

Matthias Liechti

selected works from 2016—2026

I work with familiar forms such as clocks, doors, windows, books, planets, letters, etc. I am interested in the extent to which we understand these forms as signs which affect our (everyday) actions and thoughts, and to what extent the repetition of these very signs and the followed actions and thoughts is able to create (hypnotic) realities. Each work functions similarly to a model: as fantastic catalysts, they lead into a zone of shifted realities and invite us for a (critical) thought experiment.

Many spirits both dead and alive are present within my works. Even though many of these works look like ready-mades—not a single one of them is. It's all synthetically produced, everything guaranteed unnatural and everything exactly like nature.

Ma t t h i a s L ie c h t i

se le c t e d w o r k s f r o m 2 0 1 6 — 2 0 2 6

I w o r k w i t h f a m i l i a r f o r m s s u c h a s c l o c k s , d o o r s , w i n d o w s , b o o k s , p l a n e t s , l e t t e r s , e t c . I a m i n t e r e s t e d i n t h e e x t e n t t o w h i c h w e u n d e r s t a n d t h e s e f o r m s a s s i g n s w h i c h a f f e c t o u r (e v e r y d a y) a c t i o n s a n d t h o u g h t s , a n d t o w h a t e x t e n t t h e r e p e t i t i o n o f t h e s e v e r y s i g n s a n d t h e f o l l o w e d a c t i o n s a n d t h o u g h t s i s a b l e t o c r e a t e (h y p n o t i c) r e a l i t i e s . E a c h w o r k f u n c t i o n s s i m i l a r l y t o a m o d e l : a s f a n t a s t i c c a t a l y s t s , t h e y l e a d i n t o a z o n e o f s h i f t e d r e a l i t i e s a n d i n v i t e u s f o r a (c r i t i c a l) t h o u g h t e x p e r i m e n t . M a n y s p i r i t s b o t h d e a d a n d a l i v e a r e p r e s e n t w i t h i n m y w o r k s . E v e n t h o u g h m a n y o f t h e s e w o r k s l o o k l i k e r e a d y - m a d e s — n o t a s i n g l e o n e o f t h e m i s . I t ' s a l l s y n t h e t i c a l l y p r o d u c e d , e v e r y t h i n g g u a r a n t e e d u n n a t u r a l a n d e v e r y t h i n g e x a c t l y l i k e n a t u r e .

Realpolitik

05.02.2026—11.02.2026

Lokal-int, Biel/Bienne

When the eagles circle high above, it was best to ignore them, they say. Attention is what invites the predator to sit on our heads, cling on, and influence our thinking. Once the bird sits down, you are responsible for everything else: deciding whether to test and share your new thoughts and face the consequences; or to hold them back and sift through sieves until they lost the potential to offend. Hannah Arendt would certainly advise us to choose the former. If we think along with Arendt, the present offers an exclusive opportunity for political thinking. This does not involve sifting, but rather looking back and thinking ahead. The present is imagined as a temporary state between what's traditionally established and what may be the beginning of something new. It is the moment that connects experience and utopia, thereby providing impetus for political action. Right here, there is some grounding, there are things that can be done, new beginnings that can be realized, so that there may be places where birds can nest. Because utopias can come true. Wikipedia exists, the Bubble is testing it, Lokal-int still opens every Thursday, and Ursula K. Le Guin's novel can be bought and read as a book: the fictional planet Anarres nests like a bird on our heads and lets porous minds keep thinking.

