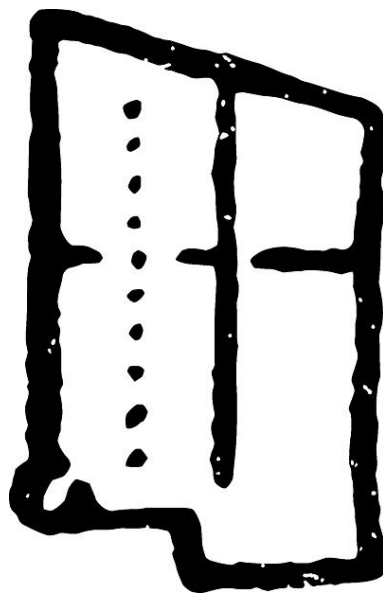


47th Bremen Young Artists Award for Fine Arts 2023

March 10 to May 5, 2024



A short guide through the exhibition

Small Gallery

ANJA ENGELKE, *Sleeping by the Dataflow*, 2023, five AI images, megalight posters, *Sleeping by the Dataflow*-Preprint, publication „Alec Soth: Sleeping by the Mississippi“

Anja Engelke's contribution *Sleeping by the Dataflow* refers, like previous projects of hers, to an iconic series of photographs and a (male) protagonist in the history of photography. Alec Soth's *Sleeping by the Mississippi*, first published in 2004, is a photographic field research along the Mississippi River that focuses primarily on the people of the area and revolves around the themes of religion, identity and sexuality. For the photographer, the well-known series, was a breakthrough; photographs from it are part of a contemporary photographic canon. Anja Engelke went through Alec Soth's series picture by picture (with his knowledge and consent) and had all 48 photos in his publication reproduced by an artificial intelligence in several steps. First, an AI "read" the images and converted them into descriptive text, known as prompts, which are required for an AI to generate images. From the images that were then created in the second step the artist made a selection for the exhibition, had them extrapolated using AI and printed them in larger-than-life size on inexpensive advertising material. All images - in the same order, size and arrangement as in Soth's book - are reproduced in Anja Engelke's publication *Sleeping by the Dataflow*, which is on display as a preprint along with Soth's book. In Soth's case, the page opposite the image shows its title, whereas Anja Engelke places the descriptive prompt, i.e. the first transfer step from the original image to the AI images here. As a result it also precedes the final image according to the reading direction. This makes it possible to retrace every image genesis while also revealing the strange processes and limits generated by AI. These go as far as blank spaces in the book, because the AI did not generate an image for ethical or moral reasons. Once it did not generate a prompt because of the original photo and once it did not generate an image because of the AI-generated prompt.

The size of the prints in the exhibition makes it even clearer than in the book how the AI collects images from the Internet and in some cases steals copyright, as can be seen, for example, in the large watermark in the second image of the woman on the bed. The prompts, which among other things often refer to photographic references, give a good impression of the specific genesis of the images, but it is the arrangement in the exhibition that gives a deep insight into the digital collage technique that AI uses to create images. Beyond that, the five pictures present a new narrative, an independent and visually impressive photography project by Anja Engelke - even if it is only conceptually by Anja Engelke and the products can probably not be described as photographs. However, that's

precisely where the discussion about the future of photography begins and Anja Engelke has generated an early and exciting commentary.

RIMADAUM, AW: AW: [EXTERN]-Re: AW: [EXTERN]-Fwd: Frage zum Aufenthalt [eng: AW: AW: [EXTERN]-Re: AW: [EXTERN]-Fwd: Enquiry regarding the residency], 2024, binder, copies, register, plinth

The basis of **Rimadaum**'s work with the sequential title *AW: AW: [EXTERN]-Re: AW: [EXTERN]-Fwd: Frage zum Aufenthalt* (eng: Enquiry regarding the residency) are the letters she received from the Migration Office in the course of securing her right of residence in Germany. In a critical examination, she reflects and processes the administrative material, characterised by bureaucracy, by typing paragraphs, sentences, words and terms in typewriter typography and presenting them in alphabetical order in a file folder. The result is a mixture of frightening and frighteningly banal, comical, and linguistic fragments reflecting the official language, which appear as a play with language until they seem like concrete poetry. As such, the extraction and sequencing of all "please" mentions in the official enquiries under the register letter B constitutes a comical and impressive poem, which in this context conveys a sense of desperation that was not intended by the Office, but applies to the recipients of the letters. Rimadaum's appropriation and isolation of passages, sentences and words emphasises the extent to which this work, despite its bureaucratic, official order, is her artistic and literary reworking.

