

Maximiliane Baumgartner – The Fourth Wall of the Third Pedagogue

16.11. - 20.12.2019

From the perspective of artistic research, Maximiliane Baumgartner develops research-related series of works in the medium of painting. Starting from urban contexts and an interest in possible forms of counter-publicity, which she understands both as a place of production and a venue, she formulates critical questions and operational frameworks in the medium of painting as an extended field of action. The interrelation between artistic production and education is characteristic of Maximiliane Baumgartner's painterly and performative practice.

The work series shown in the exhibition, *The Fourth Wall of the Third Pedagogue*, examines the educational role of architecture and painting as a socially embedded cultural practice. Baumgartner is interested in the question of subjectivity arising both in painting and in (free) pedagogy. The title of the exhibition refers to the idea of a third space<sup>1</sup>, as one that is not subject to binary logics of failure and non-failure, but has to be negotiated and activated again and again.

Maximiliane Baumgartner develops pictorial derivations in the form of paintings that deal with the overcoming of hegemonic thinking. It also deals with the question to what extent critical potentials of cultural criticism can be activated via pedagogically artistic settings to tackle issues that surpass the canon of a majority society. Here, pedagogy is regarded as a social discipline that shapes childhood and youth. It forms the basic experience of most people, affects our daily experience and actions and is closely related to social class experiences in its institutional formulation.

The paintings exhibited here appear as *mise-en-scènes*, whose field of reference is made visible: They quote and construct architectures, works of art and urban places that have been robbed of their subversive, anti-fascist context, and thus depoliticized in the course of time. For example in the picture of the Ulmer Hocker, which was designed by Max Bill in the environment of the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm, but whose context of origin - the HfG Ulm had its origin in the attempt of anti-fascist artistic teaching after 1945 - is hardly communicated any more. In other works, the grotesque as an educational category is used, for example in the three-part work "Die vierte Wand der dritten Pädagogin II": In the critical processing of the topos of the "German forest", park-like settings and grotesque-looking designs for visual sculptures and architectures condense, taking the idea of a 'Leitkultur' or guiding culture *ad absurdum*. In the edition works "Eckenlehnerin" Baumgartner appropriates the materiality of the wooden shingle. This regional formal language is inscribed in the architecture of the foothills of the Alps, where the artist grew up. From an imagined feminist perspective, the triangular forms attempt to open up narratives as pictorial set pieces.

In recourse to figures and places from the past and in the assertion of a different historical construction, the pictures in the series enter into a relationship of resistance and complicity.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Homi K. Bhabha.

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The question of situated knowledge<sup>2</sup>, which is decisive for the position from which Maximiliane Baumgartner develops her works, is also posed to the exhibition as a format that addresses the so-called "fourth wall" - the viewers inside - in the gallery spaces during the duration of the exhibition. Painting - in its extended form of action - is here presented as a mediator between the sketched third rooms and the fourth wall.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Donna Haraway.