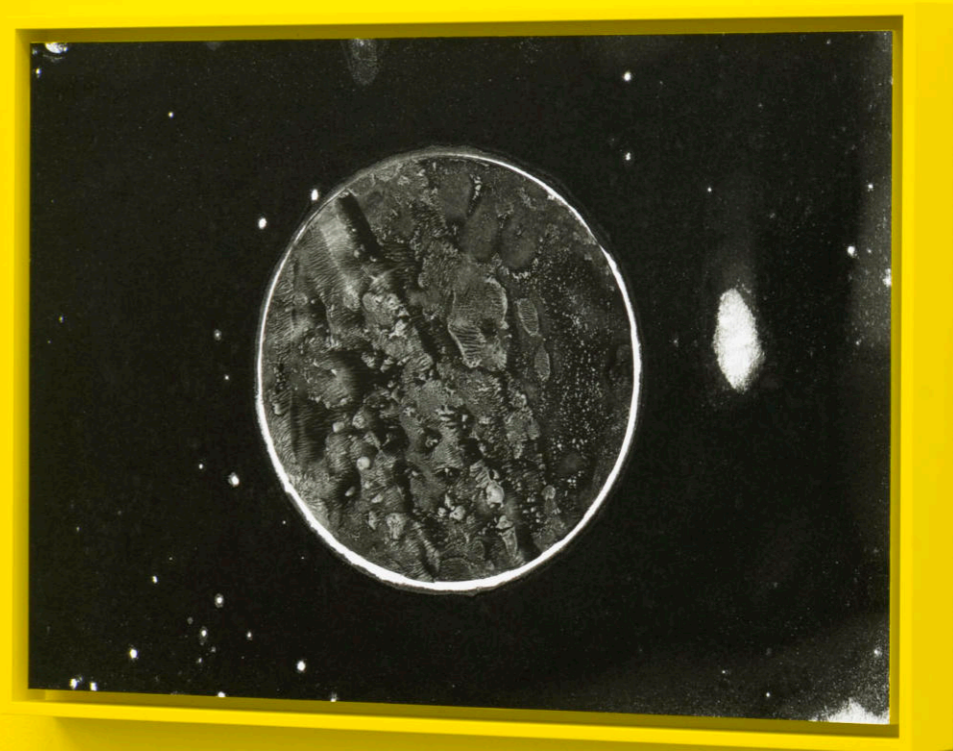
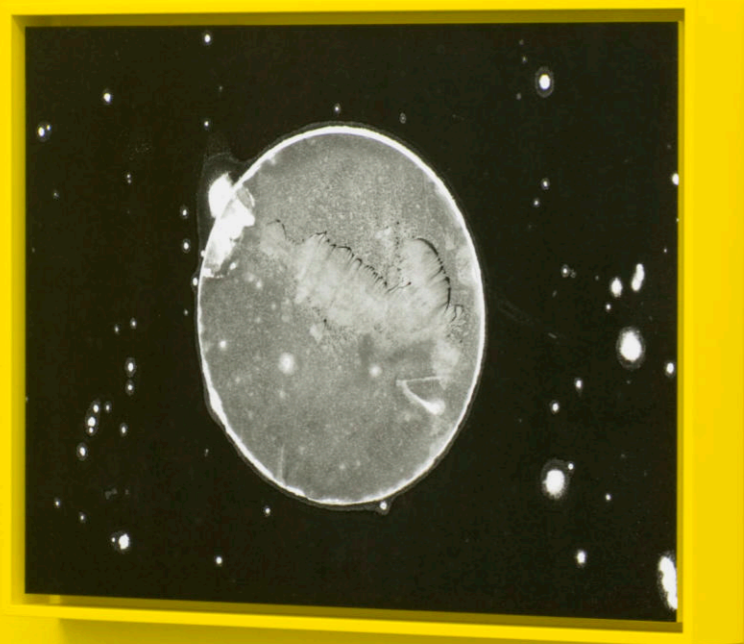
Valerie Keller, 2026