Aside from the index, her work also follows its own formal and content-related logic. As the index progresses alphabetically, the text moves downwards. Moreover, the rather general excerpts from the letters, which at first glance could also have come from other, more harmless official processes, increasingly reveal to contain obviously existential content. When Rimadaum extracts the phrase "excluded by law" [Kraft Gesetz ausgeschlossen] under register K, which may refer to anything, it is already a subtle reference to the effect of rulings by the Migration Office, which do indeed exclude people from society by law. With phrases such as "obliged to leave the federal territory immediately" [unverzögerlicher Ausreise aus dem Bundesgebiet verpflichtet] under U, it becomes quite clear what kind of vital process the artist refers to and analyses here.

Under S, Rimadaum indicates that this is her specific, individual case; it reads "Dear Mrs Rima" [Sehr geehrte Frau Rima]. This subtly illustrates how ignorantly the official bureaucracy treats individuals. For one must assume that the artist's Indian surname, which may seem complicated in German, is simply replaced with her first name, a process that is all too familiar to people with migrant backgrounds. The transfer of Rimadaum's case to all other people who have to deal with the Migration Office applies to the entire language analysed here and its

particular decomposition, rearrangement and intensification. The personal correspondence becomes a universally valid depiction and unmasking of the bureaucratisation of existential concerns, which even all those who are not exposed to these difficult, gruelling and even humiliating processes can understand.

TOMMA KÖHLER, *Hidden Treasures – sechs Tretminen* [eng: *Hidden Treasures-six landmines*] 2024, six plexiglas moulds, arduino, speakers, cable, batteries and single-track video, 03:51 min.

Tomma Köhler's *Hidden Treasures*; the hidden treasures mentioned in the title lie on the floor and are truthfully not necessarily visible at first because they are transparent. With their shiny surface reflecting small dots of light, they even appear like attractive, valuable objects. In the second part of the work's title, however, Tomma Köhler clarifies that they are in fact landmines. This characterisation is also easy to grasp. Under the transparent surface, there are cables that are reminiscent of homemade bombs. If the visual association with weapons is ineffective, the mine-like nature of the objects becomes clear when we approach them from a certain angle and within a fixed radius and trigger their acoustic response. The "explosion" consists of one sentence each, spoken by a computerised voice. There are six short statements ranging from direct speech and commentary to personal experience. The computerised voice which speaks these sentences remains automated, neutral and emotionless.

After engaging with tanks and drones, which Tomma Köhler has critically analysed and reworked with a feminist approach in several artistic works, she now takes up one of the most treacherous weapon systems, anti-personnel mines, which remain effective far beyond the actual armed conflicts. They often affect children, for whom the seemingly harmless mines look like toys or treasures. In addition to conveying the perfidious effectiveness of a common weapon, Tomma Köhler sees an analogy to the communication between people, in which some sentences and statements, especially in relationships, have a similar effect in that their explosiveness only becomes clear later. From such sentences, experienced by herself or conveyed by friends, she has generated the six statements that become effective for us in the installation. They confront us and potentially attack us emotionally - albeit subtly and with delayed effect.

In the video, she depicts the uncertainty with which her bare and correspondingly vulnerable feet move on different surfaces, tentatively and unknowing of what is under the grass, or in the mud, or how they should walk on pipes.

