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Christine Zufferey

«random access memory (leading back to the unknown)»
Photo series / installation, 2010 - ongoing

<http://www.pluriversum.ch>

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Photo series / installation, 2010 - ongoing

random access memory (leading back to the unknown) is an ongoing digital photo series of presently 34 photos that I started in 2010. The photographs in this series are not digitally manipulated.

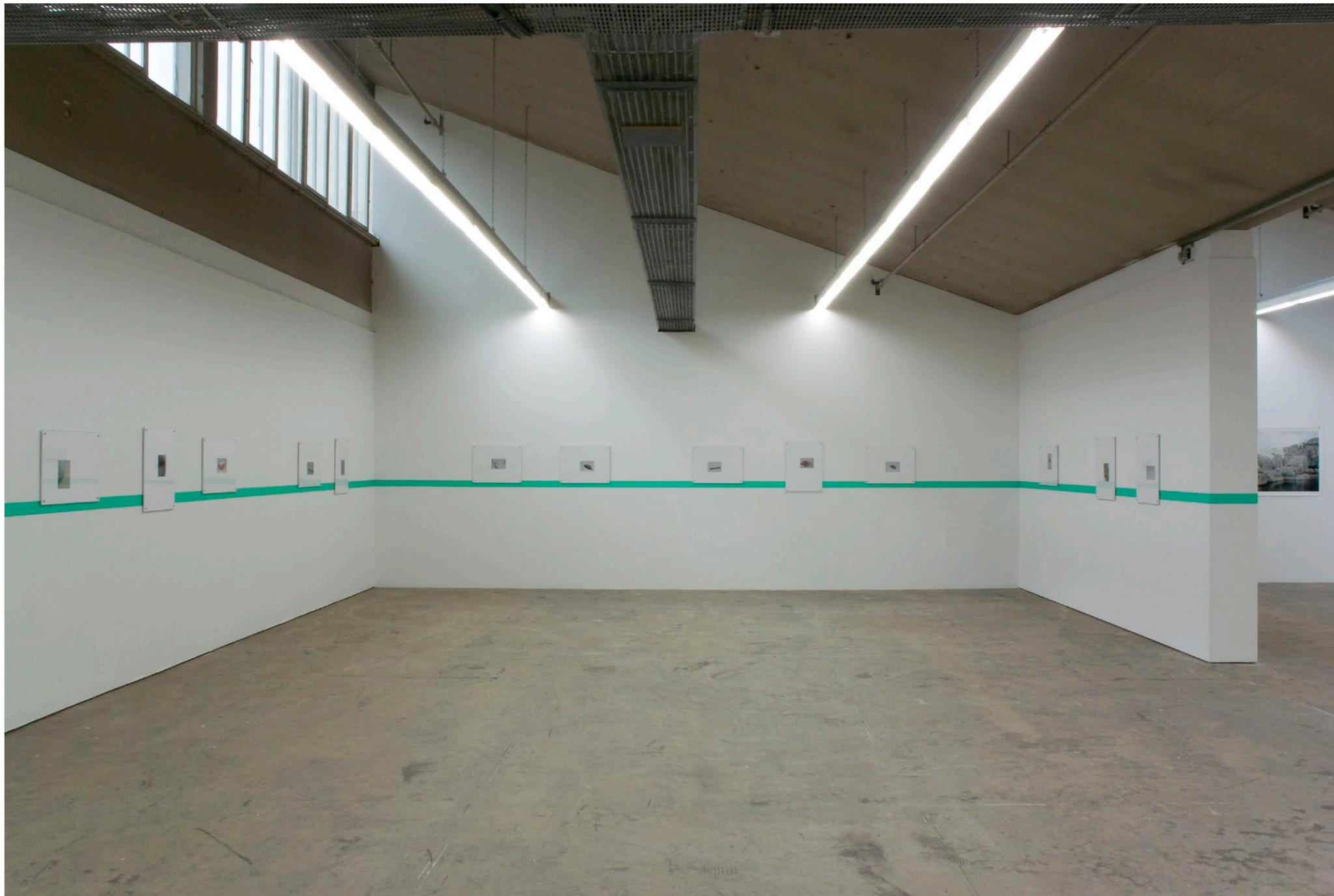
I try to distill the complexity of our highly civilized and engineered world into reduced, almost minimalistic images in a state of suspension between the sensual world and abstraction. Everyday objects are depicted, showing subtle distortions and disturbances on multiple levels. Physical objects are being exposed to various influences. Different aspects of the complexity of our reality are being disassembled, fed back and forth, and reassembled in new constellations.

The world depicted and negotiated in *random access memory (leading back to the unknown)* is a world in transition between the analog and the digital, the physical and the virtual, generated by and falling into a multitude of fragments, developing and disintegrating in the blind spots of forms and surfaces, undergoing encryption, decryption and manipulation, constantly morphing and trying out random patterns, shapes and combinations, leading back to the unknown.

The interference and interleaving of systems of reality are being examined; every recurrence of the signified brings forth a shift of meaning, a loss and gain of information and a disturbance of communication content. *random access memory (leading back to the unknown)* presents a decelerated view on hybrid, manipulated, fragmented objects, on the outcomes of different experimental set-ups, the interlocking of ideas, realities and technologies. A reflection on the physicality and virtuality of images and objects, on hybridization, metamorphosis, transitions and states in between - states of instability, reality / realities as temporary states - raising questions about identity, authenticity, manipulation, representation, projection and fragmentation.

*'Zufferey's presentational aesthetic is also reminiscent of the display tactics of conceptual artists who have deployed fragments of photography in interrogative ensembles, such as Victor Burgin and Christopher Williams. Like these artists, Zufferey doesn't take as a given the traditionally passive role of photography. She actively extends its reach beyond its orthodox otherness or "framing" via an almost documentary facticity. [...] Her rather abject pictures of everyday objects placed in generic settings are only (albeit poetically) deceptive in that their critical reflections are hiding in plain sight.'*¹

¹ Exhibition review: [Brooklyn Rail, «The Deceptive Everyday», Tom McGlynn, März 2019, S. 75 / online](#)