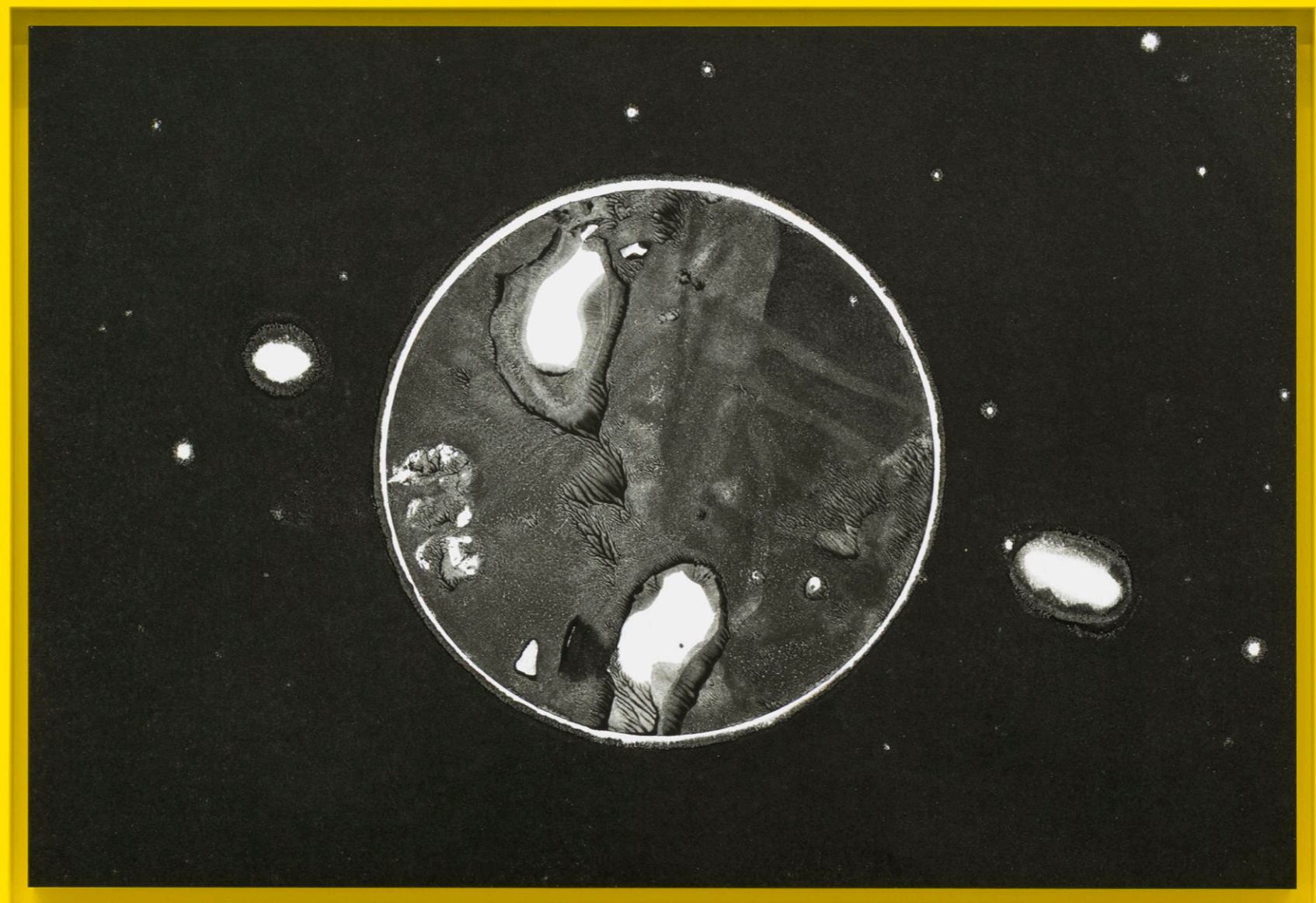






exhibition view. *Realpolitik*. 2026. Lokal-int. Biel/Bienne. photo: Studio Stucky





