

KATZ CONTEMPORARY

FLORIAN BÜHLER
Fallen - Ach wie gut, dass niemand rumpelt

LUTZ & GUGGISBERG
3 Skulpturen

20 May - 28 July 2017

Opening: Friday, 19 May, 6 - 8 pm

KATZ CONTEMPORARY is delighted to present the solo exhibition "Fallen" featuring new works by **Florian Bühler** (*1983 in Lugano, Switzerland, lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland). **Lutz & Guggisberg's** (Andres Lutz *1968 in Wettingen, Switzerland, Anders Guggisberg *1966 in Biel, Switzerland, both live and work in Zurich, Switzerland) three concrete sculptures add another accent to the presentation and heliogravures of several works by Peter Pfister will be on display alongside Florian Bühler's paintings.

Florian Bühler's work revolves around painting and its power to create its own, unruly and at times almost conniving reality. Bühler's style is characterized by a way of painting that pretends to be realistic. The artist's color application is so precise that he seems to transfer the model's exact materiality to the painting, making the viewer believe that he or she could actually feel the exact surface when touching the work with their fingertips. Looking more closely, however, one can detect a delicate, almost invisible fuzzy coat covering the different materials. It ties together the divergent qualities and the objects, though incredibly realistic, feel removed into an unreachable distance. The images turn into hyperrealistic testimonials of a reality that we used to believe to know and recognize. Despite their familiarity at first glance, it is suddenly impossible to imagine what these objects and figures, stemming from our own reality, actually feel like. Bühler's complex work method is remarkable: The artist applies several coats of paint in stages until the layers form the finished surface. In style as well as in motif his works in oil refer to classical painting. He moves within the categories of the portrait, the still life and genre painting, frequently blending them into each other.

The current exhibition presents small- and medium sized still life variations which can be roughly divided into two groups: the first features zen-like arrangements in rural hunting/workshop settings (beaver trap, bugle, fire etc.) that appear to have an esoteric-fetishist touch, the second contains a rather shrill composition with elements of a childlike-clownish narrative and a humorous but also morbid touch inherent to the tradition of still life/death dance depictions, reminiscent of a "persiflage of decay". One will also notice the many instances of "product placement" (such as mepha, the butter, odlo, Look-O-Look etc.). According to the artist this happens "Pop Art-anthithetically" but he is also rather enamored with Niklaus Stöcklin's advertisement illustrations. Just like in Bühler's past exhibitions the show's title "Fallen" does not stand for an actual subject matter or a motto but serves as a kind of lense through which the works, which were all created during the same time frame can be looked at. That way the mounted canvases turn into traps – and the artist certainly enjoys setting up traps through painting as a means of deception!

Lutz & Guggisberg's concrete sculptures shy away from a standardized all-encompassing gaze. Lying on the ground they are somewhat reminiscent of tree stumps. They are not based on grand gestures from a single cast, they are more of a kind of three-dimensional collage of different elements of shapes, which present themselves in new ways from every angle, conjuring up various associations: They invite the viewer to find new reference points again and again while remaining seductively instable. In this exhibition, the artist duo presents sculptures that have been exposed to the elements and gained an individual patina and traces of decay. One sculpture even presents itself bedded on the forest floor, others have been worked on further and ordained with tiles on one of their flat surfaces. Some of them are reminiscent of postmodern neo-classicism, others seem to refer to the mystery creatures of Surrealism while the different types of surfaces let the materiality of the concrete shine through here and there. The time-consuming additive way of working that created the sculptures leads to an according way of experiencing them visually – partial views in interplay between a singular element and the whole piece. The sculptures exude a strong physical presence eluding the viewer time and again, remaining unreachable. And this is precisely what makes Lutz & Guggisberg's sculptures just so appealing.

Stefanie Bissig

For visual material and further information please contact the gallery:
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PREVIEW

PATRICK GRAF

31 August - 5 November

Opening: Thursday, 31 August, from 6 pm