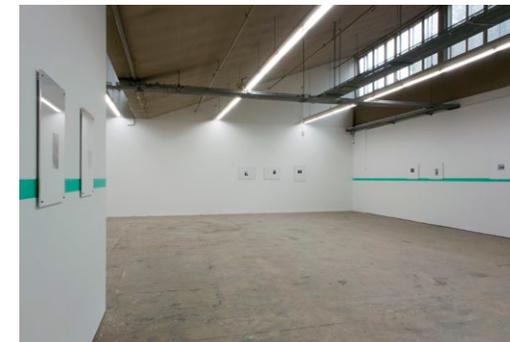
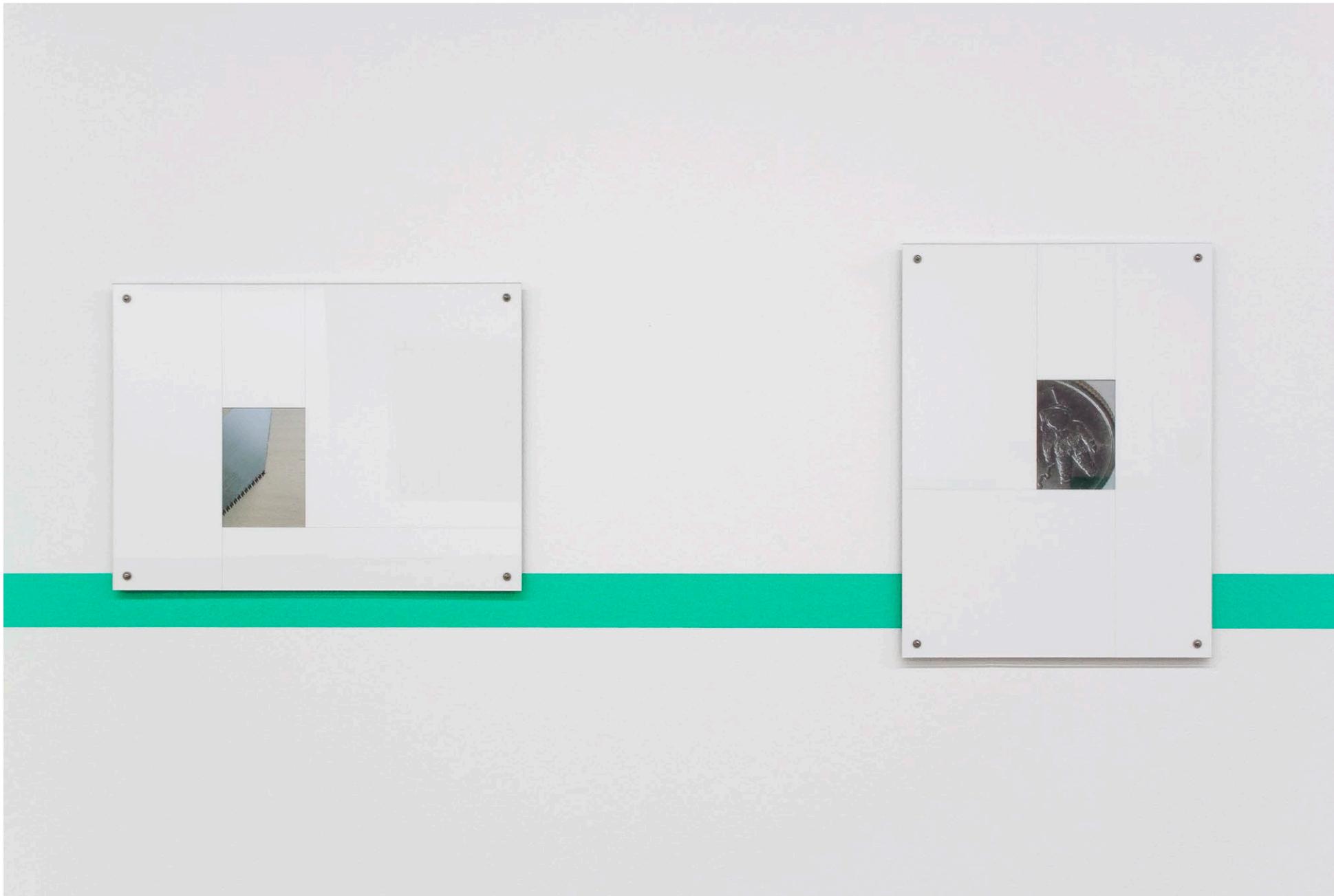


2016 / 2017

«**random access memory (leading back to the unknown)**»

Installation / in the context of «Encoding the Urban», Kunsthau Baselland, Switzerland

19 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing / green stripe on wall



2016 / 2017

«**random access memory (leading back to the unknown)**»

Installation / in the context of «Encoding the Urban», Kunsthau Baselland, Switzerland

19 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing / green stripe on wall



2014

«random access memory (leading back to the unknown)»

Installation at frosch&portmann, New York

12 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing / «revolving door», 2014, cut door, hinges, / wallpainting



2018

«random access memory (leading back to the unknown)»

Installation at Kunstbulletin, Zurich

7 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing, green stripe on wall / foreground left: installation by Agatha Zobrist (installation foto left: Dominik Zietlow)



2015

«random access memory (zurückführen auf das Unbekannte)»

Installation at Villa Renata, Basel

7 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing / «revolving door», 2011 / green stripe on wall

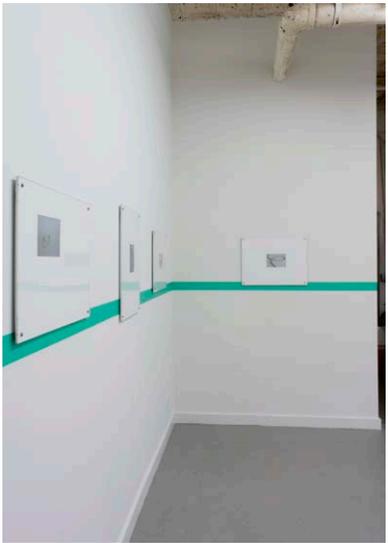
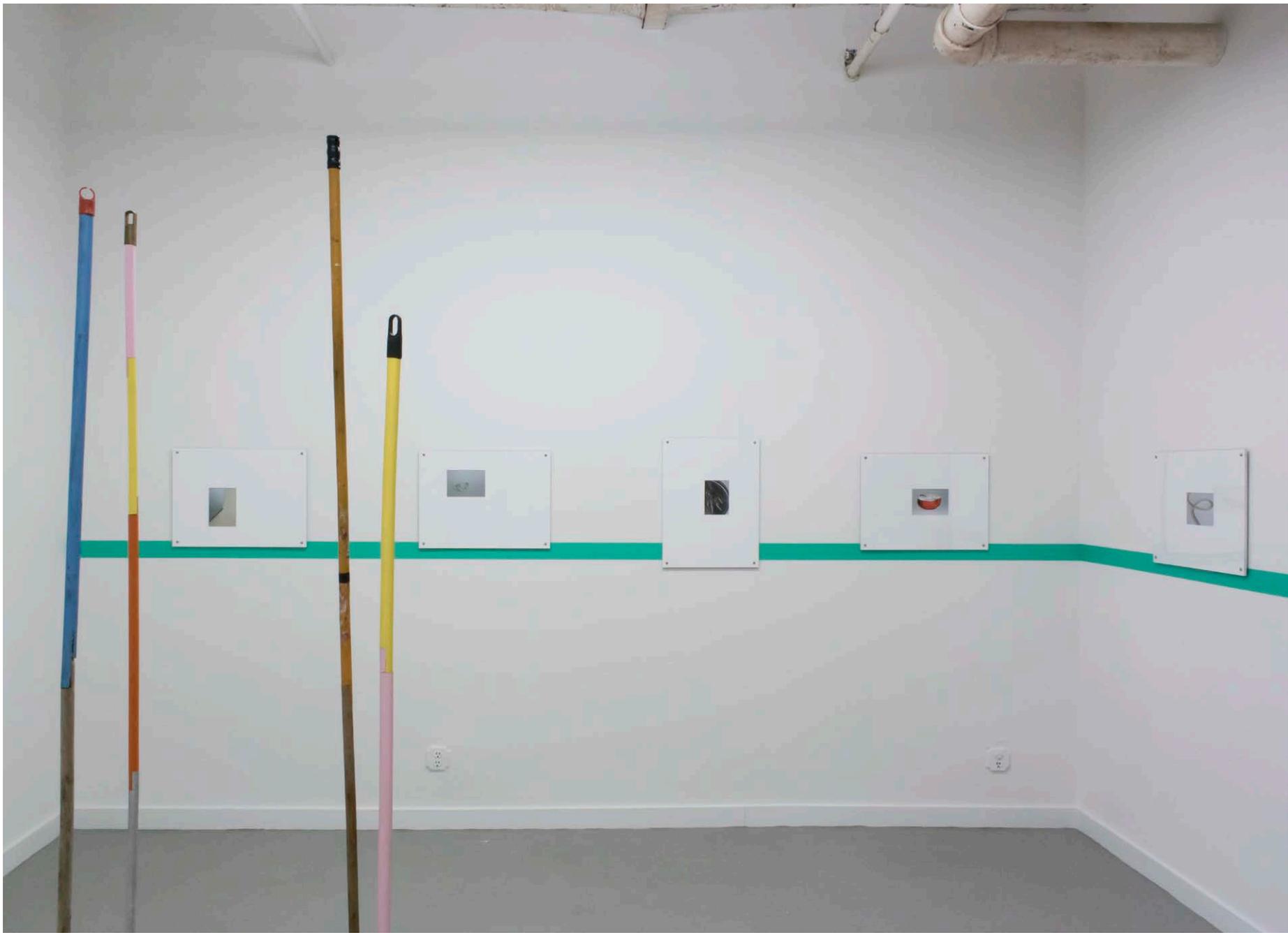