The visual transfer of the feeling of approaching unsafe terrain that prevails in the encounter with the landmine treasures reinforces the ambivalence towards

the objects we can also find in their external form. While the transparent surfaces initially appear to be abstract, amorphous shapes, a closer look reveals body parts: a finger with a long fingernail, a tongue, a braid, breasts, a paw. They refer yet again to the fragmentation, which is triggered physically by landmines, but figuratively also applies to communication and relationships between people through certain statements and especially in close proximity.

KIRA KEUNE, *www.mydiary.com*, 2023, seven books, display

For some time now, **Kira Keune** has been exploring our traces in the digital world and the question of privacy and presence in the digital world (and the transfer to reality) in her artistic work. For her contribution to the Förderpreis exhibition, she has undertaken a radical form of public display of her private life. In seven black books, whose designations with monthly dates from June to December 2023 already suggest diaries, she has listed her entire internet browsing history by day.

She does indeed keep a diary, but it does not offer the possibility of filtering her own experiences as she writes them down, as in the case of ordinary diaries that are used to summarise life. A selection of specific events is not possible or would only be possible if the artist deliberately accessed only certain websites (or avoided some) during the time of the browser history recording.

They are printed, in a certain sense formally idealised, notations in a generated typeface based on the artist's handwriting, which remain on the borderline between personal authorship and anonymised recording. Real content information is often only found deep in the URL of the individual entries, whereby the link could be called up again and the exact website could then be viewed. But even without this context and solely through the website names, we inevitably begin to deduce a life from the browsing histories, including specific images and experiences of the person whose internet activity we are following.

We quickly lose ourselves in these diaries and our curiosity about what the artist did between June and December 2023. The fact that this probably relies on the readable form of the book and that a chronicle of events in the browser itself would not equally fascinate us is an incidental observation. Because our own curiosity becomes tainted when we realise that Kira Keune is not only taking a very radical personal step, but that she is once again revealing what we should all have been aware of for a long time: that all our internet activities can be read by the same services, hackers and corporations at any time.

In many cases, this happens automatically because we willingly share our data and online activities via mobile phone tracking, location display, personalised searches or social media and offer up our everyday digital lives, in which more and more of our daily activities take place, to be read and re-read. Reading all

this neatly listed in a diary makes the existential dimension all the more comprehensible.

OLE PRIETZ, *Pause*, 2024, synthetic fur, various types of wood, Styrofoam, plastic

Ole Prietz takes a break. This could well be a statement by the artist, who is both present and absent in this work. He has finished his sculpture and is now taking a break. Because he has handed it over to us very clearly when the figure, which initially seems very realistic, suddenly sits opposite us after we have unsuspectingly walked around the temporary exhibition wall. A brief scare is almost unavoidable, especially if you are visiting alone. The sculpture asserts its space and tells its story without further alteration by the artist.

Actually, however, it is above all the figure that Ole Prietz has created that is taking a break. This quickly becomes clear from its posture, as the man, carved from wood, sits leaning against the wall, a cigarette in his large right hand. The figure has placed the glove and the head of the teddy bear costume that he is wearing, envisaged and crafted by the artist in the same way as the wooden core, next to itself. To smoke, to get out of the ridiculous costume, which does not look like a voluntary carnival costume, but is obviously intended for some kind of advertising purpose.

It is immediately apparent that the story of the seated man involves him performing the somewhat humiliating activity of appearing in costume to earn a living – in an amusement park, a shopping centre, a football stadium or wherever else funny animal mascots are supposed to create a good atmosphere. His entire posture and facial expression express exhaustion, both physical and mental. It does not look like this person is in the mood for anything. At best, he is indifferent to us as well as the situation he finds himself in. Accordingly, his gaze also wanders into the void and neither to us nor to the works of art that he is facing and to which he is inevitably placed in relation, because we recognise ourselves in this figure.

This realism is surprising insofar as Ole Prietz, as usual in his works, makes clear deviations from realistic depiction. The wood remains recognisable even in its manipulation, the costume shows that it wants to be a cipher for a mascot, the figure is clearly larger than life, which we can first see in the hand, but can also imagine elsewhere. In fact, if it were standing against the wall, it would tower over us all.

