

"Radical Stories": Nyakallo Maleke and Sylvain Croci-Torti

6 -28 September 2024

Opening 5 September 2024, 5-8pm

There is something radical about telling stories with lines, surfaces, structures or colours that cannot be read figuratively. On the one hand, it means respecting the autonomy of the materials and design elements used, while at the same time focussing on their ability to communicate, indeed to claim it.

In the focus of the works by Nyakallo Maleke (*1993, ZA) shown in the exhibition is on her drawing practice, which the artist describes as an expressive form of communication. This is based on a tradition that has always associated drawing with the visualisation of thought processes and ideas. However, she extends this concept to the physical experience of people in real space, in a specific city, in a specific physical location. In a time of increasing virtualisation of our spaces of experience and knowledge, her drawings therefore read like notations of a performative process. The interplay of pencil, charcoal, needle, thread, metallic yarn, cotton and found materials develops complex narratives in an open artistic process. Space, movement and action interlocks to form a kind of manuscript or subjective cartography that can be the starting point for alternative experiences in public space.

In contrast, Sylvain Croci-Torti's (*1984, CH) paintings interact directly with the gallery space. After his three dimensional and sculptural paintings of the last show with annex14 he enters into a dialogue with the architecture with three square stretcher frames covered with painted canvas. They are clamped between two supporting walls or hung directly on the wall. The actual picture surface remains empty and is therefore no longer the familiar metaphorical window to the world. The gaze falls directly on reality, in this case on painted walls. The focus on what painting is or can be is thus fanned out in many different ways. The boundaries between the autonomy of painting and context-related entanglement become blurred and fluid. Conceptual boundaries are radically scrutinised and once again an extremely exciting chapter is added to the history of painting.

Elisabeth Gerber, August 2024