2015

«random access memory (zurückführen auf das Unbekannte)»

Installation at Villa Renata, Basel

7 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing / «revolving door», 2011 / green stripe on wall



2019

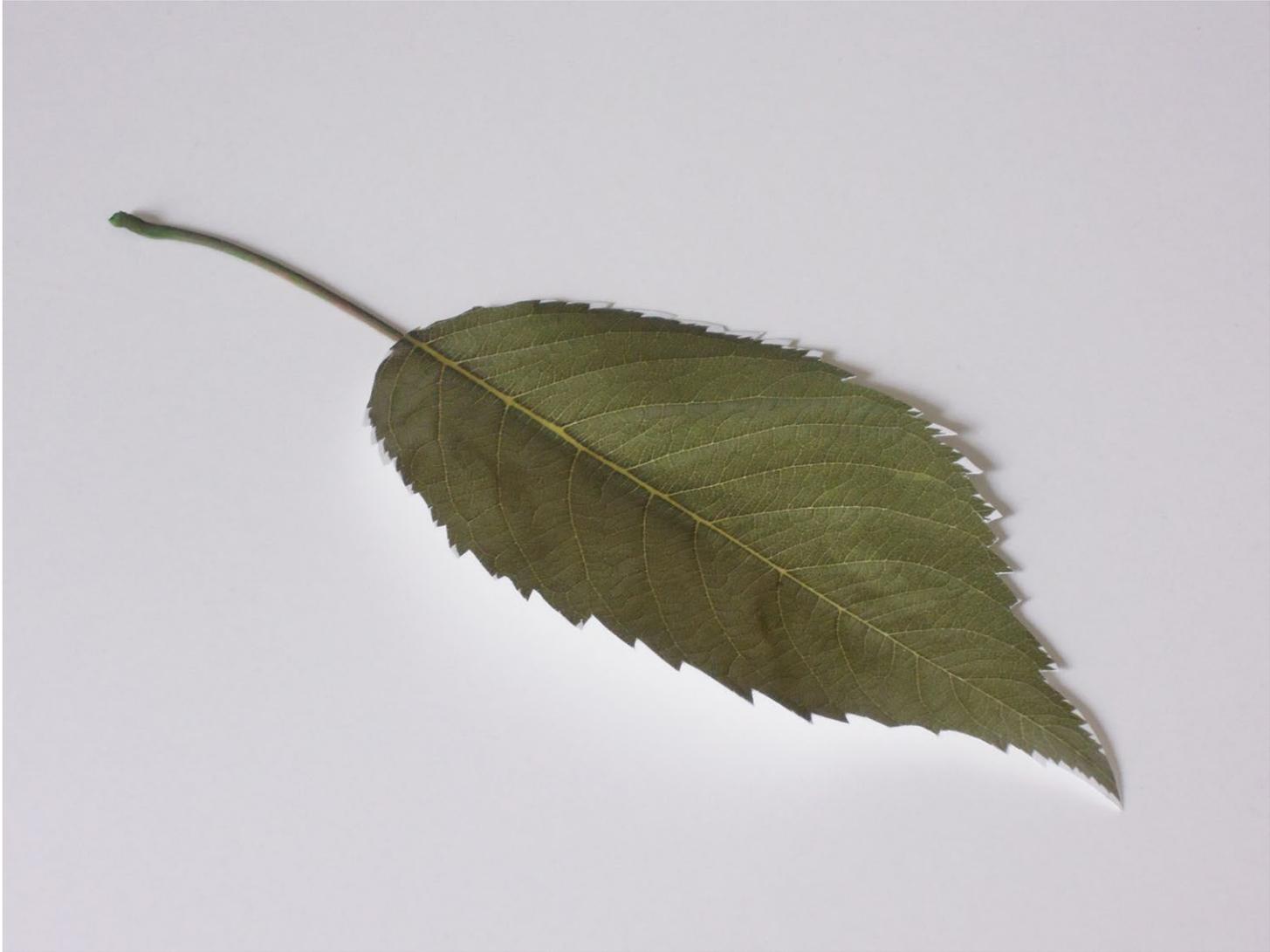
«random access memory (leading back to the unknown)»

Installation at Fresh Window, Brooklyn, NY, «The Deceptive Everyday»

5 photos from the series «random access memory (leading back to the unknown)», 2010 - ongoing, green stripe on wall (foreground: installation by Jeff Feld)

Top right: «The Unbearable Lightness of Being», 2016, multiple / embossed print, ink, acrylic paint on museum board, nail / 5.4 cm x 8.6 cm / 2 1/8" x 3 3/8"

Exhibition review: [Brooklyn Rail, «The Deceptive Everyday» by Tom McGlynn, March issue 2019, online / p. 75](#)