The identification that we nevertheless make - if only because visiting exhibitions sometimes makes us tired - means that it quickly becomes clear how capitalist labour in its greatest futility is thematised here as an inescapable Sisyphean absurdity. Ultimately, the exhaustion of this sedentary person also refers to the

exhausted labour society, a kind of archetype of the self-obsolete neoliberalism based on its absurd dregs. But Ole Prietz is not only present through this theme, he has also created the figure after his own approximate model in the mirror, sketching into the wood with a knife.

ARIA FARAJNEZHAD, *Beyond Undoing A Rediscovery (Part Two)*, 2024, 79 ceramic tiles (in cooperation with Eghbal Joudi, with support from Gaurav Talekar and Ute Alexandra Fischer), Audio, 10:00 Min., (with Eghbal Joudi, Youngji Cho, Iulia Radu, Helena Otto, Farzad Golghasemi and Tabea Erhart)

Aria Farajnezhad offers a complex examination of the relics and effects of colonialism using a prominent example from Bremen. Between 1998 and 2001, a mosaic was uncovered in a central location above the display board in the main hall of the city's central station. The large tiles celebrate colonial trade in Bremen as the basis of the city's prosperity. The mosaic was donated in 1957 by the Brinkmann tobacco factory, which profited from colonialism and was deeply involved in National Socialism. Despite a public controversy about the colonialist and racist content, the mosaic remains under monument protection without comment. Aria Farajnezhad approaches the historical and charged image through the reading and conceptualisation of a text by the Caribbean author Sylvia Wynter. Here, she analyses the Western-Christian narratives of a supposedly universally valid image of humankind as ideas shaped by the Renaissance and colonialism as well as Darwinian interpretations. Aria Farajnezhad discloses his method of approach in a short text in which he references Wynter's theory and expresses his own thoughts and, above all, feelings. This text was the basis for a workshop at the Weserburg Museum für Moderne Kunst entitled *Beyond Undoing A Rediscovery (part one)* organised as part of *Lacuna: inside a dumpling activation programme and Circa 106 Common_s Knowledge_s residency programme*. Here, other people were included in the discussion of the mosaic as an example of colonialist continuities.

The ship, which is visualised in a dynamic diagonal as the engine of Bremen's trade and thus as an essential tool of colonialism, was isolated as a particularly symbolic element of the picture in the station. During the workshop, Aria Farajnezhad laid the individual tiles on the floor as pieces of paper and allowed the participants to annotate them. This paper floor mosaic, including the handwritten content, was then transferred to ceramic panels, which are now once again presented as a "tile mosaic" on the gallery wall - resulting in parts of the comments and drawings from the workshop being upside down.

In the second workshop, which took place in 2024 under the title *A Rehearsal to Scuttle A Monument* at the GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Aria Farajnezhad then went back to the central station with the participants (some of whom had

already taken part in the first workshop) with the handmade ceramic tiles in their hands and recorded the encounter with the mosaic, the confrontation between the two mosaics and the participants' comments. These recordings were condensed into the ten-minute audio work included in the exhibition, which, in addition to the comments on the tiles referring to the political context of the work, represents the confrontation with the explicitly racist mosaic celebrating colonialism.

The work in the exhibition impressively answers the question of why there is not even a sign, a contextualisation of the historical image in the central station, by carrying out precisely this contextualisation. With a clear stance on the content of the mosaic and the mechanisms of colonialism that continue to dominate it, Aria Farajnezhad very reflectively locates the image, its function, its interpretation and the current and possible ways of dealing with it together with others (and thus from a variety of perspectives), without being able to undo the rediscovery. As the title indicates, the project goes beyond this.

