

Places of Longing

25.1.—2.4.2018

Solo Position: Nicole
A. Wietlisbach.
An initiative by
kulturelles.bl
25.1.—4.3.2018

Esther Hunziker
25.1.—2.4.2018

Places of Longing

with Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler, Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger, Max Philipp Schmid, Monica Studer / Christoph van den Berg

What could our places of longing be? What identifies them and what might endanger them? What accords with our personal image of an extraordinary day, an unusual experience of nature or a paradisiac state, for us or other beings? Can we find this amid the quotidian? In the most varied manner selected video works investigate this question of the societal and individual longing for an ideal place of being oneself. With works by Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler, Max Philipp Schmid, Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger and Monica Studer / Christoph van den Berg.

Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler *Eight* (2001)

HD video with sound / Duration: 3 min 35 sec, loop / Courtesy the Artists, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, Vera Munro Gallery, Hamburg and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin. Copyright © Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler

The video work *Eight* already references in its title both what is to be told here as well as the structure of its narrative. It apparently revolves around the (eighth) birthday of a girl — and this in an endless loop. The camera is in a continuous

dolly movement, only interrupted by two short editing sequences, from the interior of a house to the outside yard and back. The localization of and transition between interior and exterior here remain just as unresolved as do the starting and termination points of the narrative. The girl is oscillating back and forth through these ambiguous states. Having arrived in the rainy, nocturnal yard, she approaches the remnants of the drenched party and cuts herself a piece of the birthday cake. Yet before she can take a bite, the girl has already arrived back in the house, only to recommence her journey back outside. At the point where the bounds between inside and outside — sheltered home and stormy world — are traversed by the girl, the spatial order has already been reversed. *Eight* marks a passage of the girl leaving the 'shelter' of childhood and becoming an adolescent. *Eight* was shot on location in Austin, Texas in 2001.

Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler *Eighteen* (2013)

UHD video with sound / Duration: 15 min 50 sec, itinerant loop / Courtesy the Artists, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, Vera Munro Gallery, Hamburg and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin. Copyright © Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler. *Eighteen* was made possible through the generous support of the Linda Pace Foundation.

A decade after creating *Eight*, Hubbard / Birchler began searching for the child actor, whom they had cast for the role of the girl in *Eight*. Locating her in Boston, the child actor has grown up to become a contemporary dancer. *Eighteen* picks up on the same character in a scene of her eighteenth birthday party. As in the work *Eight*, Hubbard / Birchler have developed a narrative perspective that is unsettled, does not come to closure and oscillates between adolescence and adulthood. As the protagonist journeys from one place to another, linear time, fact and fiction, and the solidity of physical shelter constantly slip around her. Steady, uninterrupted camera movements straddle constructed and actual locations, inside and outside, rain and sunshine, day and night, summer and winter. *Eighteen* incorporates three musical compositions, arranged and performed on guitar: the *Gymnopédies* by Erik Satie. Written for piano in 1888, these movements share a common structure and collectively are regarded as an important precursor to modern ambient music. *Eighteen* was shot on location in Austin, Texas in 2012.

The videos *Eight* and *Eighteen* by Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler will be screened at different times. *Eighteen*: 25 January – 16 March 2018; *Eight*: 17 March – 2 April 2018.

Monica Studer / Christoph van den Berg Wiese, 2005/2010

Realtime-Animation © Studer / van den Berg, Basel
Courtesy: Galerie Nicolas Krupp

We are familiar with this gaze — travelling over an Alpine flower meadow that bursts with spring, a meadow with grasses, different plants and stones. The gaze glides endlessly about, indulgently pursuing what it notices — on and on, with the expectation that this gaze will, soon, be lifted in order to see the horizon, the breadth of the landscape or an urban context. But this wish is never satisfied in Monica Studer / Christoph van den Berg's work *Wiese* (Meadow). There is no swift survey of what has been seen, nor is there a final overview of the landscape which has just been travelled visually. So, almost longingly, the eye follows the real-time animation which Studer / van den Berg made using digital 3D computer game technology. The images are continually rendered afresh in real time. Flowers, grasses, stones and branches emerge repeatedly anew as 3D objects and lead us into infinite digital tracking shots through the fictitious landscape. Yes, you can lean back and enjoy this animation of time and movement, and be delighted by flora and fauna. Yet much as we are fascinated by how closely linked fiction and our perception of reality are, and how nature can also be enjoyed as a digital animation, a feeling of insecurity and discomfort is mixed in too. The gaze can never be raised from the ground to find out where this meadow leads. (IG)

