im Bombenkeller. Die Erinnerung an den Nachbarn, der von der Gestapo abgeholt wird. Oder seine Schandtat im katholisch geprägten Heimatdorf, als er mit anderen Kindern die lebensgroßen nazarenischen Heiligenfiguren aus der Kapelle zerrte und kurzerhand mit dem Beil enthauptete – um zu überprüfen, ob der Allerhöchste wirklich alles sieht. »Später gab es deswegen eine Wallfahrt für uns. Wir waren vom Teufel besessen – so hat sich das bis heute im Dorf festgesetzt.«

Die extremen Erfahrungen einer Welt, die aus den Fugen gerät, die Perspektive eines Außenseiters, vermischt mit übersinnlichen, auch telepathischen Erlebnissen in seiner Kindheit, haben ihn geprägt. Sie haben ihn, so sagt er, »eine andere Realität erfahren lassen«, die mit der physischen Welt nichts zu tun hatte.

Vielleicht sind die Handlungen, die »Aktivierungen« in seinem Werk auch deshalb so wichtig: Es braucht eine imaginative Kraft, um sie zum Leben zu erwecken, ihre Bedeutung ganz und am eigenen Leib zu erfahren. 1962 habe er in sein Tagebuch geschrieben: »Ich möchte aus der Kunstgeschichte austreten.« Aber doch immer in permanenter Reibung, in Auseinandersetzung mit der künstlerischen Tradition und seiner Zeit. »Letztlich», sagt er, gehe es darum, »die Balance zu finden aus Präzision und völliger Freiheit«. Die Ausstellung in München ist dazu nur ein weiterer Schritt. »Shifting Perspectives« heißt sie. Den Zusatz »Retrospektive« hat sich Franz Erhard Walther verbeten. //

»Letztlich geht es doch darum, die Balance zu finden aus Präzision und völliger Freiheit«

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—*Declan Long*

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tinuing the shape of the palm's trunk and fronds across what appears to be the sky—a background painted in sunset shades of blue, pink, orange, and yellow. Though her paint application is utterly even, Bertrand depicts scenes that seem to have more than just three dimensions. Whether boxing in would-be exteriors with surprising corners and low ceilings or painting objects so that they appear solid in some areas and translucent in others, Bertrand consistently turns our understanding of materiality and perspective upside down and inside out. Her blatantly paradoxical representations of distance and materiality ensure that her virtual realms remain superficially delectable but intellectually impenetrable.

Amélie Bertrand, *Daisy Temple*, 2018, oil on canvas, 86⅝ × 70¾".

Whether intentionally or not, the inclusion of three large-scale digital prints in this exhibition underscored just how well Bertrand's paintings evoke the cyber sphere. While the prints featured the same motifs as those seen in her paintings, the overall aesthetic was quite different. Whereas the painted scenes appeared luminous, crisp, and enticing (even with their impossible distortions), the imagery in the digital prints, set behind glass in shadow box–style frames, was dim, distant, and sometimes pixelated and blurry. The imperfections give an interesting hint of texture and nebulous depth to the prints, but ultimately these digital works are less seductive and complex than Bertrand's painted oeuvre. Though her practice is intimately linked to digital tools and virtual reality, it is only through the work of the hand that she captures the conflicts that characterize our increasingly screen-mediated lives. Bertrand's paintings represent the freedom and claustrophobia associated with screens, the paradoxical sense of connectedness and alienation we feel when we use them, and the ways in which they've changed our understanding of reality.

