

Under Construction

Teresa Bräula Reis, Lukas Hoffmann, Aurélien Martin, Michel Sauer

31.8. – 26.10.2019, Opening 30.8.2019, 18h

The title of this group exhibition refers to artistic positions that have something inherently processual, in the broadest sense of the term, about them. The phrase alludes to things, processes and ideas that are still emerging, and implies both openness for unanticipated twists and turns, and careful planning. At the same time, it evokes the notion of something that is not yet complete and can thus still be altered. And like an accompanying echo, the opposite resounds in our minds: real and mental dismantling, destroying and demolishing. Taking these together, the two antagonists develop a potential that is as artistic as it is poetic.

Gordon Matta-Clark recognised this in a visionary way. His cuttings, done in the 1970s through the facades, walls, ceilings and floors of buildings using a chainsaw, are still an altogether inspiring gesture for artists today. At the time, those cuttings did not just expose – architectural – structures and create new views. As paradoxical as it may sound, the artist also exposed the constructive side of processual destructive actions. As regards this group exhibition, what is instructive is above all the fact that with his conceptual approach Gordon Matta-Clark also developed a future-oriented set of artistic tools with which not only architecture, but also urban situations and landscapes, different art genres and everyday objects could be reflected on from an aesthetic, sociological, political and ideological viewpoint.

Lukas Hoffmann (*1981, CH) and Aurélien Martin (*1993, CH) succeed in dissolving rigid ideas and maintaining the works they create in a sort of neither-nor state. What is more, and very much in the sense of Umberto Eco's plea for an open work of art, the perspective here shifts from the work to its reception, so that, for the viewers, the state of uncertainty captured in the sculptures or photographs includes a mentally challenging incompleteness. For example, in Aurélien Martin's works, to be understood neither as design nor as objects or sculptures, both handicraft and industrial construction processes are exposed in such a way as to draw our attention subtly to the process. In the case of Lukas Hoffmann, this is done by the photographic technique, the choice of angle, frame or incident lighting. He finds his motifs during excursions around urban peripheries and wastelands. He then uses an analogue camera to isolate precise sections, respectively images with a direct presence and sensual quality, from this open spatial continuum. In the process, he unobtrusively exposes historical compositional principles and aesthetic processes.

Teresa Bräula Reis (*1990, PT) devotes her attention to architecture, construction and decay. In doing this she experiments repeatedly with materials from her surroundings, for example, bricks or concrete, which she subjects to a process of controlled decay. The forms are often reminiscent of architectural elements, above all in the works she installs on-site and then destroys. With such works, she reflects the processual in both the creative-constructive and the destructive sense. At the same time, she always directs our gaze beyond the art space to our human, built up surroundings, which are subject to constant transformation.

You can never be quite sure whether the objects made by Michel Sauer (*1949, D) want to be perceived as models, designs, copies or three-dimensional abstract studies. Undoubtedly their size, which recalls architectural models, contributes to this positive indetermination. Added to this the fact that although the constructive processes may well be visible and comprehensible – we encounter them at every turn in our constructed everyday life – the resulting aesthetic points above and beyond what exists in reality. This in-between state is therefore a wonderful catalyst for philosophising about ascriptions, processes of change and shifting meanings.

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