Large Gallery

HAE KIM, *Dialog* [eng: Dialogue], since 2014, sanded down books, bookshelf, *Geflüster* [eng: Whispering], 2016, plexiglas case, dust from the sanded down books, *Monolog* [eng: Monologue] #1~#31, 2016, 31 words from the diary, stamps made out of the dust from the sanded down books and plaster, *Monolog* [eng: Monologue] #2.647, 2024, Print, one word from the diary, printed with dust from the sanded down books on universal printing paper, *Prolog* [eng: Prologue], 2024, statement

Hae Kim presents his artistic (life) project in *Prolog* [eng: Prologue]: he has been sanding down books all his life. He has been doing this for ten years. All books he has sanded down are presented in the exhibition on the shelf at overhead height under the title *Dialog*; the last one is displayed on a plinth with gloves. Kim collects the sanded-off dust and displays it as its own work in a Plexiglas case. He also uses the dust for other works and mixes it with plaster to produce the word stamps, 31 of which are also exhibited. Even when he stamps the words, he adds some of the dust.

He does this just as systematically as he synthesises the relevant word from his diary entries every day as the essence of the day and creates a stamp of it. The 31 mirrored plaster words on the wall represent one month. The stamped word is the most recent one from before the completion of the exhibition set-up. It dates back to February 29, 2024 and thus represents an extraordinary date, without us knowing whether this has anything to do with the term that Hae Kim personally found for the day.

Sanding down books means, as you can see in the copy on the plinth, that he removes all content from the book and the book cover after he has read it. Here, despite the work's systematic nature an individual, personal level comes into play, which shows that Hae Kim departs from his own existence and, with the symbolic act of removing content, first grasps his own life and demonstrates its transience. The fact that everything that was recorded turns to dust has a direct symbolic meaning.

However, it is not only the cultural and social significance of books that makes it clear that Hae Kim's artistic project goes far beyond a personal and existential level. Removing writing - and thus knowledge, education, power -, gutting books, leaving them behind as sculptural paper objects and compiling them into a larger, ultimately sculptural work in the exhibition constitutes a political act. He draws attention to the aforementioned significance of writing and scripts. However, as an image and a tangible work, he also testifies to how cultural knowledge and memory are erased or lost.

If we look at the polished books from below, we see not only the fascination for the artistic craft but also indications of their possible contents. The larger copies could have been art catalogues; perhaps they were cookbooks. We see books that were probably novels; we automatically look for iconic books - the Bible, the Quran, the constitution, the telephone directory. And we know immediately that we probably won't find it here because nobody, not even Hae Kim, reads that from cover to cover. With every suspicion about the identity of the writings and the search for textual remains in the book, we must recognise that the contents are irretrievably lost. However, one can imagine that there may be a certain liberation in this and that the artist has internalised and preserved the written content by reading it.

PAULA HURTADO OTERO, *Muttering Incantations: The Carrier, The pot, The Instrument*, 2022/2024, red and black ceramics, pebbles, single-track video, 30:30 min., audio, 18:20 min., audio, 17:00 Min.

In *Muttering Incantations: The Carrier, The pot, The Instrument*, **Paula Hurtado Otero** explores the historical, cultural and personal relationship between people and the five elements of fire, water, air, earth and ether. The project began with her research during the Bremen Studio Grant 2022. In the final presentation at the Künstlerhaus Bremen, she presented parts of the current installation: the stone riverbed, the video and the dark ceramic that connects several vessels.

In addition to the five elements, Paula Hurtado Otero refers to the long global tradition of ceramics, to (human, especially female) bodies as carriers of stories and to the traditions of storytelling. Drawing particularly on Ursula K. Le Guin's 1986 essay "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction", she follows the thesis that the majority of traditional narratives and narrative styles are (male) heroic stories and create a corresponding historical image: a linear story of heroic deeds and events. Life stories and especially female perspectives and biographies remain hidden.

Already in Le Guin's short essay, the vessel used for transport plays a major role as a metaphor, as an ancient tool and as a central cultural invention. These "carrier bags" therefore contain multiple stories and stand in opposition to a myth-making driven to the extreme of heroic deeds. Paula Hurtado Otero identifies these vessels as ceramics, which are found in all cultures of the world as storage containers, as fillable bodies, and which she has also recognised in the Colombian ceramic tradition. The engagement with the five elements is inherent in the identification and utilisation of ceramics, as they are all required for their production.