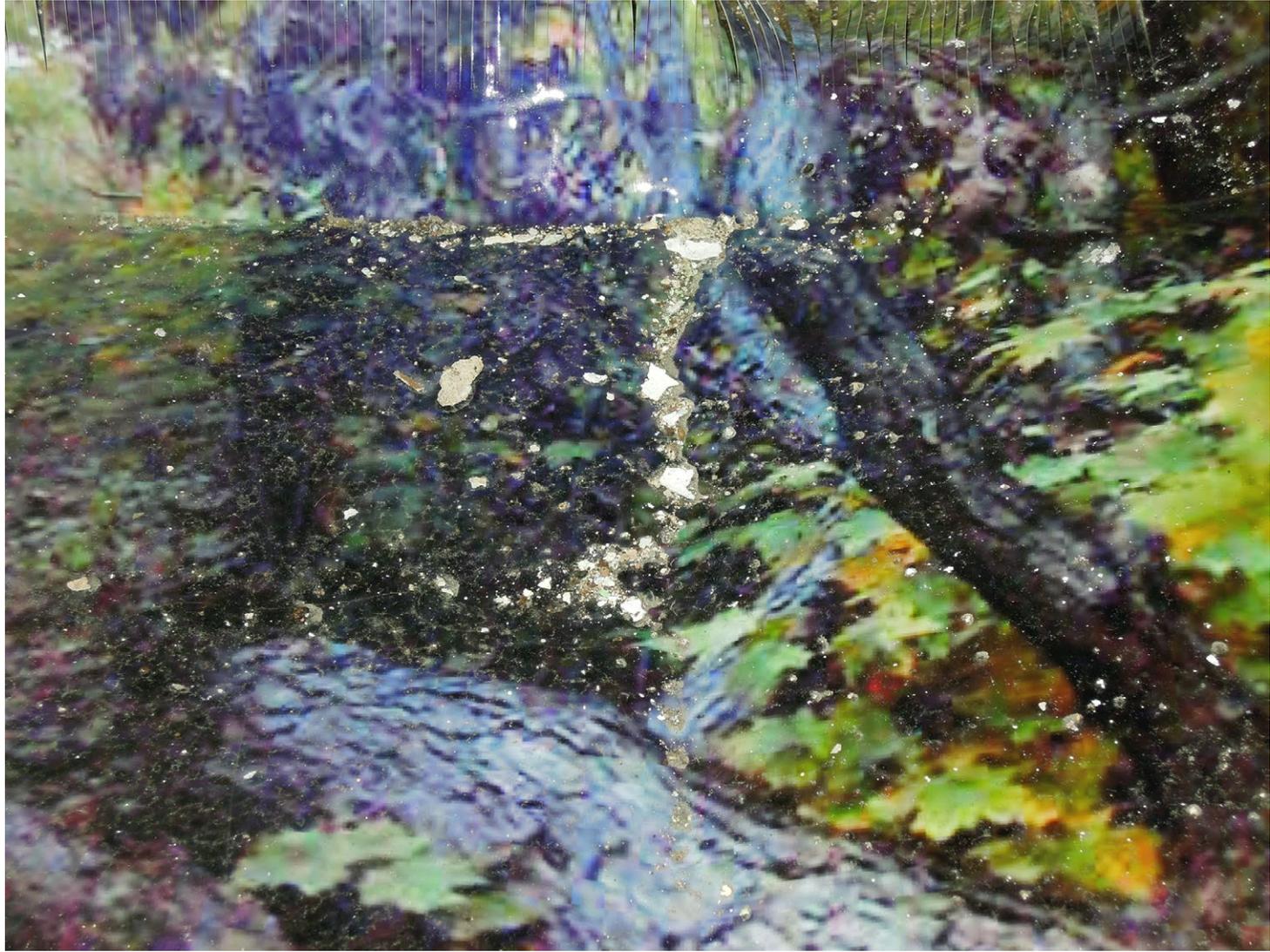


2010 - ongoing

«**random access memory (leading back to the unknown)**», photo series

#16, 2015. Inkjet on photo paper, mat board (assembled in 4 parts), aluminum, acrylic glass, screws, green stripe on wall, overall dimensions 17" x 22 3/4" (43 cm x 58 cm) each

I developed the framing system especially for this photo series; the photos are surrounded by four pieces of mat board, cuts visible, allowing to position the photos dynamically within the format. The photos are mounted between an acrylic glass front and an aluminum plate, connected by visible screws piercing the surface in four places. Thus the photos become new sculptures positioned on a green line that divides the room horizontally, recalling visual guides used in hallways.







2010 - ongoing
«**random access memory (leading back to the unknown)**», photo series
#6, 2012. Inkjet on photo paper, mat board (assembled in 4 parts), aluminum, acrylic
glass, screws, green stripe on wall
overall dimensions 17" x 22 3/4" (43 cm x 58 cm) each