—*Mara Hoberman*

Santiago de Paoli

GALERIE JOCELYN WOLFF

If the first noun in "*Peintures et Hotline*" (the title of Santiago de Paoli's first solo exhibition in France) announced the paintings on view, the second referred to a binder of erotic drawings, undisplayed but available for viewing on request. The twenty-one oil paintings—variously on felt, wood, plaster, and ceramic—hung at different heights on the gallery's white Sheetrock and exposed-masonry perimeter, save for two, *Chaussettes à centre libre* (Free Center Socks), 2018, which was set leaning against a wall, partially propped up by a stained cork, and *Here you are*, 2018, which lay horizontally on a deep, sun-filled windowsill. The display casually evoked a landscape with various objects in it; one French newspaper review likened the installation to wet laundry hanging on a line. In any case, the Argentinean artist often seemed to treat his paintings more like sculptural objects in a specific place than like two-dimensional windows onto another. The works' small scale and the delicacy of Paoli's brushstrokes, especially on unstretched swaths of felt, conveyed a physical lightness.

Many of the pieces also pictured a landscape of some kind, or else a still life that was somehow comparable to one: objects arranged on a side table or the anamorphic terrain of the artist's palette. *Chaussette maigre* (Skinny Sock), 2018, and *Country sock*, 2017, depict open countryside, one casting it as brushy and wild, the other showing tightly manicured vegetation. Both works also featured the show's recurrent image of a knitted sock, often functioning as a corner frame to a landscape vista. Works such as *Hora sola* (Single Hour), *Early moons*, *Luz con flor* (Light with Flower), and *Cuadro con luz interior* (Picture with Interior Light), all 2017, established a material link to the natural world. Paoli had built up their surfaces' rich sculptural textures by layering organic matter—dried mushroom and dried dandelion, for example—or by burning wax candles close to the canvases to create dark veins of carbon.

But it is not necessarily into the materiality of the natural landscape that de Paoli's work expands. As motifs (such as the socks) repeat across the works like the flickering of memories in deep REM sleep, the paintings conjure an erotic, uncanny dreamscape. Many of the objects that Paoli paints share a formal echo. The curve of the painted eggshells in works such as *Interior light* and *City moons*, both 2018, recurs variously in crescent moons, knee socks, and the cartoonish bulges of naked rear ends. Although the sketchbook, *Hotline*, 2008–2009, is full of them, cross sections of the nude body were present in only two paintings, *Here you are*, and *Tiempo libre* (Free Time), both 2018. Still, the sense of intense corporeal intimacy was present in works throughout the show, whether or not the human form was pictured. The bruised skin of the banana in *Palette*, 2018, for example, loomed like a battered appendage over a rendering of globs of paint on a porcelain plate. In *Country sock*, the tiny crescent moons painted at the tip of the sock suggested a row of toenail clippings. Woolly stockings implied the bare skin they cover. Elsewhere, Paoli evoked the nose—via thin lines of powder awaiting a rapid inhale: The innocent-sounding title of *Luz con flor* slyly ignored the fourteen lumpy slashes of white paint that suggested lines of cocaine prepared on a table. Like a memento mori forcing the proximity of pleasure and death, this detail brought the everyday up against a vast unknown. Reveling in the slow viscosity of oil paint, Paoli invoked a painterly surreality.

Santiago de Paoli, *Luz con flor* (Light with Flower), 2017, oil and dandelion on wood, 11⅜ × 7⅛".

—*Lillian Davies*

DÜSSELDORF

Natalie Häusler

KIT – KUNST IM TUNNEL

Natalie Häusler is a poet as well as a visual artist and typically designs environments in which objects and language organically flow into each other. In this exhibition, titled "Honey," she created a complex scenario incorporating disparate forms of presentation, linked through open dramaturgical interconnections and peppered with literary, aesthetic, and sociopolitical references. Every attempt to come to grips with the ensemble as a whole led the viewer to further avenues of inquiry and generated ever broader chains of association.

The dense polyphony that e
the specific setting of KIT – Kun
tunnel-building project, it is a
slopes gently downward and ha
through a sunny café on the b
suddenly in another world. Ins
the thirteenth-century *Roma*
Häusler reinterpreted the spac
tion of the *hortus conclusus*, o
dise suffused by themes of love

At once prelude and exposi
(Mountain), 2018, a hexagona
honeycomb cell) featuring a m
lava mountain and aquatic pla
raised this scene to eye level,
images that depict the organic
there, *WALL 1*, 2018—a transl
printed on it—led into the cent
were twenty-six unique silk-sc
title is a quotation from the *R*
and fair / enclosed with battle
many a figure / and inscription
featured fish-scale patterns on
lattice windows on the bare
phrase—SEXUAL SELECTION, C
COLORATION—taken from a di
literalizing the idea of these
onto the environment.

