

GALERIE EMANUEL LAYR
SEILERSTÄTTE 2
1010 VIENNA

T +43 1 945 1791
GALLERY@EMANUELLAYR.COM
WWW.EMANUELLAYR.COM

Fieber, Fever

There is a small joke in this exhibition about a kind of illness in relation to the creative process. Maybe a passing morning sickness, or too-familiar body dysmorphia; a general sense radiating from some vestigial inner organ that all is not well. Anyway, it's uncomfortable. But the coincident flashes of heat, heartache and mild anxiety won't dissipate through wishful thinking alone. The fever must be allowed to run its course.

Because of the (modern) avant-garde desire to collapse art into the everyday, and the (now) terrifying encroachment of capital and the security state into all manner of social and biological life, it is impossible to think of one's artistic or cultural origins without considering the physical and intellectual problem (pain, labor) of birth. Where does anything come from? Science, philosophy and religion have a number of conflicting theories, and certainly those proposed within art have remained, until recently, absurdly patriarchal. As Diedrich Diederichsen has remarked, the strong grip of the canon over time exerts a deadly chokehold; resulting in conceptual still-births, aborted alternatives, malignant obedience to an empty formal code.

The series of works brought together in this three-man exhibition play with varying intensities of heat – through artistic processes that resist, or slip away from traditional categories. In (what appears to be) orthodox film, painting, and sculpture, (re)production is staged within the realm of base matter and banal fact; as it pertains to the body, at work.

Lisa Holzer's newest "paintings" are thick with complex alimentary particles, in muted mush-tones that have been poured or pressed with the back of a soup-spoon against the artist's worktop. Transparent and translucent drips on the glass surfaces of their standard frames seem to expel unmixed color and excess condensation, as if her fixed, all-over compositions had continued to breathe, emote, and sweat.

Lena Henke's latest sculptures from the series *Female Fatigue* (2015-16) reduce architectonic structures down to the supportive scale of the freestanding plinth. Thus diminished, the public museum and private interiors of Viennese architects Hans Hollein (*Das Kuchenstück*) and Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky (*Die Frankfurter Küche*) here house or prop up fragile sand impressions of Surrealist or neoclassical fixtures, and choice fragments of the singular ornament which graces every style, aesthetic, and period: the female form.

Margaret Raspé shot her first camera-helmet film after attaching a (then) lightweight Agfa Super 8 camcorder to an industrial hardhat. In a series of 30-second single takes (the limit of her device's wind-up self-timer) she recorded the preparation of a *Schweineschnitzel*. All eight of the works in this series, made between 1971 and 1983, are presented looped across three monitors. In each tightly framed view, the "automatism" of her serial production – whether daily washing, cooking, drawing, or painting – is emphasized as proceeding from the very same pair of (knowing) hands.

Kari Rittenbach