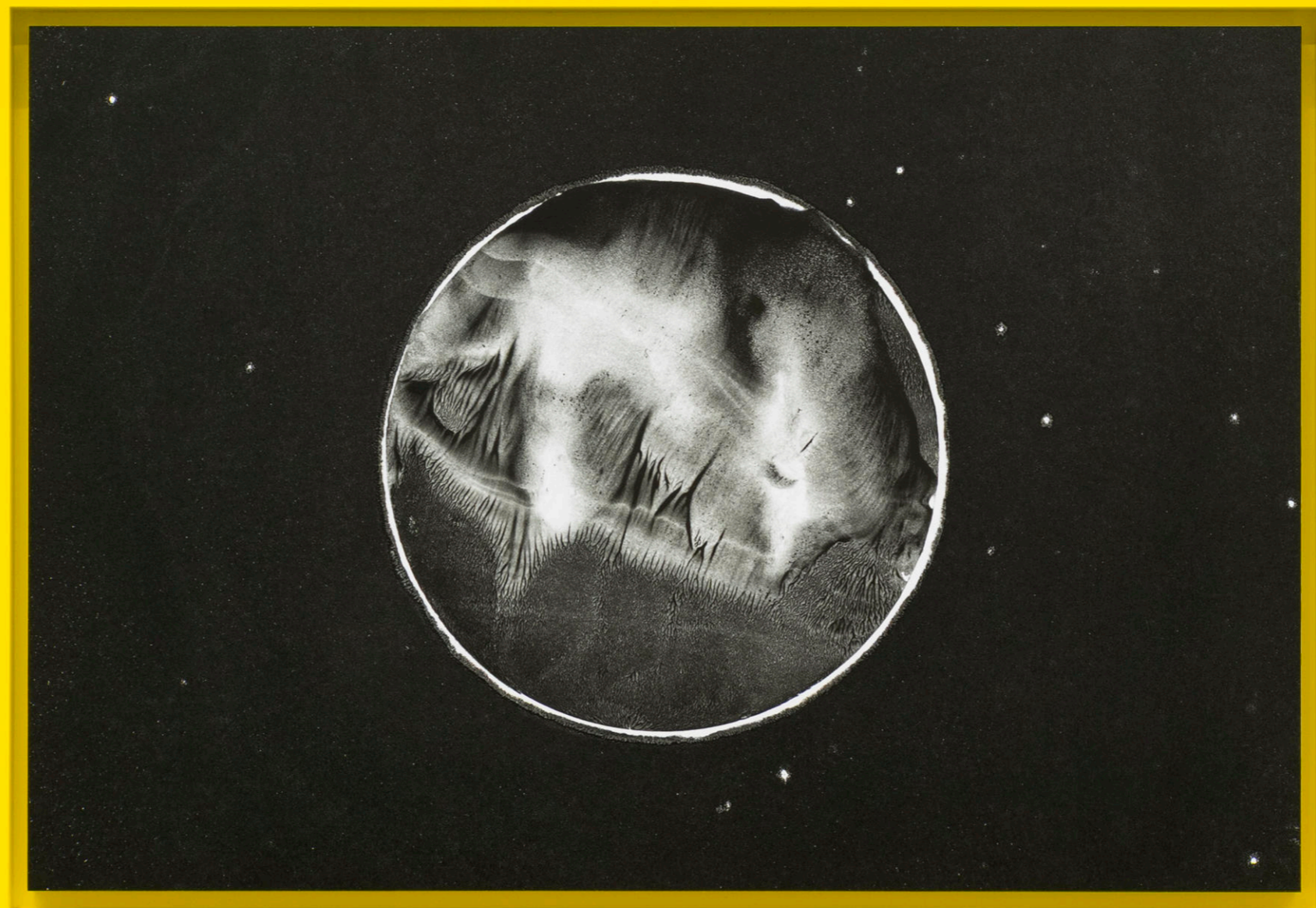
Anarres. 2026. nitrofrottage on paper, yellow wood frame. 28 × 40 × 3.5 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