In the center of the show w
2018, a nearly forty-foot-long
The water theme, already ann
was here realized in the form
which Häusler connected the e
nature *Lebensreform* movem
rewritten so as to give its pr
tiles decorated with letters of
basin and spelled out the tex
was also available on headp
spans an enormously broad sp
and again textuality proves to
created new links, enabling
content of the fabric of reality

ART FORUM
2020

美术馆之夜：南京金鹰美术馆开馆及四方当代美术馆展览 | ARTFORUM所见所闻

原创 李佳 ARTFORUM中文网 今天

收录于话题
#所见所闻

12个

ARTFORUM艺术论坛

所见所闻

美术馆之夜

南京金鹰美术馆开馆及四方当代美术馆展览

北京UCCA尤伦斯当代艺术中心馆长田霏宇在南京金鹰美术馆窗前.

> 是不是可以说灯光灿烂的都市夜景才是全球化时代最深入人心的大地艺术呢?

“你好呀好久不见”，“啊我刚到，你是什么时候来的？”……这些或长或短，饱含浓重或曲折感情的问候语从无数张嘴里吐出时散发的二氧化碳充满了美术馆灯光明亮的大厅，走进去就意味着要做好准备，深呼吸，保持微笑，一头扎进这片氧气稀薄的海洋，同时不遗余力地贡献自己的一部分排量。不知从何时开始，像点样子的展览总会以这样的前奏曲来宣告“开幕”。展览规模越大，人气越旺，这前奏也会相应地更加热烈绵长。在南京新成立的私人美术馆——金鹰美术馆的开馆晚宴上见到的几乎都是从外地连夜赶来的同行——重逢的愉快、惊喜与和谐在此情此景中翻了倍，当然，前提是你能成功地忘记自己是深度社恐患者这一残酷的现实。

“如同我们，所有莫名的渴望”展览现场，南京金鹰美术馆，2020. 图为林科作品.

可是干嘛要纠结于现实？难道环绕身边的一切不就是现实？新的美术馆，更多的展览，更棒的空间，可期的人流和票房，热闹的宴席和社交，好像艺术原地有了信心，甚至能一扫疫情带来的阴霾。如果你觉得有什么不对，那一定是内心秩序维护没有跟上，或者类似深度社恐这样的感觉盲肠还没有割干净。然而此刻，在距欢声笑语几百米开外的黑暗中，艺术作品正静静相对，同喧嚣的白天相比，夜晚似乎更适合它们，何况人类又不会白白为艺术点灯。它们真幸运，不需要说话就可以存在，可是人却不是总能向自己创造的东西学习……我找了个空档溜出来，尝试在黑暗中重新接近它们：展厅最前端是毛焰的一排大大小小的新画。在宣纸上密密排布一圈圈一层层极细小的笔触，最后仿佛在墨底上组成了一个一个彼此相连成群成片的环状负形，让人忍不住猜想，艺术家之前那些结构重复的肖像画其实源于同样的灰调子游戏及其伴生的纯粹愉悦。中央展厅的仇晓飞的两幅大画被分隔出若干区间，形象在每一个区间生长出类似复调的感性逻辑，挑战人的视觉在棋盘一般的平面上能同时处理多少想象的路径，这几乎复现了人脑中浮现的瞬时切片，它会不会也具有自己的心智？比它们更大的是林科的巨大电脑绘画（六米长，十米高，由二十块拼接而成），图画背景据说来自南京的天空。似乎到了这个份上，美术馆真的变成了乌托邦，很难想象还有哪里能够容许这么大的一块数码印刷桌面毫不客气地宣示自己的顶天立地，也没有什么比这种富于幽默感的庞大体量更能让人看清数码物的本质。