For Paula Hurtado Otero, who has made storytelling the basis of her work across a series of artistic projects, it is above all hidden stories that fill the ceramic vessels, alongside the heroic narratives that have shaped culture. The dark ceramic reveals the idea that several bodies and a series of (life) stories can be connected and merged. Accordingly, this ceramic takes centre stage in the video as a connecting element that several women interact with, which in turn is placed in the context of a narrative - narrated in English in the subtitles. From the perspective of the ceramic as a first-person narrator, Paula Hurtado Otero weaves invented stories, traditions and myths into a new narrative that essentially revolves around fire and the female body.

For the current continuation of her work, Paula Hurtado Otero takes up elements from the first setting that represent the element of water: the riverbed, parts of the story in the video, its sound, the vessel as a container for liquid and the human body as such a vessel. The "hydrofeminist" theses by Astrida Neimanis, published in her book "Bodies of Water. Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology" present a parallel to Otero's own research. For the artist, the interconnectedness of all human bodies comprised of water means that our stories too are connected through our bodies.

For her current project, Paula Hurtado Otero has processed her own research and previous artistic approaches in the image of the filter. Liquids are stored and slowly released; the water takes on different forms in different bodies and is subject to continuous change over time - a metaphor for narrated stories. The ceramic material can be used to filter water, which is done in the exhibition with the hanging vessel. On it are archaically simple but recognisable drawings of our body's own filters, the kidneys and the bladder. They lead the symbolic setting directly back to the question of human bodies as vessels.

CLARA ALISCH, *Support Structures*, 2024, multidimensional intervention: „Milkworkers“ 1-3, 2023, Photographs, each 91 x 61 cm, *Milky Spot*, 2023 light yellow nursing pillows filled with EPS-pearls on a red, round rug (diameter 200 cm), *For Use*, 2023, white monobloc chairs and colourful children's-monobloc chairs for use

In three parts, **Clara Alisch** shows *Support Structures*, support structures that serve a family-friendly stay in the exhibition and at the same time draw attention to the significance of unpaid care work by means of an artistic positioning in the exhibition space. Apart from three photographs, her exhibition pieces are usable, while, however, retaining an artistic aesthetic in their materiality, form and colourfulness and thus appearing as sculptural positions. On a carpet lies a pile of several very long nursing pillows filled with EPS (expanded polystyrene) beads

that are enclosed by a light yellow, shiny fabric, but have no other usual nursing pillow cover. Thus, the functional object remains ambiguous both haptically and in terms of its intended use, even if its form indicates its main function. Surrounding the pillows are white monoblock chairs and smaller coloured children's monoblock chairs, which may be spread throughout the exhibition as they are used. When standing alone, it quickly becomes clear that they can still be used functionally in an artistic context. When they are stacked, they tend to revert back to sculptural arrangements.

The objects are positioned in the exhibition space in such a way that although they show their purpose as objects for a family-friendly visit by being slightly in the way, they can still clearly be read as artistic interventions because they are not arranged in a separate area. Clara Alisch blurs the boundaries between art, art viewing and family support services. She points to the common barriers that parents with children often face in art institutions, especially if they are breastfeeding mothers with babies. In addition, she draws attention to the large social area of unpaid care work which is still predominantly performed by women by elevating the necessary utensils, the support structures, to the status of art.

This is precisely what the three photographs refer to, while also revealing that the intervention in the Förderpreis exhibition is part of a longer-term project by Clara Alisch. They are images from her work *Lactoland*, which includes a video showing a woman pumping breast milk, which is then used to make sweets that are offered to the visiting public in many of the artwork's exhibitions. The three excerpts shown here focus on the aspect of "dairy work". This is achieved in a visually striking way with the straightforward images, which nevertheless follow in the tradition of iconic art-historical paintings. The aspects of care work depicted here are thus assigned to the usable interventions in the exhibition. Especially those who actually breastfeed directly in front of the photographs become part of the artwork and almost inevitably make a statement in a socio-political debate.