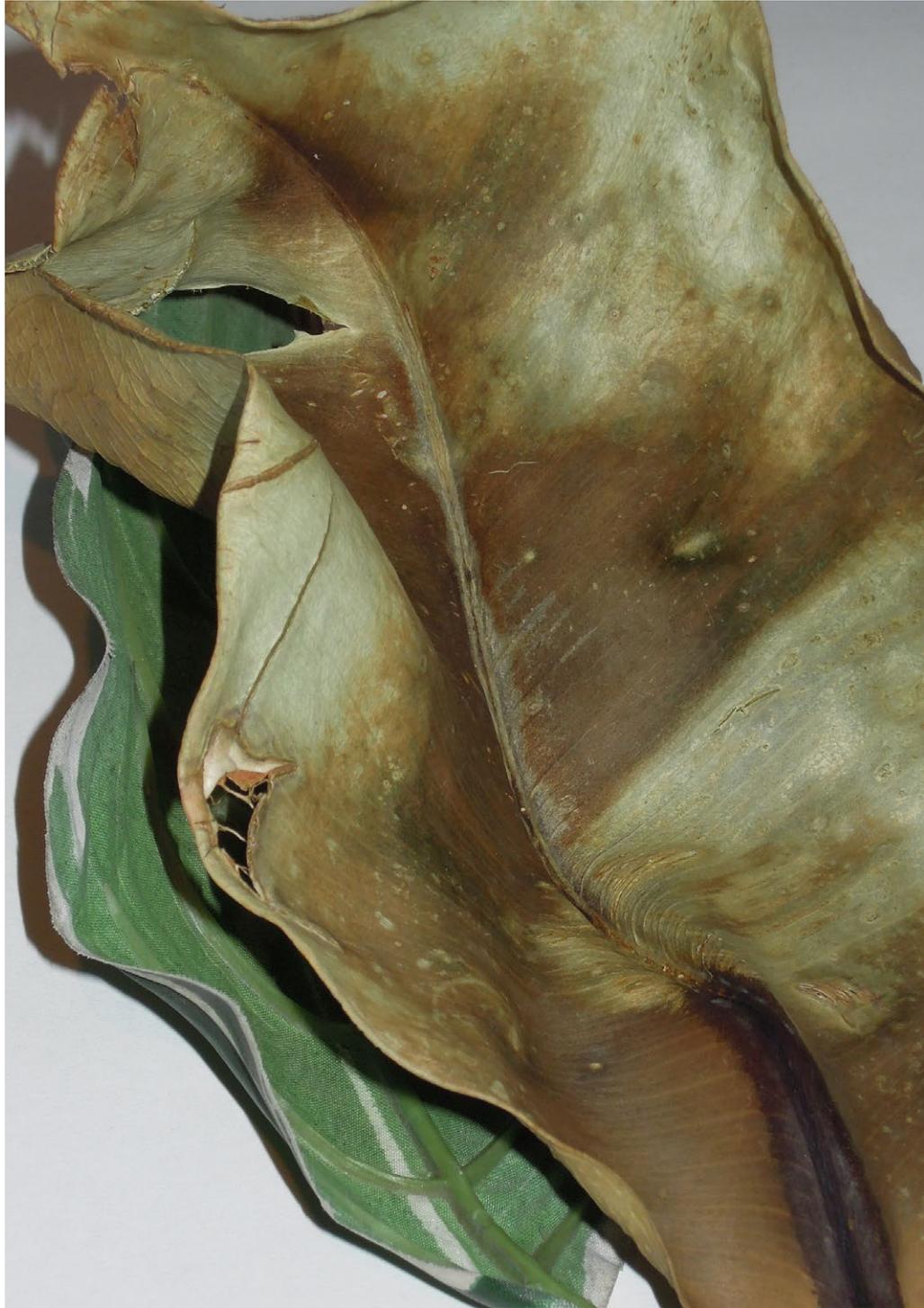














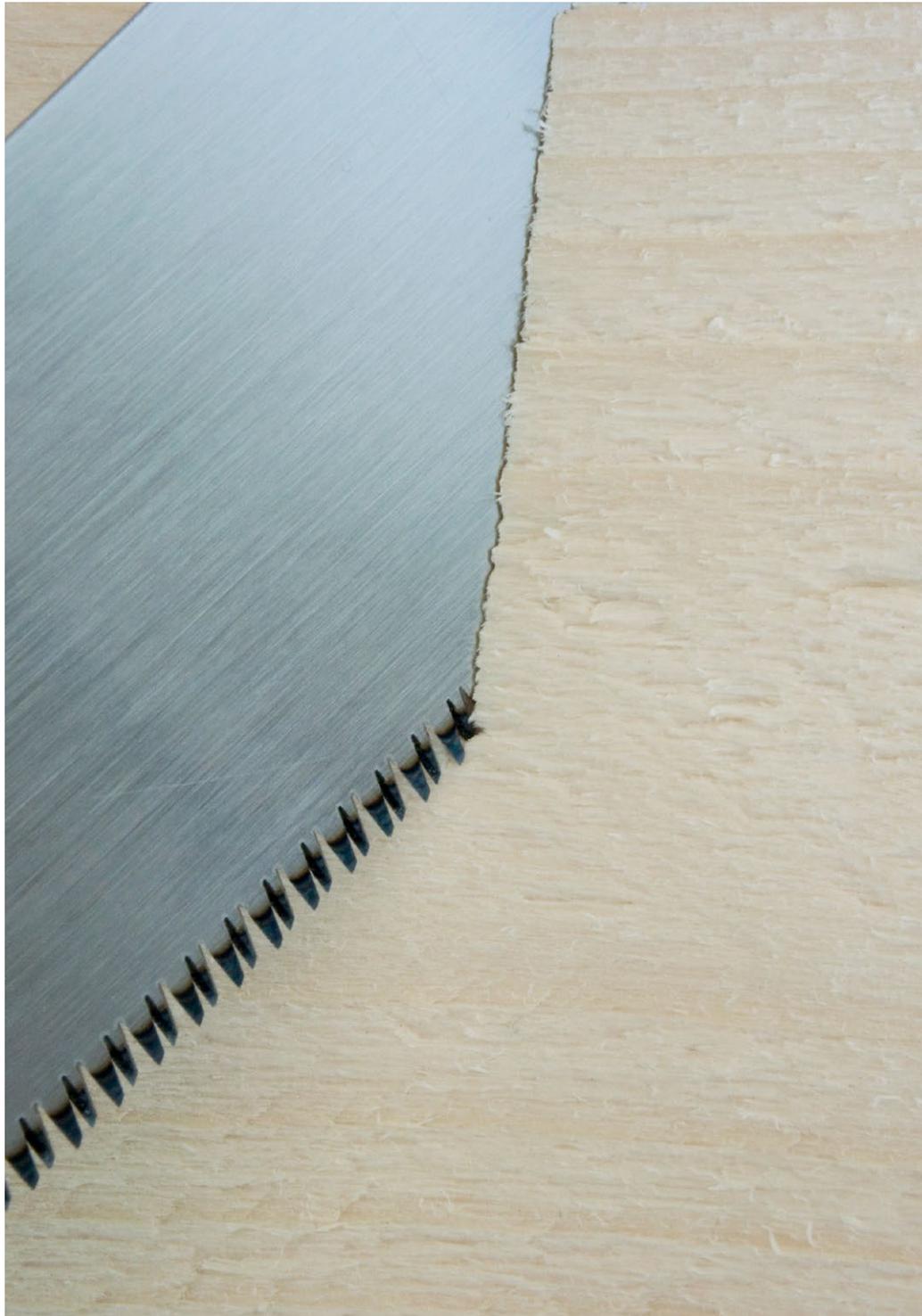




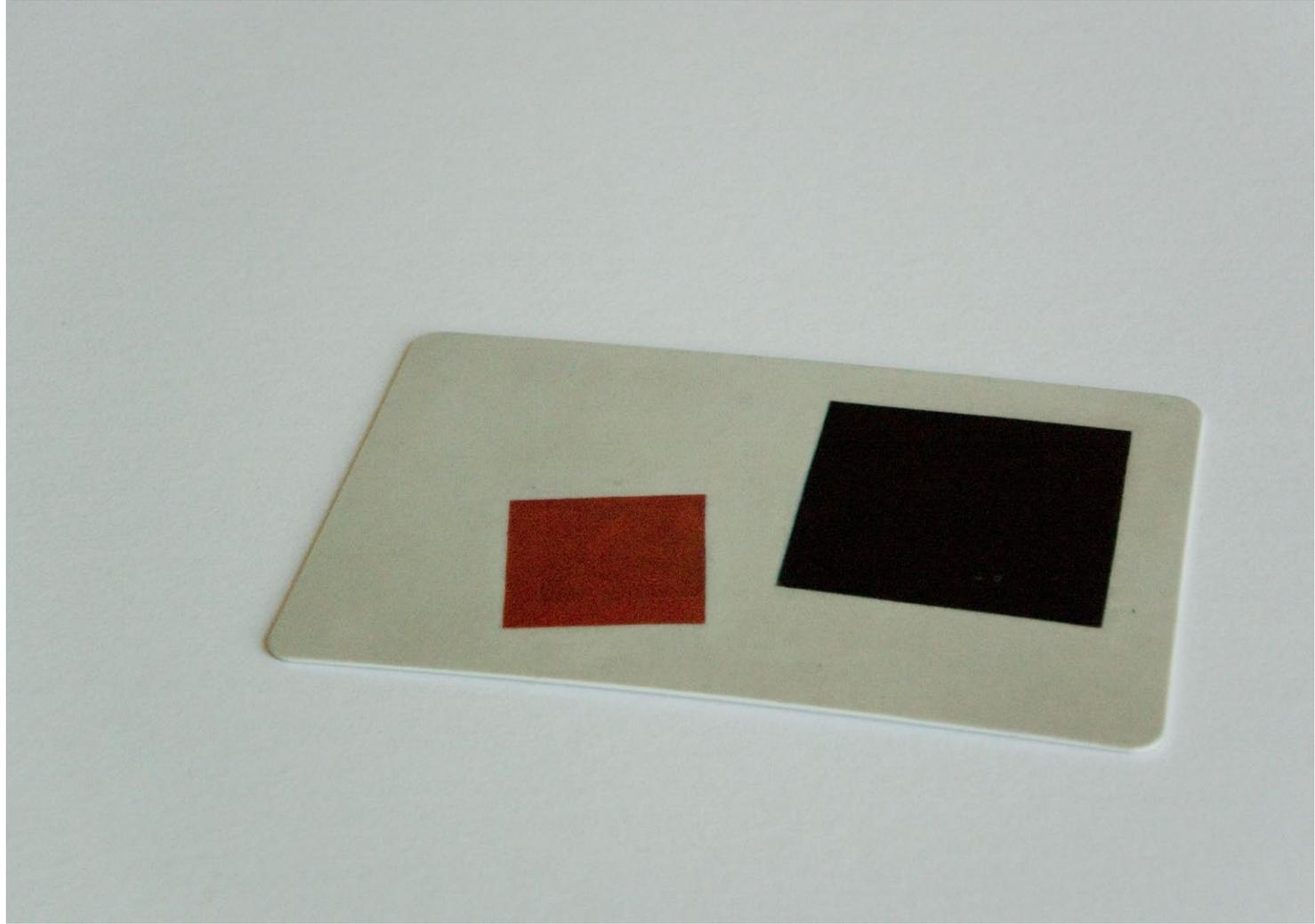












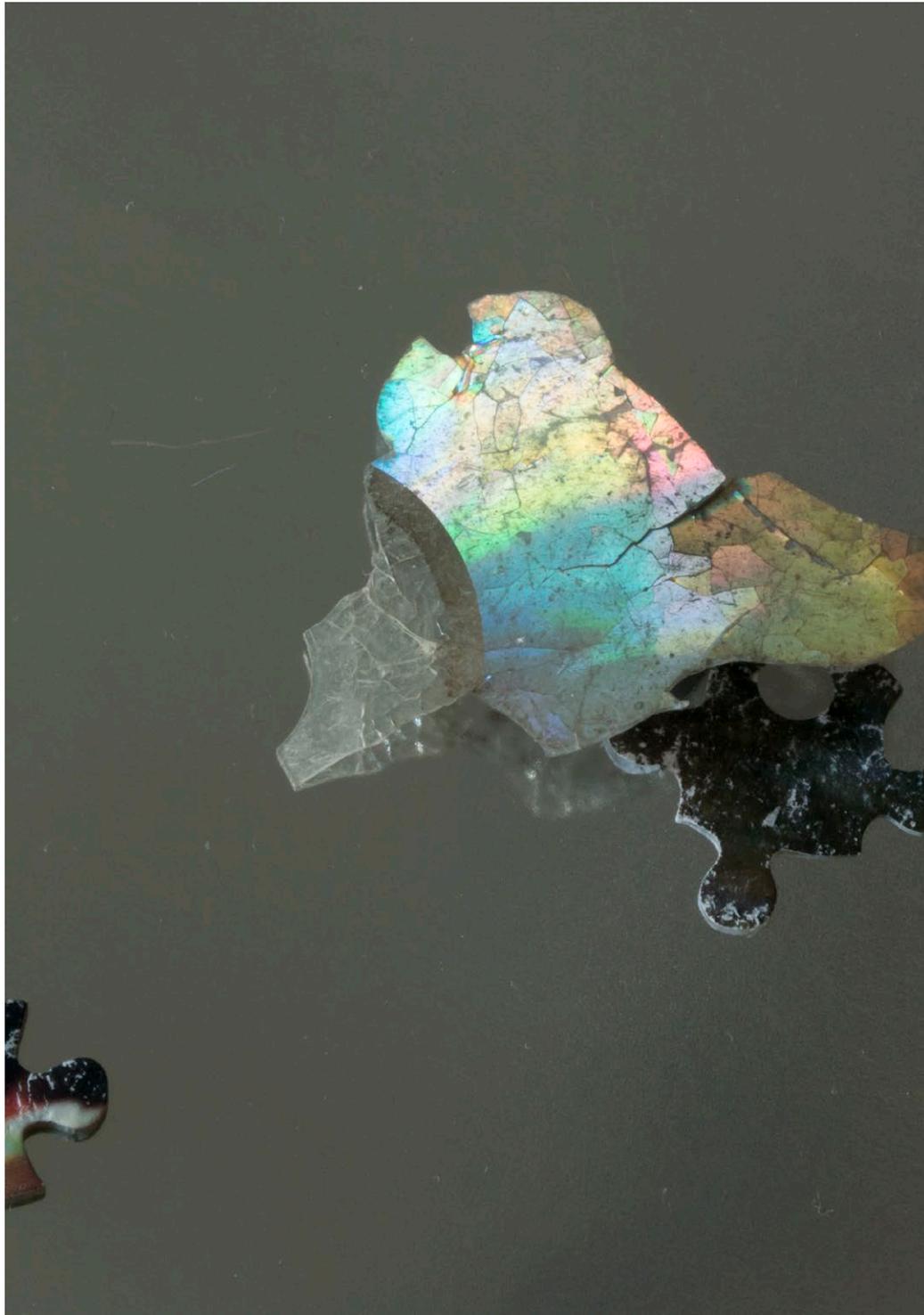
















The Deceptive Everyday

by Tom McGlynn

Fresh Window | February 8- March 10, 2019

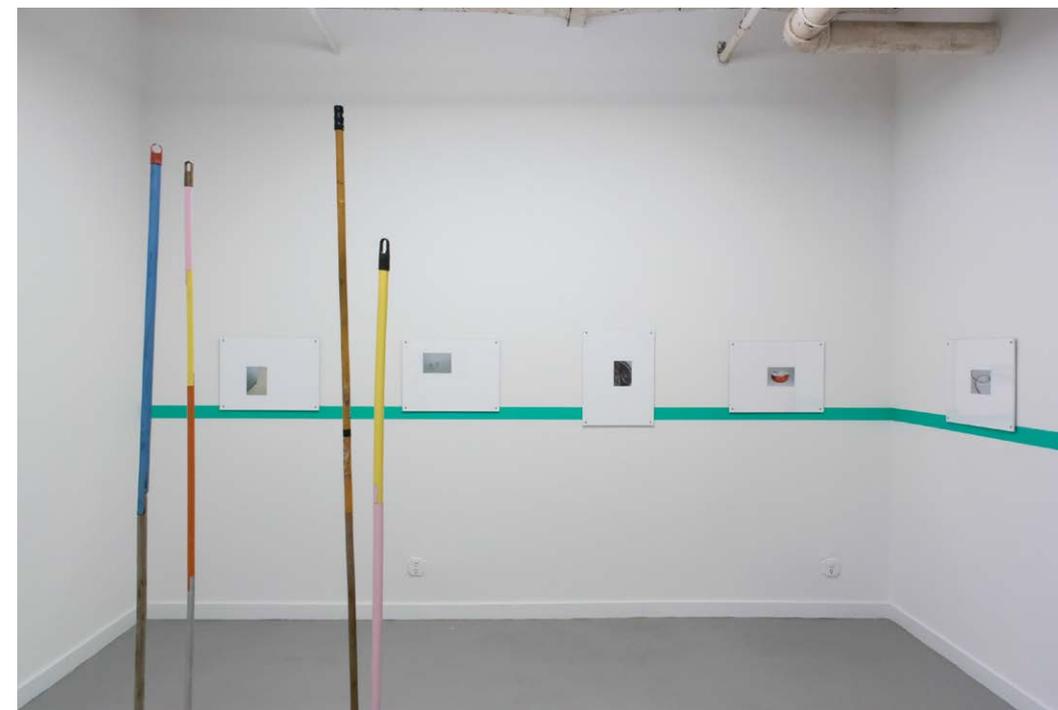


Installation view: *The Deceptive Everyday*, Fresh Window, New York, 2019. Courtesy Fresh Window.

Everyday events are deceptive in that their very ordinariness can remain transparent to us. It is a somewhat irrational human impulse to maintain a more exalted interval between the art of life and naked subsistence. Who hasn't harbored a secret wish, formed perhaps in the magical thinking of childhood, that we can be artists of our own lives, authors of our own destinies—that we can make "me" a world. Those who are fortunate enough to have that idealist conceit chipped away by the grace of daily experience are left with the fundamental realization that it is the world, actually, that makes us. The art of living, in other words, is inextricably constituted of the quotidian. We come to understand that relation through the humble tools we've pragmatically fashioned as the vehicles of our own being/becoming. Herein lies the basic premise of *The Deceptive Everyday*, curated by Alma Egger at Fresh Window. Comprising the works of three artists who, according to the director's narrative, examine "everyday objects beyond their utilitarian purposes and see their deceptive and extraordinary nature." The show balances what Heidegger termed "tool-being" (or a graspable metaphysic) with a nuanced reading of ontological cunning—as in Michel de Certeau's definition, in his *The Practice of Everyday Life*, of the creatively tactical nature of our daily navigation of existence. Certeau describes this tactical nature as being composed of "clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things ... joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike." It is this inflection of the quotidian that the curator emphasizes in this grouping of otherwise disparate artists.

