

«Unsere Love hat Niemand überprüft»

**Kai Fischer, Benjamin Hönsch, Benjamin Koglin, Elisa Lohmüller,
Fabian Widukind Penzkofer, Isabel Stoffel**

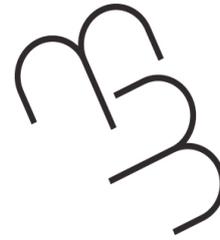
**An exhibition with students from ABK Stuttgart (Klasse Boller)
September 3–October 15, 2022**

The exhibition *Unsere Love hat Niemand überprüft* at Galerie Mark Müller presents the work of six promising students from the class of Reto Boller at Kunstakademie Stuttgart. The works also share an experimental approach to materials and a fundamental openness to process-oriented approaches to art production.

The text-based fabric work *Unsere Love hat Niemand überprüft* by Fabian Widukind Penzkofer provides the exhibition's title: a supposedly coincidental sentence, like one from a translation program. Since 2018, Fabian Widukind Penzkofer has been experimenting with the interaction between the online tool Google Translator and Goethe's late elegies. He thus explores the mutual influence between artificial and organic intelligence, creating an epigram that thematizes the changes in language due to Internet culture. Alongside the line of text, Penzkofer also presents the tripartite installation *Personal*, an embroidered series of individual figurative representations in the form of bust portraits that are draped across chairs. The figures enter spatially into a relationship with one another, but the red eyes, all the same shape, make them appear mentally absent. They seem to have departed from this world, existing in another, perhaps the World Wide Web. The intuitively placed needle stitches in the fabric recall the topography of a printed circuit board, the heart of electronic and thus digital applications. In combination, the works can also be read as an investigation in terms of systems theory of coexistence and love under the conditions of the digital.

The works of Kai Fischer also question and "hack" existing orders. His *Recibos*, receipts painted in series, deconstruct the foundational principle of the classical panel painting and mark it as a commodity fetish in Benjamin's sense. On the art market, painting still achieves the highest prices and continues to dominate the majority's conception of what art is. A key work of Western painting is Caracchi's *The Bean Eater* (oil on wood, 1538). Fischer translates this work to a mundane sales receipt, which he then transforms back into a panel painting. This painting can be decoded: the address on the receipt, Via della Pilotta in Rome, represents the location of the painting at Galleria Colonna in Rome and of course fagioli al fiasco, beans in the flask, were listed as one of the items purchased. The subject of the bean eater is also fitting because Fischer repeatedly uses rituals and objects in his works that come from a proletarian connotated milieu. He thus thematizes questions of social background in the art world.

In his work *Safetycheck 1*, Fischer provides a commentary on the omnipresent need for security in our present. He repeats the toasting of a piece of bread until the smoke sets off the alarm, then continues to roast the bread until the sprinkler system is triggered to extinguish the fire. But the artist himself remains stoic in the face of the developments around him. An artist's life is defined by insecurities, living with them is a basic condition for survival as an artist, which requires more willingness to take risks than other ways of living.

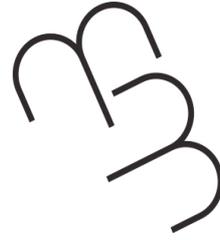


In many of his works, Benjamin Hönsch explores the trace as a gestural and materialized moment of artistic expression in drawing. For his project *Ben baut Zeichnung* (Ben Builds Drawing) he invited for the first time in July 2022 seven select participants to use their full bodies to draw on paper placed on the floor using “tools” he provided. They drew at the same time and appear performatively in relationship to one another. His drawing tools are based on materials that the artist collects and reassembles so they can be used as drawing instruments, but also independent sculptural works. The tools enable a physical expansion of the drawing process and make difficulty a method. Control over the line moves to the background and the tool itself is granted autonomy. With this project, Hönsch makes collective aesthetic experience possible and shares his own processual experience searching for his own trace with others. The corporeal, but also the socio-cultural and personal backgrounds of the participants have an influence in the process in how the tools are used and the interaction of the individuals with one another also becomes visible in the traces on the paper. The work itself thus becomes an impression of social action under the conditions of drawing. With this work, Hönsch combines two of his major interests: work in the collective and his researching engagement with the medium of drawing.

The work *In Partikeln existieren* (Existing in Particles) by Elisa Lohmüller also emerges in a processual fashion and is based on the artist’s material research. She begins with the flat application of a black mass of glycerin, vinegar, starch, water, and pigment on the floor. In the style of an informal composition, gestural structures emerge that then continuously change over the course of time. The black, pigment-based mixture increasingly contracts and shrinks. The composition, applied densely at first, separates organically into islands of color that can be viewed individually or in context with one another. By way of its placement on the floor, this evokes organic structures as they emerge in nature, allowing a topography of individuation to emerge from the homogeneity of the paint surface.

In her works, Isabel Stoffel experiments frequently with various textiles and pieces of clothing that she subjects to painterly processes. She often works with paint, and partially tears apart, cuts, reduces and dissolves the material. Her untitled work confronts the beholders with three life-size figures that she painted on a bedsheet. The actual pattern of the quilted bedspread can be recognized in the upper part of the image and strengthens the arch of tension in the composition. She has soaked the material itself in paint, covering it in lacquer, then painting and spraying it. By way of paint and the use of lacquer, rigid folds emerge in the deep red cloaks, at the same time robbing the material of some of its organic nimbleness. The three faces were cut from the fabric, the remaining gaps were then framed with the hair made using the filling. The holes in the bodies of the figures can be conceived as injuries. Stoffel thus treats subjects like vulnerability in interpersonal relationships, but also the transformability of organic materials by processual artistic ways of working. That there are precisely three figures visible is an important consideration of the work. As of three, we can speak of a group. This is a key point, for the artist is interested in group dynamics and relationships, but also the interaction with the beholder as a group dynamic process and part of the work.

The work *orBis* by Benjamin Koglin is an assemblage of objects that oscillate between corporeality and fragment. *orBis* sits on a red tarpaulin, upon which is placed a plastic ball, that is partially covered by a skin-like texture. An



outstretched hand completes the composition, which is reminiscent of a torso. For orBis, Koglin uses leftovers and everyday objects of our civilization as the foundation for this sculptural modulation. In contrast to classical or neo-classical torsos, Koglin's work is assembled using several parts, and is not carved monolithically as if from stone. In this way, the fragility of the sculpture can be interpreted as a reference to ever more complex and fluid personality formations. Heroic representations of idealized physical proportions based on classical models, which rely primarily on strength and a less than complex ideal of beauty, seem long out of date. The demands faced by modern humanity are multilayered, as are the structures and thought processes required to master them. The material plastic here stands in for the Anthropocene and the ecological challenges of our time that form the framework for these processes of transformation.

Sebastian Schmitt, Stuttgart, August 26, 2022
Translation: Brian Currid