从这座52层高空中的美术馆望向脚下的城市，灯火在各个方向闪动，甚至很难想象地球的另一端还有白天。是不是可以说灯光灿烂的都市夜景才是全球化时代最深入人心的大地艺

术呢？在超大玻璃窗后面展现的南京之夜，和在森美术馆顶楼看到的东京夜色竟有些相似。城市的景色只有拉开距离后才会变得宁谧、广阔、美好。也让美术馆里的人与脚下那些健康码、信用卡、社畜996、空气污染、交通拥堵暂时脱离。这个场景太经典了，让人想起巴尔扎克写《高老头》那个同样经典的结尾——青年野心家拉斯蒂涅在埋葬了高老头后，一个人远眺巴黎的灯火，上流社会熙熙攘攘如同热闹的蜂房，他扫一眼，气概非凡地说了句“现在咱们俩来拼一拼吧”。只不过今天，阶级固化、社会控制等热词当前，再没什么“底层青年”敢妄想一人单挑世界，或许这句话换到此刻会变成“现在咱们俩来拍张照片吧！”只要被镜头收纳，那些花花世界所代表的欲望就瞬间被驯服，甚至净化，变成被平庸和焦虑所充满的日常生活里百转千回的一点闪光，和一点优美的记忆。

“灵与景”展览现场，南京四方当代美术馆，2020. 图为米利亚姆·卡恩作品.

这让人想起十个小时前，在距离南京市区约一个小时车程的另一家私人美术馆，头发花白的老年游客举着长枪短炮，年轻人们相互留影，事毕转头而去，不再看作品一眼。但四方当代美术馆此次“灵与景”展览里的两位女性艺术家——米利亚姆·卡恩（Miriam Cahn）和克劳迪娅·马丁内斯·加拉伊（Claudia Martínez Garay）——的作品确实是非凡而动人的，为此我愿意暂时忘记自己的游客身份，忘记威胁艺术独立、导致价值危机的所谓权力或资本的力量。不过话说回来，现当代艺术自诞生以来难道不是一直处于这样的危机当中吗？甚至可以说，为应对危机而进行的自我证成是整个艺术界运转的核心动力。无论是米利亚姆·卡恩用纯净、放松、仿佛在流动中的颜色塑造出来亦幻亦真的形象，还是克劳迪娅·马丁内斯·加拉伊借助带有手工痕迹的织物、陶器、雕塑和模型讲述的有关古老宇宙的故事，如果

你也曾在静静浮动的颜色，在微小朴拙的雕塑身边，度过足够长的一段时间，直到那个虚空中的世界随着你并不察觉的呼吸而进入你的身体，变得如同血流一般温暖和真实，最终你会感受到来自女性的力量，在最缓慢的节拍中抚触世界。它不在意是否被闪光灯打断，也给人勇气，让人可以不在意他人目光而径直流下泪水。

“灵与景”展览现场，南京四方当代美术馆，2020. 图为克劳迪娅·马丁内斯·加拉伊作品.

文 / 李佳

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ART MOUTHLY
2020

Crowd Control

The Berlin-based video artist discusses crowd phenomena, group dynamics, multiple perspectives and layered histories.

Clemens von Wedemeyer interviewed by Chris McCormack

Transformation Scenario, 2018, video

Chris McCormack: Over the past few months we have seen some of the greatest shifts in how people congregate in public. Given your closeness to the subject of crowds, with many of your works examining how an individual's identity is altered or transformed when part of one, I wondered how far you thought the current pandemic might alter our understanding of public and shared spaces.

Clemens von Wedemeyer: I found myself returning to Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power* from 1960 and rereading his concept of 'invisible crowds'. These are crowds of invisible bodies which comprise the dead and our ancestors, but also bacteria – and I would also add digital data to today's crowd. Canetti observes that these invisible crowds induce paranoia, and we see the sharing of stories which question the origins of the virus and other conspiracy theories as part of that. The virus is also pushing us ever further into a digital environment, like we are sitting here now talking on Skype. As we are pushed more and more into using digital services we are also, for the moment at least, becoming more dependent upon them.