Jeff Feld's collection of *Totems* (2018) dominates the center of the gallery. Each *Totem* is elegantly composed of the inelegant, basic materials of used household broomsticks mortised together to create tall, spindly, and wavering vectors, originally multicolored from their source materials and topped with plastic loops used to hang brooms for storage. Each sculpture is embedded in a simple block base, also of polyglot found materials. The gentle palette of generic colors wonderfully cross-sections this group of precarious (conceptually contingent and literally leaning) pieces. What is unexpected, or deceptive, here is the simplicity of form amplified by its absurd extension. Feld also shows a similarly fragile and provisional wall piece entitled *Hello* (2018), which is made up of the word "hello" spelled out awkwardly in duct tape stuck to cheap plywood. One comes across such hurriedly made and temporary signs

on a construction site, or propped up by a homeless person. In each instance the direct expression is transparently revealed via its humble means. Feld's expression serves to wryly undermine any notion of exalted artwork through the provisional medium of such a frank address.



Installation view: *The Deceptive Everyday*, Fresh Window, New York, 2019. Courtesy Fresh Window.

Christine Zufferey takes a much more materially removed stance than Feld in her deployment of common objects. In *Random Access Memory (Leading Back To The Unknown)* (2010 – ongoing), what looks like a simple band of twisted paper lined with a slightly green ribbon trim sits isolated in an inkjet image mounted on the wall under plexiglass. The wall on which the print is mounted is painted with a slim green line, similar in hue but larger in width than the one on the depicted band of paper. The combined effect produced a dystopic vision of what one might encounter at a minimally designed stationary display at an office-supply store. Zufferey's presentational aesthetic is also reminiscent of the