



Joachim Bandau «Alles nur Illusion»

Tilo Schulz «Facing the blank...»

In the large space of the gallery, Joachim Bandau's 1967 floor sculpture *Ophelia, badewassergrün* spreads in a bright turquoise across the concrete floor. On first glance, the waves seem to rise up at the edge, upon stepping closer they refer to the core of the sculpture. Parts of a shop window mannequin are embedded in polyester and covered in lacquer. Divided into four sections, the sculpture refers to a work process that has run through Bandau's oeuvre for years, for decades. From the fragmentary, a whole emerges, a whole that results from a process of addition.

Seven watercolors form the foundation of the exhibition «Alles nur Illusion». Layers of paint in different shades of black, that is to say in different densities, are applied on top of one another and form illusions of spatial structures that present themselves on the handmade paper, sometimes ordered and dense, sometimes airy and tissue-like.

The paintings emerge in a work process that consists of several steps. With a broad Japanese brush, watery layers are applied to the flat paper. This forms ripples in which the paint collects, which in turn is removed with the brush. As the layer of paint dries, a fine line emerges along the margins, a line frames the individual surfaces that seems almost drawn. Layer for layer – intuitively, in a conversation between the emerging work and the artist – an ever-denser black and depth emerge. This is quite reminiscent of a sculptural way of working, building up layer after layer, while at the same time the temporal dimension of the process becomes visible. Almost film-like, as in a time lapse, the process of application takes place before our inner eye. From a distance, a slight flicker of the surfaces is generated. While the shapes of his earlier watercolors move from the outside toward the center, the newest works deal with the margin of the image. The surfaces are layered parallel to one another and the edge of the paper in a regular rhythm beyond the format.

Another field of illusion is opened in the lacquer works. Bent, carved wood is covered in several layers of Bagan lacquer, creating a deep, shiny black. The slight remove of the objects from the wall as well as the mirroring and distortion on the rounded shapes in turn imply a spatiality, amplified by the shadows of the wall objects that are reminiscent of the fine degrees of black of the watercolors.

Parallel to Joachim Bandau's «Alles nur Illusion», Tilo Schulz shows in «Facing the Blank...» five works from the series «Your Head Is Not My Prison (Portraits)» and the floor sculpture «I Built a Desert under the Bridge».

Like a stage, gray, precisely treated floor boards are spread across the space, dividing it with empty gaps in an exact pattern. The distance from the walls, the free placement in the space, makes the installation into a kind of floor sculpture that nonetheless must be entered. The wall works in their small formats and their fineness force the visitors to examine the works closely and thus to walk across the boards. But since these boards have a core of foam, they give in to every step. A scarcely perceptible uneasiness takes hold, and thus an awareness of every step – a searching for balance that is so subtle that we become unsure whether it is happening beneath our feet or in our heads.

In this slightly unsure state, we find ourselves face to face with the wall works: crumbled pieces of paper, covered with cream-colored acrylic lacquer, that are backed with foam. The images, which recall portraits in their format, represent an



undefined, vague vis-à-vis, and recall skin in their color and their structure. The paint layer preserves and amplifies the sculptural quality, cementing over fine tears in the paper and leaving behind a brush structure and drops of paint in a painterly moment. The work opposite the glass front was smoothed before being lacquered, while others stand out like reliefs in the space.

Schultz' abstract, reduced works promote the perception of the beholder on all levels. Only using traces of allusions, a site is created with the ideal requirements to generate content. In so doing, the beholder fills the space in a double sense of the word. We encounter our own actions and cognition, a search for location, an insecurity, and a sense of restriction.

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