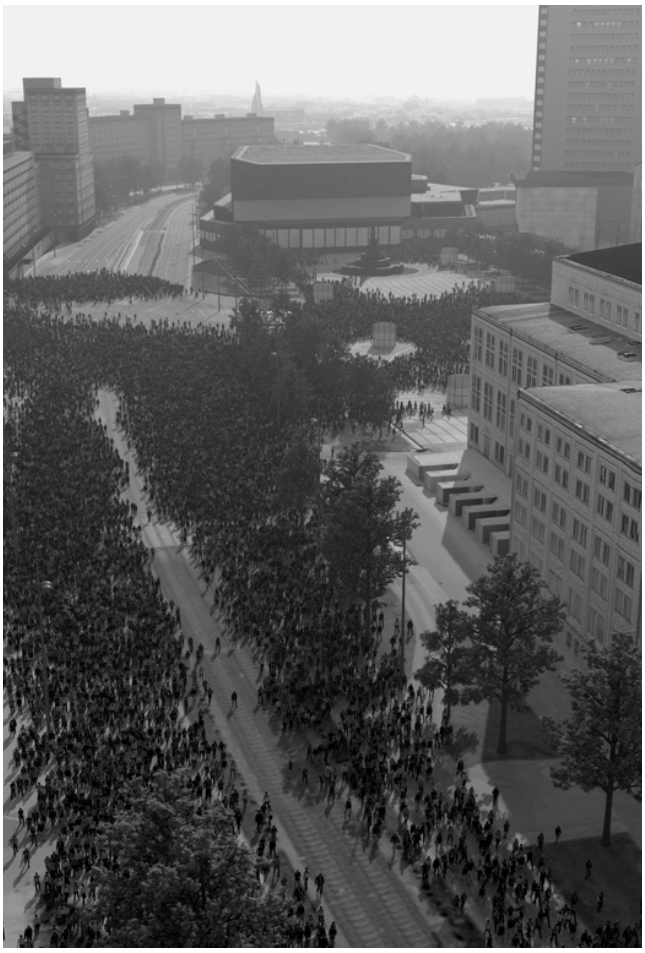
Crowds are still gathering in public but under different conditions. Protesters demonstrating against Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel, for example, are observing a two-metre distance from each other. Conversely, public demonstrations in the US have been politicised by Donald Trump supporters as an inalienable right to congregate. Are we seeing the fracturing of how the public convenes?

I was interested in the crowds as you describe – the strange demonstrations where perimeters of how we gather has shifted – but we also see how vast daily crowds which flow through cities, those who move from A to B and back, have stopped. We have infrastructures made for thousands of people suddenly vacant, and this is something really astonishing to see.

In 2018, I made the video *Transformation Scenario*, which deals with the subject of how algorithms might influence crowd behaviour. During my research I spoke with several social scientists, and one told me that if you stand in a very dense crowd and start walking, even when the light is red, then it is likely that the person next to you will start walking, regardless, across the street – the human crowd often moves like a swarm or a school of fish. So, if everyone is now standing two metres apart, this collective crowd movement will no longer happen. It is interesting to speculate on what this does to society, what the effect will be when we look back in several years.

In the video computer animation *70,001* from 2019 you recreated the Monday demonstrations in East Germany, which started in 1989 and were instrumental in the fall of the Berlin Wall. What was your interest in returning to these protests and re-picturing them as digital assemblies?

The work refers to an incisive protest that took place in Leipzig on 9 October 1989. I studied in Leipzig and, although I now live in Berlin, I continue to teach there. The whole incident is very well documented with videos and thousands of photographs, so I didn't need to take a forensic approach; instead the film has more of a dreamy aesthetic. At first the film is closer to a reconstruction of the event, but it slowly gets more fictitious and more absurd – we see the sun rise and



70,001, 2019, video

fall in the space of seconds and, whether it's day or night, the crowds ceaselessly demonstrate and never go home. The perspective moves from a detailed eye-level viewpoint before rising above the cityscape and then returning back down to the crowd – a sort of arc across the city. It produces a kind of drone image, which perhaps evokes police surveillance, but I also wanted to have this higher position in the centre of the film to show the scale of the protest.

