

FRANCIS BAUDEVIN
ERICA BAUM
STEPHANE DAFFLON
PHILIPPE DECRAUZAT
BLAIR THURMAN

Artists Talk on Saturday, 28 January 2017 at 5 p.m.

Opening on Saturday, 28 January 2017 at 6 p.m.

26 January 28 – 4 March 2017

At first glance, this show seems off-putting, given the way that it looks like a linear succession of works, laid out in such a way that it is impossible to see more than one work by the same artist at the same time. This group show is akin to a musical score, with a series of *sol*i without any choral effects. Yet the works have in common a connecting point, which it is far from easy to discern.

Our exhibition is bringing together artists from different generations. Born in the 1960s and 70s, they live and work respectively in Switzerland, France and New York. Despite this geographical gap, they share a real complicity, which has led them to conduct a large number of collaborative projects. Particular mention should be made of the duo FRANCIS BAUDEVIN and STEPHANE DAFFLON in 2000 at the Glassbox (Paris); the collaborative, anonymous project “No Pictures Available” (FRANCIS BAUDEVIN, STEPHANE DAFFLON, PHILIPPE DECRAUZAT) in 2008 at the Galerie Art & Essai (Rennes); the book *Bbababaumbaudevin* which in 2011 brought together work by ERICA BAUM and FRANCIS BAUDEVIN (Bureau, Circuit and Regency Arts Press); and, in 2016 BLAIR THURMAN, PHILIPPE DECRAUZAT, STEPHANE DAFFLON exhibited together at the Honolulu gallery (Zurich).

To pierce this exhibition’s secret, the starting point is the hanging plan. It is schematic and flirts with being talismanic, in a rotating pattern providing a play of permutations, a movement which can be found formally and conceptually in all the artists in the show.

BLAIR THURMAN’S triangular *shaped canvas* pieces are run through with chamfered patterns, laid out according to a principle of revolution. Greatly attached to pictorial abstraction, BLAIR THURMAN apparently distorts traditional procedures. The chamfering obviously evokes mechanics, but primarily it is there to create an obstacle for the tints and lead to the total projection of the painting. According to the same principle, FRANCIS BAUDEVIN has reproduced the colours of the Lego logo, in homage to individual creativity in a standard environment. For this series of quadrangular canvases, he has elaborated a classic construction, in the tradition of Concrete Art, as formalised by Max Bill. This approach is deceptive. FRANCIS BAUDEVIN extends the interdisciplinarity or functionality dear to the Zurich movement; but, for him, abstraction is never isolated, autonomous or free of allusions. Painting, even when geometric, uses the logotypes of everyday packaging, to convert the fetishism we devote to consumption into a eulogy to everyday creativity. The artist openly cites a Lego slogan: “a famous collection allowing you to make all possible constructions!”. STEPHANE DAFFLON is presenting a series of polygonal canvases, in which the painted patterns seem alternately to “emerge” and “enter”. As the paint has been pushed to the edge, at the threshold of the frame, it disturbs the step towards a clear reading of the painted object, evoking the hypothetical result of a circular movement. PHILIPPE DECRAUZAT’S works evoke the logo of the Dead Kennedys, which was made by Winston Smith. In 2004, he discreetly alluded to this group in *Woodstock über alles* (Dead Kennedys, *California Über Alles*, 1979). Subsequently, the faceted pattern of the logo was deployed on the scale of the exhibition space (Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse, 2008). Over and above the formal analogy of the folded pattern with angle-boards, PHILIPPE DECRAUZAT and ERICA BAUM share a taste for folding and collage. ERICA BAUM often uses books and their photographic reproduction to create a new reading which is tilted or diagonal. Here, two pages have been connected by folding, and make for an original poetic narrative.

The artists in this show have in common an aesthetic and an openness which take abstraction towards hybridisation: “custom” mechanics provides pictorial invention; a standardised art makes for devotion to infinite individual creativity; folding renews the copy/paste; the circulation of images favours geometric invention; elementary geometry dynamically sets painting in architecture; etc. The talisman of the show is not a secret, magical sign, but a movement – which, as opposed to the aesthetic tradition of focused contemplation, sets into motion centripetal forces.

Salzburg, January 2017

Julien Fronsacq