

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

THOUGHTS ON TACTILITY - with works by Katinka Bock, Johanna Jaeger, Kathrin Köster, Edith Kollath, Helena Petersen, Kathrin Sonntag, Jenna Westra organized by Johanna Jaeger & Anne Schwarz

18 January to 23 February 2019

Press Release

The exhibition *thoughts on tactility* presents works by seven artists who address the dimension of the corporeal.

When does an object become corporeal? Why is the notion of the corporeal so important for beholding, understanding, and categorising what we see?

In the exhibited works, photographic surfaces come close to what we experience in three dimensions, bodies are interwoven in such a way that their individual traces are lost in the surface. A portrait of a person is juxtaposed with a portrait of an object. Traces of actions turn into abstract representations.

Bodies become a form, a surface. They are visually interwoven and alienated until individual gestures dissolve in the composition. The point where the eye hits the work – the surface – plays an important role in many of the exhibited works. It is the entrance to a work, the place where observation begins.

Katinka Bock's work *Five Speaker (2014/2018)*, an assemblage of various materials, extends into the space vertically and horizontally. Surface and spatial arrangement create a reference system between the individual elements. A canvas with gradient color patches – the result of an exhibition where the visitors could moisten the canvas and thus change its property – is reflected in a raised copper plate on which four roughly spherical shapes made of differently colored clay can be found. A fifth such clay shape is placed on the floor. The materiality of the different surfaces is complemented by various reflections and opposites, and creates an impression of something between earthy and industrial, between

outside and inside, of something shaped in a way that is somewhere between controlled and natural.

Johanna Jaeger is represented with the video *temporary visitor (18.9.2018)*, showing an object dancing in the wind in front of a blue sky. A leaf from a tree that got caught in a cobweb in front of the artist's studio window. Since the window is not visible in the video, the leaf seems to float freely and becomes a metaphorical representative, a plaything of the breeze, exposed to the elements.

Kathrin Köster's work *tender buttons 1* takes its motif from the clothes seen in two fifteenth-century Renaissance paintings by Giovanni and Gentile Bellini. Printed here greatly enlarged on a piece of silk cloth, they are equipped with porcelain handles picturing the inside of a hand. The work suggests that it might be wearable. The folds of a garment become a garment again, changed in terms of time and scale.

Edith Kollath's *Findlinge #2 & #3 (EINFG><ENTF)* are temporally transplanted. Originally moved by the forces of the ice age, these boulders were strangers where they were found, consisting of rocks atypical for the area. The artist gives these bodies of time an unexpected appearance in a new temporality by smashing them apart, and then meticulously reassembling them. Moveable hinges make it possible to unfold these boulders and fold them back together. By exposing their insides, layers preserved over millions of years see the light of day for the first time.

Light is also at the centre of **Helena Petersen's** photographic work *Pyrographie, Colour XV, 2013*. The abstract colour motif shows a double shot – two calibres shot simultaneously in opposite directions, whose explosions are captured on photographic paper as a photogram. The image of the shots is unique and cannot be reproduced because countless factors, such as the distance to the photographic paper and the kind and precise composition of the calibre, influence the result. At the end, we get a poetic image, a landscape perhaps: the outcome of a violent gesture.

Kathrin Sonntag, represented in the exhibition with the four collages *Dinglinge #20-23* and the object *Glücksgriff*, intertwines everyday things quite humorously. We look at familiar bodies and objects that, stripped of their function, cannot be identified properly because they have left their intended sphere of action. In a ceramic object, two hands have grown together with a vase, as if touch would automatically lead to such an amalgamation. In Sonntag's collages, a tree can become, without further ado, a musical instrument, or an overblown strawberry can turn into a new kind of wrinkle dog, a decorative little animal. All this happens in full disclosure of the level of the photographed and collaged. Several frames are visibly placed on top of one another and hint at the exchangeability of the individual components.

Jenna Westra treats bodies and objects as equal artistic material in her photographic mis-en-scenes, creating unexpected interrelationships. The silver gelatin print *Tights Pinch* shows a cropped leg in tights in such contrast that a hand pulling the nylon just slightly out of shape serves as an irritable factor visually turning the nylon into skin. The work oscillates between a graphic composition and the depiction of an actual body.

In *Hand Squeezing Lemon into Open Mouth, Onlooker (Greyscale)* we witness a ritualistic act between three people, a bouquet of flowers, and a lemon. The linking of very different materials and an experimental equation of them on the level of the photographic is typical for Westra's works. As a result, the moment when the artist decides on a picture has a free quality – as if the next moment could also be a picture.