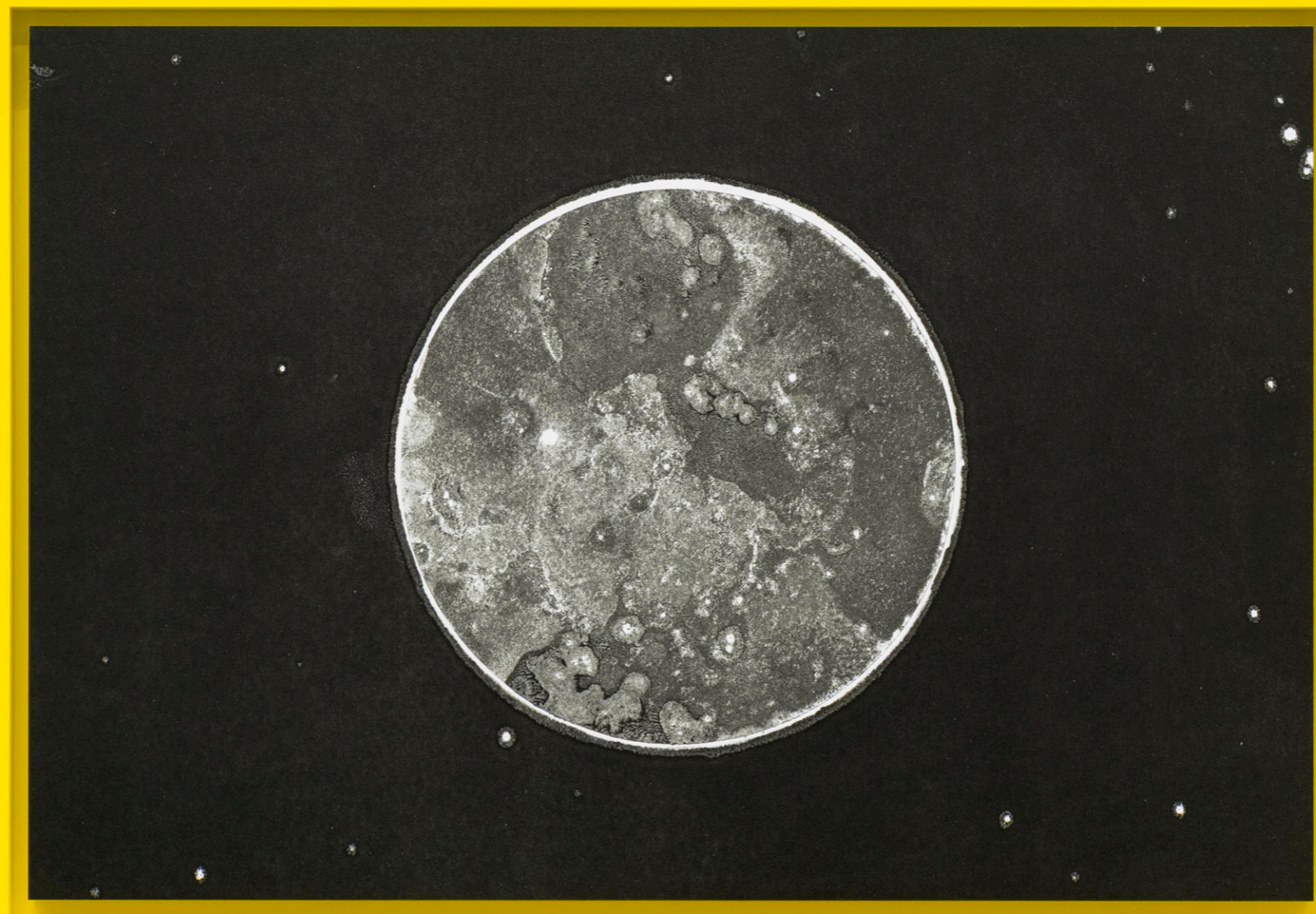
Anarres. 2026. nitrofrottage on paper, yellow wood frame. 28 × 40 × 3.5 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



Anarres. 2026. nitrofrottage on paper, yellow wood frame. 28 × 40 × 3.5 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



Anarres. 2026. nitrofrottage on paper, yellow wood frame. 28 × 40 × 3.5 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



Anarres. 2026. nitrofrottage on paper, yellow wood frame. 28 × 40 × 3.5 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



exhibition view. *Realpolitik*. 2026. Lokal-int. Biel/Bienne. photo: Studio Stucky

Geister, 2024/25

copy-transformed text, silkscreen print
on paper, oil paint on wood, glass,
bronze, steel, 92 × 75 × 11 cm

The series *Geister* (= ghosts, minds) shows replicas of old, double leaf wood windows, that are painted with multiple layers of grey oil color. While in double leaf windows the hinges are usually located on the sides, here they have been moved to the center. Similar to book pages, these window leaves can be imaginatively turned. The text fragments are scaled-up and copy-transformed take outs from books written by deceased people. In *De Pictura* (On Painting, 1435), Leon Battista Alberti compares a painting with an open window, that allows a viewer to see a certain story. Later in the 15th. and 16th. century this comparison took a spiritual turn. The painting (window) was no longer only an optical metaphor—it became a threshold between two realms: the earthly and the spiritual. The work *Geister* continues this metaphorical play and understands books as windows to grasp the quite whispers of (departed) minds.

