

GRAND GESTURES

3. September – 15. Oktober 2016

Kevin Aeschbacher | Heidi Bucher | Sophie Bueno-Boutellier
Megan Rooney | Yorgos Sapountzis | Jessica Warboys

«What was to go on canvas was not a picture but an event» theorist Ronald Rosenberg wrote into his diary after observing the works of Jackson Pollock. Back in those days, in 1952, action painting was seen as the purest form of union between painting and performance.

Six positions are united within «Grand Gestures» which engage themselves, sometimes exclusively, with the production of painting, positions that have remained performative in their approach towards perception and craft. Painting works as a medium, a carrier of truth, which is designed to manifest a work of art itself (that which is depicted on canvas) as eternal. This imminent truth remains always present even in the absence of the artist. The medium of performance, then, does the exact opposite – it is an ephemeral experience, direct and ostensible. Unlike painting, a performance is tied to a single moment in time, remains elusive and volatile only ever present in photographs or videos as well as the within its conceptualization. Both of these forms of expression, however, share the power to engross entire spatial entities including the recipients present.

The second exhibition by Freymond-Guth Fine Arts in Basel is staged as an experimental arrangement. It attempts at examining correlations between painting, performance and the universal presence of artifacts or corporealities within spaces. It unites the artwork of artists who could hardly be more dissimilar, who, however, despite being different in practice and technique, attempt at examining and illustrating similar phenomena - in particular by means of use of intermediality as well as the resulting interactions and narrations.

It is in this manner, for example, that Jessica Warboys “Sea Paintings” came into existence - a performative act between her and the tides of the sea - in which she allows the waves of ocean to interact with the pigments upon a canvas. What remains are remnants of sand and salt, which stick to the paintings and change them in substance. The motives and oil paintings by Swiss artist Kevin Aeschbacher are initially conceived on a computer by means of Photoshop and only after are they, in the tradition of the classical painting format, transformed into oil paintings. What results is a unification of digital and analog techniques as well as the bridging of the 21st century with the traditions of the previous centuries. Canadian artist Megan Rooney completely re-interprets space with strong wall paintings, performances and objects. She implements space with rocks found in river Sihl (Zurich) and painted with faces. Sophie Bueno-Boutellier creates works of minimalism, which could be interpreted as paintings as well as stage designs, a technique, which unites space and art and highlights, above all, its presence. Finally, Yorgos Sapountzis works with pictorial prints on cloth, which, similarly to his videos, reference the traditional depiction of bodies. Sapountzis allows an effortlessness within his art that keeps everything continuously moving and within an imaginary spatiality. This notion becomes particularly evident within the video: «Die Landschaften Griechenlands», in which the recipient is faced with a continually changing scenography of metal residue and textile which is staged as a stop motion picture.

Heidi Bucher has conducted a comparatively early interpretation of a union between spatial presence, pictorial instruments, performance and corporeality. «Der Schlüpfakt der Parkettlibelle» is a segmented work of art which was realized between 1983 – 1989 in Le Landeron. Apart from a series in four parts containing of skin castings, it further contains a number of dresses, which were crafted from within as well as directly on the mannequin. The conceptualizations of all artifacts resulting from this oeuvre were meticulously documented. What remains is an ample amount of documentation as well as a film illustrating the development of the series over the years.

The exhibition will be complemented with a performance by Megan Rooney, on Friday, September 23rd, 7pm.

For further information as well as images please contact the gallery.
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