RICARDO NUNES, *For Sale*, 2022, Photographs, 120 x 90 cm, 24 x 18 cm, 45 x 60 cm

In a series of photographs, **Ricardo Nunes** explores an architectural phenomenon in Portugal. Large housing development projects were discontinued there after 2007 as a result of the financial and property crisis and the subsequent economic crises. In many cases, this meant that although the infrastructure, especially transport routes, electricity and sewage systems, was already in place, no houses were built.

Ricardo Nunes captured a striking image of this in the photograph that shows the beginnings of a building in the foreground and a completed functional building with the inscription "Em Venda" - "for sale", in the background, which provides the English title for the entire series. The picture was the artist's first photographic encounter with these housing projects. Based on it, Ricardo Nunes has captured countless similar places in his photographs.

The thus created "landscape pictures" share a number of similarities, as the artist has followed certain conceptual guidelines. His photographs are always on the borderline between presenting an overview of the location and a distinct fragment focussing on a detail that represents the overall phenomenon. These could be the lanterns that appear frequently. It could be a road, or it could be a mule, which would be out of place in a finished housing estate, but not at a repurposed building site.

Moreover, Ricardo Nunes frequently positioned the horizon line of the landscape roughly in the centre of the picture and photographed at the time of day when the street lighting actually switched on or the other lanterns would come on. These evening moods at the transition to dusk give the whole series a slightly surreal, romanticised feel that does not seem to match the content. An absurdity that manifests itself in the model-like arrangement of functional settlement elements without associated housing and even more so without any people living there.

Instead, Ricardo Nunes photographed the portraits of the estate agents, with which some of them draw attention to themselves on site. They are the absurd counterpart to the unbuilt properties, which they already offered to sell and where they were still found when it was clear that the planned flats would never be built. The artist also includes four detail photographs, each of which shows a drain in its centre. These refer to the existing sewage system. However, the photos also reveal a reutilisation system that developed in these settlements whereby the marketable metal manhole covers were stolen. To prevent a hazard, creative solutions have been found to fill the resulting holes. In this way, Ricardo Nunes also demonstrates the possibilities of new uses and repurposing that may slowly take over the economic voids in the Portuguese landscape.

FLORIAN WITT, *Roter Turm mit Auge und Antrieb*, [eng: Red Tower with Eye] 2021, acrylic paint, oil pastels, spraypaint, MDF, spruce wood, trackstone. Baseball bat, clothesline, 250 x 250 x 450 cm (tower), 60 x60 x 140 cm (drive), *Arbeit aus Malgründen mit Figur* [eng: Work composed of painting surfaces], 2021, acrylic paint, oil pastels, spraypaint, fleece, army tent, MDF, spruce, cable, Burnerchrome, paint marker, 360 x 650 cm

Florian Witt is participating in the exhibition with two works, a sculpture and a painting, which are in some ways connected and can only be partially defined by the aforementioned art genres. Above all, *Arbeit aus Malgründen* [eng: Work composed of painting surfaces] proves to be a large-format assemblage, in which, however, none of the objects can be traced back to their original function. One understands the painting grounds as material. They nevertheless refer to traditional panel paintings. Parts of this painting seem to have been added in reaction to other parts, but despite this relation, they maintain a separate content. And, yet Florian Witt has obviously reacted intuitively with motifs, colours and materials relating to existing settings and the overall form. This form is overflowing and oscillates between perfect seclusion and possible expansion.

Perhaps one would not dare to recognise or name the figure as such if the artist had not already done so. This makes it clear that figurative associations and their content-related categorisation are absolutely permitted. So there is a wire mesh fence and that is a socio-political statement, even if one can justifiably object that it is only a matter of green diagonals to structure the surfaces and colours, which can at best be read as patterns or ornamental quotations.