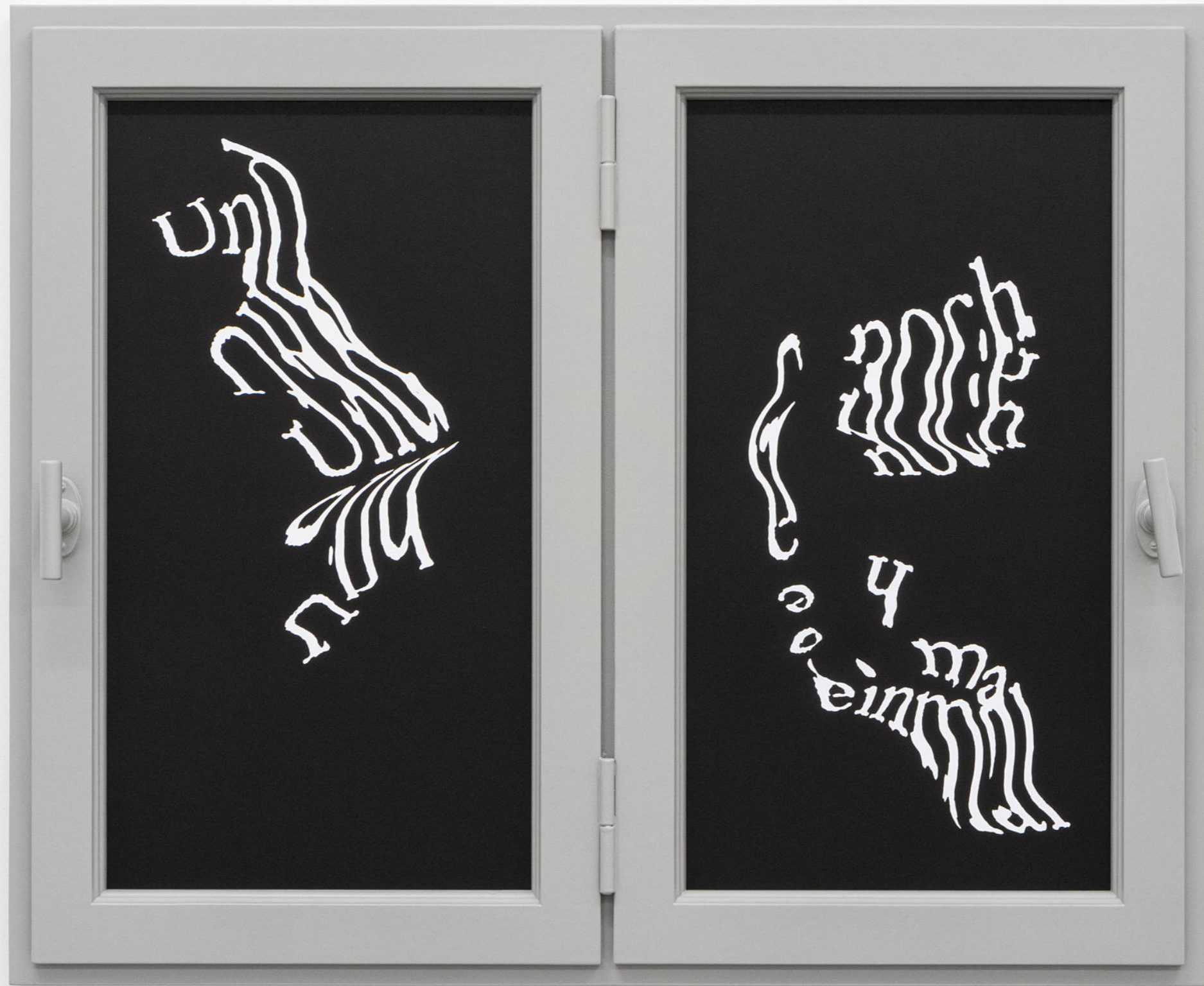
www.eac-leshalles.ch

[@burnedout.space](https://www.instagram.com/burnedout.space)

www.artviewer.org

www.contemporaryartlibrary.org





Geister (und noch einmal). 2024. copy-transformed text, silkscreen print on paper, oil paint on wood, glass, bronze, steel. 75 × 92 × 11 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