Max Philipp Schmid Paradies, 2015

HD video, ca. 15 min
with: Thomas Douglas; direction, editing, sound, photography: Max Philipp Schmid; camera: Thomas Isler; set and costumes: Monika Gömer—Vogt; sound design: Knut Jensen; producer: Stella Händler
© Max Philipp Schmid / freihändler

P-A-R-A-D-I-E-S (PARADISE) spells out the protagonist in Max Philipp Schmid's video work. Slowly, almost clumsily. Sitting in the middle of a greenhouse, the question quickly surfaces: what vision do we have of paradise or a paradisiac state? Is a little bit of nature tamed inside a greenhouse enough? And what about the everyday idylls we often try to arrange, with our perfectly designed and fenced front gardens, city greening or strange urban furnishings that sometimes have bizarre effects, but which do not nonetheless hide the facts of hard urban reality? The 'hortus conclusus', the enclosed and thus protected small garden seems to be evoked

perennially, up and down the land, as an idealised refuge. In his video work Max Philipp Schmid carefully observes the everyday in order to enquire humorously and insightfully about how closely the general trend towards retreat and compartmentalisation is tied to an ideal of life in harmony with nature.

Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger Schlaraffenland (Cockaigne), 2014

10 min 8 sec, loop
© Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger
Courtesy: Galerie Stampa, Basel

“Sie sind ja auch nur spirituelle Wesen, die Erfahrungen eines Lebens als Huhn machen...”
Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger in conversation with Ines Goldbach.

Find copies in German next to the artwork.

Solo Position: Nicole A. Wietlisbach. An initiative by kulturelles.bl

Three spaces and one idea that interlinks the works: linear structures that we know from nature, but which can equally be read as abstractions which create opportunities for drawing and painting. The alienation of familiar, everyday images from nature that speak to our (viewing) habits. A notation which can become drawing, line and landscape. The three spaces themselves function like a composition that can be read and experienced in a linear and synchronous fashion — without a clear indication of a direction of travel, a beginning and end, or a first or last space.

Five blackboards that were once inscribed with melodic themes give the room a second skin — one which is dark, graphic, vibrating and melodious all at the same time. Notations and drawings, lines of dots which physically travel through the space that could describe a landscape's silhouette pull us — like a pivot — into subsequent spaces. Vertical and horizontal linear structures, taken from nature or relating to nature, and chalk dust collected in test tubes are all, on the one hand, what they are and, on the other, describe yet again fictional and possible landscape spaces. (Nicole A. Wietlisbach)

The 'Solo Position' competition format is aimed at artists from the region, enabling them a first major

solo exhibition at the Kunsthaus Baselland. There was an open call for the competition in early 2017 for the fifth time, on the initiative of kulturelles.bl. The jury was made up of the expert commission of the Canton Basel-Landschaft and the director of the Kunsthaus Baselland. Previous winners: Schirin Kretschmann (2011), Vincent Kriste (2012), Martin Chramosta (2014), Esther Ernst and (2016).

Nicole A. Wietlisbach (b. 1989, Basel), lives and works in Basel. Education: 2012–2014 Master of Fine Arts, Institut Kunst HGK FHNW, Basel, 2009–2012 Bachelor of Arts, Institut Kunst HGK FHNW, Basel, 2008–2009 Foundation Course in Art and Design, Schule für Gestaltung, Basel, 2005–2008 Fachmaturitätsschule, vocational field art, Münchenstein

Esther Hunziker

HI THERE. Large black letters meet the visitors. This address is familiar, particularly from spam emails, chatbots or vlogs, an informal greeting directed from an unknown person to an unknown receiver. 'Hi there, is there anybody out there?' This quest for interaction with unknown others, out there, is what engages Esther Hunziker in her work. In this work she creates a relationship between huge, unknown extra-terrestrial forms and fully terrestrial, everyday 'alien-like' structures of being foreign in and around us.

The artist leads visitors through a new series of works that fill the whole lower floor of the Kunsthhaus. Here opposites such as the unknown and the familiar, the near and far, the intellectual and the physical or the mechanical and the organic collide.

With a large overview of printed pages in the first space the artist allows us insight into a personal chain of associations, in which she brings together widely varying and decentralised sources to form a comprehensive collection of material on the topic of 'alienation'. In these she looks for connections to estrangement within and around us — for social estrangement and isolation in the age of networked, digital communication, as well as unfamiliar, foreign alien forms and ideas. Here the Marxist theory of alienation meets young YouTube streamers' flow of emotions, illustrations of

meteorite impacts contrast with images of anonymous laboratories, research approaches from exobiology are mixed with texts from anonymous chatbots, narcissistic selfies relate to artefacts from unknown specimens, or photographs of her own sketches bump into standardised stock photography... The foreign meets the well-known; the puzzling meets the identifiable.