display tactics of conceptual artists who have deployed fragments of photography in interrogative ensembles, such as Victor Burgin and Christopher Williams. Like these artists, Zufferey doesn't take as a given the traditionally passive role of photography. She actively extends its reach beyond its orthodox otherness or "framing" via an almost documentary facticity. Her flat-footed approach fits into the show's program paradoxically, in that her rather abject pictures of everyday objects placed in generic settings are only (albeit poetically) deceptive in that their critical reflections are hiding in plain sight. Take her *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (2016): here an inked and embossed print with acrylic paint on board mimics what seems to be a cancelled bus or metro ticket. A magnetic strip goes fully across the "ticket" yet where a date stamp would usually appear one finds the title of the piece, which is borrowed from the novel of the same name by Milan Kundera, in which that author writes, "There is no perfection, only life." Our only life, Zufferey concedes, is the one in which we sign up—take our ticket and go.

Magdalen Wong's presentation seems at first to be the most traditional of the three artists'. Her wall of framed watercolor flowers on paper are rich with associations of 19th-century botanical illustrations and also the diaristic mementos of pressed flowers. Studying the titles, though, it becomes evident that something is off here. Each watercolor is named *Plasticus Flos Botanica* (all 2017) with geographical subtitles (Athens, Hong Kong, Los Angeles) that indicate where each *plastic* flower was encountered. The simulacra of nature in each ersatz flower arrangement is seamlessly transmuted into a traditional medium that "naturalizes" each in an arcane academic exercise. What was once banal becomes banally captured. The question remains whether or not the stand-in plastic object gets fully redeemed in the decorous alchemy of watercolor mediums and methods, whether one banality cancels out another.

