

Sitting on a Branch

JANUARY 30 / 2016 – MARCH 26 / 2016



Left: Bernard Voita, *Melencolia VIII (Abdellah T.)*, 2014, Ed. of 5 (+2AP) 180 x 130 cm, courtesy the artist and galerie Bob van Orsouw

Right: Doris Lasch, *Untitled*, 2014B/W photography, 103 x 133 cm, courtesy the artist

For his new exhibition at von Bartha, Boris Rebetez has invited 6 artists to join him in exploring ideas of space, environment and architecture. Rebetez is a multimedia artist whose main interest lies in examining concepts of space in both physical terms and as a theoretical and historical construct. This fascination with space is shared by the participating artists - **Daniel Robert Hunziker, Doris Lasch, Aglaia Konrad, David Thorpe, Bernard Voita and Claudia Wieser** - who respond to these concepts in different and beguiling ways.

Rebetez is particularly interested in the artist's role in sculpting the experience of the visitor; predicting their moves and guiding their journey through the gallery. As the artist explains:

"If a space in which one finds oneself becomes an art object, then the visitor himself is in the middle of the artwork, he or she becomes a part of it and is, to an extent, also exhibited within it."

In *Sitting on a Branch* he will create an architectural intervention within the gallery itself by adding a new pillar into the exhibition space, changing the context of the gallery setting. Rebetez often works in this way, making small changes to an environment which are hardly noticeable at first, but which in the end change the concept of the room and the visitors' response to it.

Claudia Wieser (b. Germany 1973) also aims to reinterpret the purpose of the gallery. In this exhibition she will present a mural similar to her mural installed at the Kiosk gallery in Ghent, an enlarged black and white photographic wall piece depicting the interior of an imposing building. Taking up the entire wall, the piece is reminiscent of a stage set. Its other-worldly quality completely transforms the space around it. Wieser's work, which includes abstract installations and spherical sculptures, is informed by modernism, especially artists such as

Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, as well as architecture, film, cinema, theatre and conceptual art.

Like Wieser, **David Thorpe** (b. England 1972) is inspired by art historical movements. The artist, who follows in the intellectual tradition of John Ruskin and William Morris, creates his own sealed off worlds where the natural and artificial fuse. For him space is not a closed or stable entity, but is continually exposed to changes through time and movement. His work for the exhibition *The Protecting Army I-V* (2004) is a series of wooden sculptures set with glass which suggest expertly wrought ancient city gates. The screens divide the exhibition space creating points of entry or exit, guiding the visitors around the exhibition.

The exhibition also features photography by **Doris Lasch** (b. Germany 1972). Her series of works *Untitled* (2014) show interior landscapes which reveal an idea of space beyond the images. By staging and photographing different scenarios within her studio, Lasch uses the installations to challenge the notion of how a viewer reads a space and the assumptions about the artists' activities which they project onto her images. By using her studio Lasch also examines how art history is instrumental in shaping the ideal of the 'artistic persona' and the paraphernalia associated with this constructed identity.

Bernard Voïta (b. Switzerland 1960) also uses his studio space to construct photographs of false interiors. In *Melencolia VI* (2014) we can see how the artist produces false interior scenes by arranging everyday objects such as lamps, chairs and shelving units, carefully positioning them so as to break up the composition of the photograph. Voïta manipulates the space within his images through the insertion of random geometric planes, making them look like collages or sculptures.

The films of **Aglaia Konrad** (b. 1960 Austria) explore the possibilities of the cinematic medium to generate – rather than capture – an architectural experience. She plays with the two ideas of film as a “window” and a “mirror”. In *Das Haus* – a 16mm film shot in a house designed by the architect Juliaan Lampens in Sint-Martens-Latem, Belgium - these two systems are blurred, by treating windows as a gateway between interior and exterior space, and by using mirrors as devices that disrupt form.