In the *rotem Turm mit Auge und Antrieb* [eng: red tower with eye and drive], the representational designation and its visibility is even greater. Here, diagonals are once again a fundamental design element and a direct reference to the *Arbeit aus Malgründen* [eng: Work composed of painting surfaces], although they are now clearly discernible as masts. The relationship to the painting also becomes clear on the formal level, in that both works show aspects of a sort of intuitively characterised DIY, an artistic signature that relies on non-perfection, on traces of the production process and a form of achievable imitation. The drive of the eye on the tower is an example of this, as it consists of irregular wooden cog-wheels, a washing line and a lever that can slide down and only really works in one direction, as illustrated by a drawn arrow. Something similar happens in the painting in the combinations of different painting grounds and in the seemingly unclean painted lines, which in turn create a very coherent picture that also applies to the tower.

Through this uniform impression, the expansive sculptural setting legitimises associations ranging from animated film elements and set pieces, playground structures and do-it-yourself objects to drilling rigs and cable cars. Even abstract elements such as the round yellow wooden elements on the floor are undoubtedly incorporated into possible narratives and become golden balls, spinning tops, sports equipment or similar. In any case, the content of the artwork generates a great spectrum of interpretations ranging from funny to dystopian. From a rather crude man-machine, the eagle-eye on legs so to speak, to comic quotes,

Big Brother and Sauron's burning eye in Mordor, everything is present and everything is at least the basis for an enriching exploration of the artwork, which for once you are even allowed to operate yourself.

Nominating committee for the exhibition participants:

Simone Ewald (Senator für Kultur), Bhima Griem (Künstlerhäuser Worpswede), Ele Hermel (Galerie Mitte), Dr. Ingmar Lähnemann (Städtische Galerie Bremen), Prof.in Julika Rudelius (Hochschule für Künste Bremen), Ngozi Schommers (Artist), Prof.in Cony Theis (Hochschule für Künste im Sozialen Ottersberg)

Main Award Jury:

Prof. Dr. Stephan Berg (Kunstmuseum Bonn), Prof. Dr. Andreas Blühm (Groninger Museum), Carlota Gómez (Kunstverein Hannover), Syowia Kyambi (Artist, curator, Professor at the Akademie der bildenden Künste Nürnberg)

The Jury has selected Rimadaum as the recipient of the 47th Bremen Young Artists Award for the Fine Arts 2023

Laureates of the Sponsorship Award:

Helmut Streich (1977), Thomas Recker (1978), Peter K. F. Krüger (1979), Christa Baumgärtel (1980), Margret Storck (1981), Jürgen Schmiedekampf (1982), Zoppe Voskul de Carnée (1983), Till Meier (1984), Norbert Schwontkowski (1985), Henning Hölscher (1986), Michael Rieken (1987), Marianne Klein (1988), Bogdan Hoffmann (1989), Elke Schloo (1990), Gabriele Konsor (1991), Nikola Blaskovic (1992), Andree Korpys und Markus Löffler (1993), Andreas Schimanski (1994), Veronika Schumacher (1995), Florian Zeyfang (1996), Elisabeth Schindler (1997), Christian Hoischen (1998), Stefan Jeep/Ole Wulfers (1999), Stefan Demming (2000), Astrid Nippoldt (2001), Ralf Tekaats (2002), Derk Claassen (2003), Ralf Küster (2004), Anneli Käsmayr (2005), Sebastian Gräfe (2006), Christian Haake (2007), Preechaya Siripanich (2008), Elianna Renner (2009), Björn Behrens (2010), Max Schaffer (2011), Esther Buttersack (2012), Lena Inken Schaefer (2013), Tobias Venditti (2014), Sebastian Dannenberg (2015), Nora Olearius (2016), Matthias Ruthenberg (2017), Lukas Zerbst (2018), Effrosyni Kontogeorgou (2019), Norman Sandler (2020), I-Chieh Tsai (2021), Patrick Peljhan (2022), Rimadaum (2023)

Texts on the artworks: Ingmar Lähnemann

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