There was an unexpectedly high number of people taking to the streets that day in Leipzig, and as a result the organisers didn't have the means to count all the protesters. They estimated 100,000 people took part, but they were conscious that authorities would have claimed this figure was fictitiously large, so they settled on the more modest amount of 70,000. I added an extra 'one' to this number, to suggest a subjective view or perhaps insert myself within this crowd.

I was also interested in how we consider big numbers, how an action or event is counted or registered. For instance, if it says there are 70,000 likes on a Twitter account, how do we visualise this invisible data? To return to Canetti's ideas of invisible crowds, is it a manifestation of these abstract relationships? How could we visibly form a digital crowd? Would it be different if we could represent these numbers as human figures in digital space, like avatars in a computer game? It seems, however, that whatever you do in the digital realm, public space is still much more efficient – digital demonstrations cannot have the same efficacy as real ones. But these seem to be reinforced by conspiracy theories concocted on the internet.

We also see in *70,001* a building collapse – revealing it as a hollow digital shell. The soundtrack similarly drops out at this point, as if encountering a glitch in the file. From individual action to computer glitch, your work seems to suggest how an anomaly or disruptive action might question the veracity of a collective memory, and might even subvert it.

Right. The glitch produces a disruptive digital transformation. There are several things happening in the film that reveal a non-realistic approach, and also perhaps my wariness of big masses – I am not a fan of big masses of people.

At the end of the film, the crowd becomes so dense that nobody can move any more. Conceptually, I was interested in the idea of a transition from the past to the present or future, and at the end it becomes quite dystopic and nightmarish. I even repeated the same set of figures at the end of the film, as if somebody was hacking the system to reproduce the same person and multiply it; inferring how political bots all look the same.

This move from real to virtual crowds is a consistent subject of yours. From the early video *Mass* of 1998 and 2013's *The Cast* to the recent *Transformation Scenario*, they all consider the aesthetic, financial and logistical ways in which a crowd scene is assembled, clothed and fed. Hollywood cinema has often incorporated and employed extras – or supernumeraries – but increasingly the movements and behaviours are mapped as predictive tools for 'real world' probabilities.

I have always been interested to see how far cinematic images leave the screen and influence life, or not. Particularly the background in cinema and extras – you could say that people who are not active enough in political movements are acting as extras, just standing around. Cinema is also an example of how technology renders workers redundant, because extras can increasingly be replaced by virtual supernumeraries.

The figure of a quietly agitating outsider, an anomaly that informs the whole, also returns throughout your work. In *Faux Terrain*, also from 2019, the film touches on the conditions of someone who appears to be an immigrant. It is also partly filmed at the Bourbaki panorama in Lucerne. What led you to this location?

How could we visibly form a digital crowd? Would it be different if we could represent these numbers as human figures in digital space, like avatars in a computer game? It seems, however, that whatever you do in the digital realm, public space is still much more efficient – digital demonstrations cannot have the same efficacy as real ones.

Disaster Response Drill, 2019, video

I was invited by the Kunstmuseum Luzern to do an exhibition there, jointly with the Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig. I initially considered making a film at the museum but became intrigued with the panorama, a construction that has a strong relationship with the cinematic. At the same time, I learned that Jeff Wall took the photograph *Restoration* there in 1993, and a copy is in the museum's archive (Interview *AM*179*)*. The tableaux depict the history of 87,000 soldiers crossing the border from France to Switzerland, where they sought refuge during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. So this is a really important painting for Switzerland because it represents the country's values, and it also coincides with the founding of the Red Cross.