Continuing the theme of the interplay between space and structure is the work of **Daniel Robert Hunziker** (b. 1965 Switzerland). For his sculpture *Arch II/14* he uses found architectural objects and materials relating to the architectural encountered in everyday life, such as breeze blocks and panes of glass. Varying in geometrical and spatial shapes, Hunziker's work forms a dialog within the exhibition space that brings up questions regarding the architecture and social structure of urban society. As with Rebetez and the other artists participating in the exhibition, Hunziker also perceives the constructed space in the surrounding exhibition space as an integral part of his work.

Notes to Editors

About Boris Rebetez

Boris Rebetez (b.1970, Switzerland) is a multimedia artist who works across drawing, collage, sculpture, installation and photography. He currently lives and works in Basel, Switzerland.

Rebetez studied at Schule für Gestaltung in Basel from 1990-1994. His work has been widely exhibited internationally, with recent solo exhibitions at Kunsthaus Baselland, Muttentz (2014), Kunst Raum, Riehen (2012), Komplot Brussels (2011) and Kunstmuseum Solothurn (2010). Selected group exhibitions include *Überzeichnen* at Kunsthaus Baselland (2015), *Emergences* at Bex & Art Triennale (2014), *Warum ist Landschaft schön* at Kunsthalle Basel (2013), *Celluloïd Brushes* at Ludlow 38, Goethe-Institut New York (2013), and Witte de With, Rotterdam (2012),

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Minimallinie at Kunsthhaus Palazzo, Liestal (2012), Prix Irène Reymond 2006-2012, Musée d'art de Pully (2012), *Voici un dessin Suisse 1990-2010* at Kunsthhaus Aarau (2011), *Sichtbar Unsichtbar, Graphische Sammlung der ETH*, Zürich (2010) and *Voici un dessin Suisse 1990-2010*, Musée Rath Genève (2010).

Rebetez received an award from the Irène Reymond Foundation in 2011 and was artist in residence at the Istituto Svizzero di Roma in 2008. His work is included in notable international public and private collections.

About von Bartha

Representing over twenty artists, von Bartha is a contemporary gallery with locations in Basel and S-chanf active in both the primary and secondary markets.

Co-founded in 1970 by Margareta and Miklos von Bartha, the gallery initially gained recognition for showing historically significant groups such as the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención and Arte Madí, the ZERO group and the Hungarian Avant-Garde. They also worked with significant contemporary artists of their own era such as Olle Baertling and Aurelie Nemours. The gallery built on its foundations to establish a contemporary programme now directed by the second generation of the family, Stefan von Bartha. Today it maintains a focus on Concrete Art, Op Art, Kinetic Art, Activist Art, Installation Art and Light Art.

The gallery represents an international roster of artists that includes Christian Andersson, Andrew Bick, Terry Haggerty, John Wood and Paul Harrison, Imi Knoebel, Sarah Oppenheimer, Florian Slotawa, Bob and Roberta Smith and Bernar Venet as well as important Swiss artists such as Daniel Robert Hunziker, Karim Noureldin, Boris Rebetez and Beat Zoderer. Von Bartha continues to represent European modern artists such as Olle Baertling, Camille Graeser, Gerhard von Graevenitz and Bernhard Luginbühl.

Von Bartha's location in Basel is a 850m² converted garage which has been used to great effect to present large-scale installations by gallery artists. The gallery has a second space located in S-chanf in the Engadin Alps used for special exhibitions and projects. By commissioning and exhibiting ambitious new works, the gallery nurtures successive generations of artists, while supporting the continually evolving practice of their established artists.

Von Bartha publishes art books, exhibition catalogues and its own newspaper featuring commissioned essays and interviews.

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Exhibition Facts

Title: Sitting on a Branch

Address: von Bartha, Kannenfeldplatz 6, 4056, Basel, Switzerland

Telephone: +41 61 322 10 00

Website: www.vonbartha.com

Dates: January 30 2016 – March 26 2016

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Preview: January 29 2016, 6-8pm

Opening Hours: Tuesday to Friday 2 – 6pm, Saturday 11am – 4pm, or by appointment

Admission: Free

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