

# H A M L E T

Kevin Aeschbacher  
Ruven Stettler

*Module für Ordnung*  
/en

Opening: Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 2019, 2-6pm  
Exhibition: April 8<sup>th</sup> - May 19<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Opening Hours: Saturday, 11am-3pm or by appointment

*Module für Ordnung* brings together two artists which at first glance don't seem to have much in common besides painting in rectangles. When observed closely however, one can find similarities in their motifs, formal treatments and - intentional and unintentional - references, the proximity of which cannot be denied. Straightforward works, made with meticulous precision incorporating aesthetical and motif-related indicators deriving from comics, graphic novels and computer games receive a counterpart. The counterpart is informed by quick and almost obsessive applications on inexpensive and accessible materials. Remindful of popular culture and drawings in public space and despite similarities with the other position, they seem to have nothing in common.

Still, the works of Kevin Aeschbacher and Ruven Stettler both point towards a desire to create regularity: regularity in perception and the processing of perception, regularity in tales, anecdotes and stories. Questions surrounding the validity of supposedly own realities, the own and others' environments, as well as the appropriation and transfer of these, pervade this exhibition in which creating a tiny bit of orderliness is attempted.

- Clifford E. Bruckmann

The phenomenon describing the human brain's predisposition to be prompted to see human faces also where they are absent is called pareidolia. Our brains' auto completion mechanism is responsible for attempting to recognize all impressions in our surroundings and thus classify them. But what if something lies in between conceived recollection and fictitious abstraction - beyond an allocatable classification? In the conflicting field of supposed disorientation between the known and the unknown as well as recognition and losing one's self, Kevin Aeschbacher's work becomes discernible to the observer. His works show an area devoid of time and space, which consciously withdraws from definitive identification.

A distinction between foreground and background or gaining understanding of the depth of field is only made available through perspective arrangements or dark shadings. And when true-to-life landscapes are visible in the background or familiar materials suffuse the canvas, they only do so in order to become instantaneously alienated or carried off. This transformative potential is facilitated by the visual vocabulary changing between analogue and digital. Two dimensional and three dimensional visualizations find their ways no less than the physical application of oil and acrylic paint.

By translating digital forms of expression into non-digital ones and vice versa, Kevin Aeschbacher blurs the familiar border in between natural and artificial forms as well as real and virtual ones. He hereby does not understand his working media as stable bodies, but rather as liquid, ambivalent building blocks which consciously challenge what is and has been seen.

# H A M L E T

Precisely because one might recognize a familiar landscape in the sculptures placed in the space or see a familiar face in the purple, gravitating mass - however, in awareness of the contingency of the impressions - Aeschbacher proves the conditionality of the observer's perception. It is because in this conditionality every question regarding reality becomes obsolete - ultimately all impressions are a consequence of electrical and chemical signals in our brains -, that the observer is being admitted into an unstable reality which is simultaneously real and virtual.

Originally coming from painting, Ruven Stettler expands his artistic practice in *Module für Ordnung* with new, sculptural works which are shown for the first time next to a selection of works on paper. The sculptures seem to take an opposite position to the works on paper on a formal level. Especially because the hand's trace which appears through the expressive application of the colors in the painting series is deliberately inverted by the indirect pouring procedure used to produce the sculptures. In addition, the artistic latitude was limited - the weight of the sculptures was initially fixed to an ascending order from 1 to 10 kilograms - by setting a framework. Although Stettler attempts to create a supposedly numerical order, he is not interested in the order itself, but rather in its disintegration. He still acts within his self-set framework in order to expose the coincidental within the order. Thus it is not the beautiful and organized which formulates the essence of his work, but rather the chaotically dissonant and diverse.

This diversity is also reflected in the variety of materials used by the artist: oil and acrylic paint, chalk, charcoal and permanent ink are found next to traces of glue, pigments and shiny varnish. Similar to the sculptures, the supposed order - all works were painted on sheets of the same size - is constituted by a shared attribute. However, this order is then shattered and the paintings are shown in a new arrangement.

For this exhibition the pictures are presented on different materials - like felt, bubble wrap and styrofoam - used for the construction, appropriation or maintenance of a home. The display as a stylistic expansion and linking, installative and modular element opposes traditional exhibition formats. It acts an experimental handling of arbitrariness and regularity which constantly expands the works anew and softens the limits in between the paintings and the displays.

Here it becomes evident how Stettler picks up the foundation of his work involving formative structures - which he approaches from regularity to form and from form to regularity - in the display. However, it is not the quest for a superordinate structure which shapes his work, but rather the uncovering of the structures by shattering them. This quest for 'dissonance' [Unstimmigkeit] how Stettler calls it, does not become visible in the singular works, but especially when they are crossed in a spatial sequence: hereby the viewer is presented with a multifaceted oeuvre, continuously assembled anew and ever evolving.

- Céline Matter

Kevin Aeschbacher (\*1988), lives and works in Zurich

Ruven Stettler (\*1994), lives and works in Berne and Zurich