Geister (let the line of thought dip deep into the stream). 2024. copy-transformed text, silkscreen print on paper, oil paint on wood, glass, bronze, steel. 75 × 92 × 11 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



Geister (vampirmässig). 2025. copy-transformed text, silkscreen print on paper, oil paint on wood, glass, bronze, steel. 75 × 92 × 11 cm. photo: Studio Stucky.



exhibition view. *In My Room*. 2025. Burned Out. Basel. photo: Mattia Comuzzi.



exhibition view: *Réfléchis bien*. 2025. EAC les halles. Porrentruy. photo: Nico Müller. Doris Lasch.



exhibition view. *Réfléchis bien*. 2025. EAC Les Halles. Porrentruy. photo: Doris Lasch.



exhibition view. *Réfléchis bien*. 2025. EAC Les Halles. Porrentruy. photo: Doris Lasch.

Swiss Art Awards

13.06.2022—19.06.2022

Art Basel, Halle 1.1, Basel

For this presentation I showed 3 works on 3 walls: In *Environments to allow, owe, own* 3 doors are merged into one. While the size of each door is different, their components (wood-profiles, hinges and handles) stay the same. I started this work during the pandemic while reading (carefully) *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx. It was the description of how profit can be made within a workday that inspired me to think about the relation of a human body and its access to the environment. At the center wall a hardly readable text work *Sev7en* by Adéolá Olákiitán was pasted onto. This work is an ongoing series in which I invite authors to write a text for a certain presentation. The text can be clearly or loosely connected to the shown works. For the layout I use a letter-spacing-randomizer software. It's possible to read these texts but one is t h r o wn b a c k i n t o s c h o o l. The same text was accessible easy-readable using a QR code. On the right wall, slightly elevated similarly to a school bell, I showed *Pause*: an audio-work that mechanically with the help of solenoids knocks on the wall (like knocking on a door) all 5 minutes.





exhibition view: Swiss Art Awards. 2022. Basel. photo: Moritz Schermbach.



Environments to allow, owe, own. 2022. oil paint on wood, bronze, steel. 211 × 90 × 10 cm. photo: Moritz Schermbach.



Pause. 2022. solenoid, arduino, velour, wood. 5' loop. photo: Moritz Schermbach. [listen on soundcloud.](#)

Thursday comes climbing in like a mountainous feeling. Looking for lunch, something of a news flash is printed on a book about cats. Lately many things have been infiltrating my eye. I am not always in the mood to be aware that the traffic lights say go and stop both at once from my vantage point. Ceaseless infiltrations quicken me to frustration. I've said, is there going to be a determinant lyric that contours me? For I do not desire to be ruined every minute by arrows on a straight path. Imagine the overwhelmingness of linear flux, the maddening demand of its every-second sterile discovery. I do desire an in between where there are small things, or an occasional slip and slide. An example is seven minutes after twelve noon, a tangerine coos to the buds on my tongue for ebullient excess. I'm candied away in this minute, upending the world, ready to start again with my platter of infiltrations. But since most hands can't rule the wind, I have no control over what comes to knock on the door of my head. I've also decided to let punctures be punctures, I don't care much, other than that I'll always make sure to clean my filter. Red, white, blue spiralling with pink till it becomes lavender, till I sail away to green. Arms, too, learn to measure the resonance of some minutes, with both reaching for a world above this one. You had asked me if sometimes, the words looked like they poured from the heart and not the head. I said yes. I said I've carved many blocks of texts that the head doesn't understand. Is it enough to not be larger than large, but simply be beautiful? I don't know what happened when they suddenly decided to disappear. Even after looking through the big screen that measures closeness and distance with point clouds, I still can't say for sure why they suddenly decided to disappear. I call you on the phone, I call you to tell you I am a little hurt by that disappearance. I want to start speculating for reasons why, when you promptly cut me short, saying that for sure the most "intelligent" of artificial intelligence will never know for sure. So I need to dead the thought. I sink into silence thinking singly of knowing. Did you know that even if we collectively got so good at understanding emotions as biochemistry, if we successfully extracted and distilled anger into red liquids, developed counter-rage drinks (say cream coloured), we still wouldn't know why things happen, as emotions manifest differently in bodies? With the afternoon leaking away, I'll bowl butter and sugar and mix them up just to say I know of the fragrant swirl – that seven year old purple portion, once sitting, mulling, now beautifying. The funny thing about knowing is that the god of knowing will let you get away with things like saying "I know the red of anger," sure, but will laugh at the