I met the restorer, the same person who appears in Wall's photograph, and they allowed us to film where the diorama ends and dissolves into an illusory white ground – the *faux terrain* or false ground. Into this scene, I developed this figure of a stranger who doesn't speak throughout the duration of the film, so you never know who she is. She becomes the classical model for a viewer to project on – a cipher.

We also see a bunker made during the Cold War for the survival of Swiss citizens during a possible nuclear fallout. As we watch her move through the city, the way society protects nationhood takes on a powerful subtext – who is included and who is excluded?

I liked the contradiction of 'false ground'. The term seemed to refer not only to the situation in Switzerland, or indeed how Europe is dealing with immigrants, but also to the figure of the stranger. On the one hand, everything seems open, but on the other it is very difficult to enter society somehow, and this society, like in *Faux Terrain,* is always rehearsing its outcomes, mirroring its histories to itself to the exclusion of others. So this figure suddenly walks towards the crowds coming and she cannot enter, they push past her.

The nuclear-fallout bunkers have remained empty since their construction in the mid 1960s, but in 2015 some Syrian migrants were temporarily housed in them. Over the years, there have been debates in Switzerland about whether the bunkers should be kept, some of them having been neglected and fallen into disrepair. One bunker in Lucerne was once the largest in the world. Mostly I try to shoot in locations that reflect on the values of the culture. Like Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopias, the architecture already produces a certain image of its society. How group dynamics are influenced by these architectures continues to be a subject of interest for me.

Similarly, in *Disaster Response Drill*, we see what looks to be good governance, the work showing how progress is indebted to protecting its future, however speculatively, by preparing for a disaster. The question of resilience, biological or financial – particularly in this viral pandemic, which balances life against financial impact – cuts across the globe in different ways, including Europe. This work seems to comment on these discrepancies and inequities.

Faux Terrain, 2019, video

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I really wanted to see one of those emergency services exercises, not least to see how the crowd moves under stress. Also, more prosaically, it's not so costly to film. It almost felt like a procession, a bit like a ritual that society is producing – a ritual of security. It revealed to me how roles in society are hardened through routines, so everyone knows which role to play. Of course, these roles are often necessary, because once we have an accident it is good that people are organised, but it also closes down the possibilities of how we might otherwise respond to a situation such as an emergency.

The scenario unfolds after a boat has supposedly capsized, an event that has happened countless times over the past few years in the Mediterranean where migrants are seeking help and shelter in Europe. But instead they are conducting a rehearsal of it in a lake in Leipzig. Maybe they didn't think about it, or maybe they thought this is a trial run for when we do go to the Mediterranean and help others, not just ourselves. But all the extras were local people, from the next village or city, so it was a strange situation in which this society seemed to be taking care of only itself.

Returning to how group dynamics are influenced by architectures, in *Muster (Rushes)*, two characters break apart the set of the prison they are held in, revealing the construction of the scene, the lighting rig and camera equipment. Do you consider this a revelatory moment for the viewer?

I made the three-screen work *Muster (Rushes)* for dOCUMENTA (13) in 2012. I was interested in this idea of opening a door through to a different time. It is a nice cinematic effect, because you have this frame that you can change or use to lead the spectator to different spaces or rooms that are normally unconnected. The building was once a convent, a prison, then a concentration and labour camp, later a girl's reformatory in the 1970s and today it is a psychiatric clinic that has also been the Breitenau memorial since the 1980s. Here, in that one place, one can see recurring patterns over time. In the linear feature film version, the three individual passages are woven together so that memories and shifts in time are produced, all of which revolve around the same location.

Muster (Rushes), 2012, three-channel video installation

From the beginning, when I started shooting films and taking photographs, I was always interested in the view that I'm not seeing, what I am turning away from when concentrating on this view. By producing what might be considered a 'false-image' of reality, I became interested in how I might show its construction. So I started making 'making of' films, and this would become a second layer, to show a multi-perspective view of a given scenario. Some of my works almost look like a group exhibitions, as I'm building several different perspectives. I'm interested in presenting different angles in order not to fall into one ideology, and to break down the wall of the screen into the exhibition space.