Gertrude Stein playfully flipped the grammatical term of the present continuous tense (one which she would activate to extraordinarily prodigious effect) into "the continuous present" or her notion of composition as vital explanation. Of this literary continuous present, she wrote, "There is singularly nothing that makes a difference a difference in beginning and in the middle and in ending except that each generation has something different at which they are all looking." We can similarly imagine the everyday—the tactic of existence—as such a fully realized present, continuous in its being, without any arty difference or distinction outside of its own generation. The variously connected concepts of basic existence explored in *The Deceptive Everyday* approach such a continuum.

Silberne Karotte. Die Villa Renata zeigt eine extravagante Ausstellung über Gärten und Kunst. Zu sehen ist etwa eine silberne Möhre, die einen Menschen erdrückt. **Seite 26**

Mensch und Möhre

In der Villa Renata will die Kunst dem Garten nicht nachstehen

Von Annette Hoffmann

Basel. «Paradies: Loop acht Minuten. Türe bitte zuziehen.» Besuchern des Paradieses werden in der Villa Renata klare Ansagen gemacht. Schliesst man die Türe hinter sich, befindet man sich in einem Raum, in den durch die Schlitz der Jalousien Licht eindringt. Kein idealer Raum, um eine Videoarbeit zu zeigen, aber ein Bild für unser Verhältnis zum Garten Eden.

Das Paradies ist ein von der Aussenwelt notdürftig abgeschirmter Bereich. Max Philipp Schmid's Arbeit «Paradies» zeigt einen Mann mit Schlips und weissem Hemd, der in einem Gewächshaus inmitten einer kraftstrotzenden Natur einen Zettelkasten ordnet und Sentenzen vorliest. Schmid hat sie der Fin-de-siècle-Gestalt Des Esseintes aus Joris-Karl Huysmans' Roman «Gegen den Strich» nachempfunden – so wirkt die von Thomas Douglas verkörperte Figur in Schmid's Video wie ein blutleerer Denker, der die Lebensfülle und Fruchtbarkeit der Natur von sich halten muss.

Es ist nicht das erste Mal, dass sich eine Ausstellung in der Villa Renata mit der Natur befasst, aber so konsequent wie in «Der Garten im Haus» geschah es noch nicht. Initiiert wurde die Gruppenschau von Barbara Maria Meyer und Esther Hiepler.

Während draussen die Weinrebe rankt, die Erdbeeren blühen und überhaupt der Garten in den Sommermodus hineinwächst, geht es in den Werken der sechs Künstlerinnen und Künstler um die unmittelbare Faszination für die Vielfalt der Natur, die manchmal den Umweg über die Reflexion nimmt, und um Prozesse, die wir als natürlich wahrnehmen. Wirklich unangenehme Themen bleiben hinter dem Zaun.

Ein Blatt ist nie nur ein Blatt

Geradezu David-Lynch-mässig ausgeleuchtet wirken die Bäume aus Markus Gadients Zyklus «Wildenstein». Mächtige Naturskulpturen, die unbeeindruckt von den Zeitläuften existieren. Gadient thematisiert auch immer das Malen selbst. Indem er bunte Partien gegen Schwarz-Weiss-Kontraste abhebt, auch Farbkarten, wie man sie vom Zeitungsdruck kennt, finden sich auf den Bildern, die in den letzten Jahren in Öl auf Baumwolle entstanden sind. Manchmal verschränkt Gadient die Massstäbe, wenn er mit einem Bild im Bild experimentiert, so als schöbe sich die Erinnerung an einen Baum über die an einen anderen.

Gegenübergestellt sind Gadients Bildern die Cyanotypen von Barbara Maria Meyer. Ihre grossformatigen Blaudrucke geben die Umrisse von Farnen und Stechäpfeln wieder. Meyer erweist damit auch Anna Atkins die Reverenz, die Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts dieses fotografische Verfahren für botanische Abbildungen nutzte. Mit naturwissenschaftlichen Darstellungskonventionen spielt die Basler Künstlerin zudem in einer zweiten Werkgruppe, in der sie Detailzeichnungen von Pflanzen miteinander kombiniert.



Zwitter in Silber. Christine Zuffereys Skulptur in der Villa Renata. Foto Christine Zufferey

Sieht man von dieser Paarung ab, sind die Werke der jeweiligen Künstler raumweise gehängt. Silvia Buonvicinis Arbeiten – neben einem Teppich mit einer Lötcolbenzeichnung sind mehrere grossformatige Drucke zu sehen – wird ebenso ein eigener Raum zugestanden wie den sieben Fotografien aus Christine Zuffereys Serie «Random access memory». Zufferey, die seit einigen Jahren in New York lebt, isoliert in diesen Aufnahmen einzelne Objekte. Manchmal sind angebissene Äpfel zu sehen, deren Fruchtfleisch bunt eingefärbt ist, manchmal ist es eine seltene Münze.

Christine Zufferey porträtiert diese Gegenstände nicht, sie eignet sie sich an und entfernt sie von sich. Ein Herbstblatt ist hier nie nur ein Herbstblatt, sondern ein Blatt, das fotografiert, gedruckt, ausgeschnitten und in die Form eines Blattes gebracht wurde, um dann wieder fotografiert zu werden. Artefakte auf den Aufnahmen deuten

darauf hin, dass wir es nicht mit schlichten Abbildungen zu tun haben.

Esther Hiepler nähert sich der Natur ebenfalls durch die Hintertür der Konzeptkunst. Mit steter Regelmässigkeit hat sie sich in den botanischen Garten gesetzt, um mit lediglich zwei Pinselstärken und Aquarellfarbe Pflanzen zu malen. Ihr Blick hat sich dabei kaum vom Boden gelöst. Und so reht sich nun ein Blatt an das andere, was ein grosses Naturpuzzle ergibt.

Im Keller aber wartet dann noch eine Überraschung. Ein silberglänzender Zwitter zwischen Mensch und Möhre von Christine Zufferey räkel sich auf einem Stuhl und führt den Betrachter in eine märchenhafte Zwischenwelt. Das viel zitierte anthropozäne Zeitalter, in dem der Mensch unwiderruflich in die Natur eingreift, ist weit weg.

Bis 7. Juni. Villa Renata, Socinstr. 16, Basel. Do/Fr 17–20 Uhr, Sa/So 14–18 Uhr. www.villa-renata.ch

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«ALIAS or the world as a world without object»
2017 - ongoing, multi-disciplinary installation (PDF 5 MB):
http://www.pluriversum.ch/download/pdf/ALIAS_Christine_Zufferey_E.pdf

«random access memory (leading back to the unknown)»
2010 - ongoing, photo series / installation (PDF 6 MB):
http://www.pluriversum.ch/download/pdf/random_access_memory_Zufferey_E.pdf

art and architecture (selection), (PDF 18 MB):
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