"For years the scientific project SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) has been searching space for extra-terrestrial signals" says the artist, "and they have the same problems we do — the mass of noise. How can you recognise relevant signals when all the frequencies are blocked?" The mass of noise can be sensed in the second gallery. Object-like beings can be seen on six monitors, all of them speaking at the same time. Their bodies are like stone formations or strange meteorites, while their language is human, banal and quotidian. It is a babble of voices from original audio tracks on real video streams, texts from real people, who point the cameras to themselves and express their feelings, which they share online at any time with anyone and no-one in particular. Esther Hunziker borrows these 'feelings' from the nonstop stream of global networks and gives the language new bodies. She calls her hybrid beings 'specimens', so-called scientific paradigms, which she conserves and presents as 'foreign' objects on the monitors.

In the age of digitalisation Hunziker comes decisively to terms with how reality and fiction intermingle ever more, how identities appear to be interchangeable and can always be compared with others. This is the virtual exhibitionism of the online subject reflected in the vloggers' spoken texts — the continual search for the 'online I', for belonging 'in the world'. We are all tourists who find ourselves in a place, without being from this place, in a kind of transit-space, in a kind of transit-time.

– HI THERE! (IG)

Esther Hunziker (b. 1969) is artist, media designer and teaches digital media at the Institut Kunst in Basel. Numerous exhibitions and festival showings nationally and abroad since 1996. She studied video at the Schule für Gestaltung SfG, Basel.

Events

Vernissage:

Esther Hunziker, Sehnsuchtsorte,
Solo Position: Nicole A. Wietlisbach

Wednesday, 24 January 2018 | 6.30 pm

Speeches: Marina Meijer, President Kunstverein Baselland,
Esther Roth, Head of kulturelles.bl, Ines Goldbach, Director
Kunsthaus Baselland

Family Sundays with Workshops

Sunday, 28 January 2018 | 11 am — 5 pm

Free admission for families to the exhibition
2 – 4 pm: Family tour and workshop with Christina Schmitt.
Fee 5 CHF / person. With family pass: 4 CHF / person.
Registration until 24.01.18 at office@kunsthhausbaselland.ch

Sunday, 25 March 2018 | 11 am — 5 pm

Free admission for families to the exhibition
2 – 4 pm: Family tour and workshop with artist Katharina A.
Wieser. Fee 5 CHF / person. With family pass: 4 CHF /
person.
Registration until 21.03.18 at office@kunsthhausbaselland.ch

Guided Lunchtime Tours

Wednesday, 31 January 2018 | 12.15 am

With Christina Schmitt

Wednesday, 28 February 2018 | 12.15 am

With Carole Ackermann

Tuesday, 20 March 2018 | 12.15 am

With Ines Tondar

Book Launch: Daniel Götting

Tuesday, 6 February 2018 | 6.30 pm

With Daniel Götting and Patricia Hug

Artist Talk

Wednesday, 7 February 2018 | 6.30 pm

With Nicole A. Wietlisbach and Barbara van der Meulen,
Member of the Fachkommission Kunst Basel-Landschaft

Sunday, 25 February 2018 | 11 am — 5 pm

Free admission for families to the exhibition

Guided Lunchtime Tour in French

Wednesday, 7 March 2018 | 12.15 am

With Fanny Grezet. Also suitable for schools.

Vernissage:

Outdoor Project 2018: Vittorio Brodmann,
purchased! The Canton Basel-Landschaft's
new acquisitions

Thursday, 15 March 2018 | 6.30 pm

Movie Night #1

Wednesday, 21 March 2018 | 6 — 8 pm

Artist talk and film screening of *The Wild White*. With the
artists Dadi Wirz and Renatus Zürcher.
Moderation Ines Goldbach.

Guided Tour and Book Launch

Esther Hunziker: Hi There

Tuesday, 27 March 2018 | 6.30 pm

With Esther Hunziker and Ines Goldbach

Movie night #2 Catching the Real

Wednesday, 28 March 2018 | 6 — 8 pm

Selected films. Introduced by Chantal Molleur, White Frame

Finissage

Monday, 2 April 2018 | 11 am — 5 pm

Easter Monday — open with free admission

KUNSTHAUSBASELLAND

St. Jakob-Strasse 170
4132 Muttenz / Basel
Tel.: +41 61 312 83 88
office@kunsthhausbaselland.ch