We are continually pivoting or cycling through subjectivities or points of view in your work, often creating an uncomfortable closeness to the subject. None more so than in the multipart project POV and 2016's *Against the Point of View*. The work combines footage from the Second World War of a German soldier prohibiting a refugee or political prisoner from crossing a bridge, along with a virtual model of the scene. The action is replayed across different perspectives, including from dead to alive. What led you to this subject matter?

The footage that I used for this project belonged to my grandfather, who was a German officer in the Wehrmacht. I never met him, he died 20 years before my birth in the 1950s, but he left an archive of films that he made during the Second World War. I had no personal relationship with the material, only through my mother. It is problematic material because it's shot from the point of view of a German soldier, and I sought ways to analyse it, to destroy it, in order to have a different view of it. So in this project I developed, partly in dialogue with the photographer Eiko Grimberg, seven different ways to treat this material, one of which is the computer game that you mention. In this work, I'm interested in showing how the view of the German officer is constructed, with a forensic focus. For instance, to see how far the bridge is from the truck where this woman is standing, and to understand what he films and the positions and relationships they are all implicated in. In the three hours of material that he shot, this is the only instance where we see someone hiding their face not wanting to be filmed, hiding her two children. That is why I titled it *Against the Point of View*, because she understands what it means to be filmed by the oppressor. I wanted to see why he returns to film her again after walking a few metres, and to see how his interest and feelings might be made visible. Why did he return to her and not to another view from the place he was standing?

Against the Point of View, 2016, video

Why return to this material?

These are the possibilities that I thought about at the time. I probably might do things differently now. My grandfather's films were always in the back of my mind and how I might work with them. As people forget or repress National Socialist history, including nationalistic parties in Germany like the AfD, I think it's a very necessary reminder to show this history, to demystify and analyse ostensibly banal points of view.

Another part of the project is the speeded-up 16mm film *Untitled (Everything)*, where we see the motifs and outlines of war. Why did you decide to speed the film up? It becomes an almost physically convulsive account of how cameras enable recordings of traumatic histories.

While showing all the material in one accelerated film, one experiences the dilemma between seeing all and seeing the gaps. I extracted sequences from the entire archive because I wanted to show that there is always more, that we are still seeing only a partial view within what is the entire contents of the archive. So you cannot really see, but, as you say, only see and feel motifs reappearing. It almost becomes an experimental film, like a flicker film. The place of experimental filmmaking enables both an analytic potential of looking at this film and also a physical, bodily experience of looking at it through a singular point of view. *Untitled (Everything)* was the only 16mm projection within an exhibition of video installations. In relation to this work, I also decelerated the same footage to physically render a range of how we might differently experience the duration of these images.

I wonder what you think of the work of Forensic Architecture. While their work effectively redraws history using technology to provide a non-state-sponsored version and ultimately more accurate rendering of an event, your work, although sometimes forensic, keeps us aware of its contingencies.

It is good that Forensic Architecture produces evidence on specific events where it is really needed. And it's a side-effect that while using pictures and videos as operative images for their analysis they restore a belief in images that had been lost in the past decades – in the 'Photoshop era'. But they are using images as landscapes and data, not psychological triggers. It is a different approach. I think there are always these two sides, or even more. Even when you are bringing images to court, there still remains doubt. So, it's very interesting what they are doing, as they are conscious of this dilemma. Images are part of a system of representation, like art. And the more one is stressing an objective view as truth, the more a subjective experience claims attention.

There is a sequence in *Muster (Rushes)* where we see a teenage boy putting on headphones while taking part in a guided tour of the former concentration camp. By picturing the despondency of the teenager, we see how the simple act of someone not listening becomes a layered action that redirects the present moment.

In this moment of the film, the teenager tries to emotionally absorb the story for himself through punk music. It's interesting and scary how fast this can happen, this blending of fiction and reality. It is something that everyone is familiar with, from dreams to the entertainment industry, how you can shift your reality. I think this phenomenon needs analytical attention, but it must be experienced.

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