assurance that you know anger, in a needle to the middle of it kind of way. You can't force the body to do your bidding when it doesn't feel like, you can't force yourself either to not know it is not natural when you find a trick at forcing it. You can only talk to it, say things like, hey that uncovered cheese I ate, is that why you are throwing up this much... You can only say things like I'm sorry and I need you; like it's okay, we can lay here a little longer, so that we can process slow telegrams inside you together. We can co-author new scripts for you and me. Always, I just want a little more of a dance with the infinite expanse of glam rocks. Big brained galaxy light up of the sort// maximal cranial wetness of the sort. Well all of a sudden, from nowhere, I am gaining on promise, gaining on promise, to dwell, and find how my body could coo. A sea-moss-skin octopus is in the corner, a bookshelf behind, a harp in front of it, strung with orange, pink, blue, white and green strings. This is not an evocation of some image or a scene from a movie or painting, it is the real real itself, generating the image, whatever can be referenced back to it. But again, from the jump, it is the soil bringing forth, the real real. The jellyfish is not glowing, at least not yet – it merely sits with a custom-sized electric guitar. Then there is the big seahorse with the saxophone, waiting besides Msunni who will use just its voice. The band starts to play. Minutes into the first composition, it begins to sound like what I bet star dusts sound like when they make sweet brownian motion love. Msunni's voice then miracles, layers it all: gold flakes falling into star dusts. Now it goes darker, only for eyes to see better. There is a song posed as a question – am I something less than a human, if I have many chambers in me with dried crumbled petals? Someone's printer in the audience breaks. Msunni stops to apologize but I know Msunni is secretly happy. Msunni does not stop again. Msunni continues to sing. My heart is shivering again and again. After their performance, I bend from the window of the house to steal a tulip. I hand it to Msunni and ask if truly, one was not human anymore when there are crumbled petals inside of them. Msunni says, I don't know. I say okay. People start trickling out of the barn. Someone is smoking seaweed. One person is trying to stop their ice cream and cone from melting. I am trying to head back on my skateboard, but no matter what I do, the wheels won't move. So I sit down under a tree instead. It is wet everywhere except for the spot I now sit in. I think to write my own song. Feathered sunshines will boast of me too. Feathered sunshines will dry up rinsed cells rid of sterile decomposition. I will soak up the sun and still be wet. Over and over again.

Holes, Blanks, Ways Out, 2020

offset print on blueback-paper
70 × 96 cm, install-dimensions variable

A typical garage door in Switzerland measures exactly 2.5 × 2.125 meters. Four identically sized surfaces, conforming to the stated dimensions, are lined up alongside each other on a wall. Each is formally self-contained; as a whole, however, they create a conformity that evokes a residential complex, with the protected space for the privately owned car being manifestly inseparable from the family home with which it is associated. Flat across this wall, Matthias Liechti (born 1988) has installed the letters E-X-I-T, running vertically from below upward. In countless repetitions, they merge into a continuous pattern that connects each gateway with the other, both vertically and horizontally. Simultaneously, a collective sign loses its message through subtle interventions into the direction of the text and through duplication of the uppercase letters. Interpretation of formerly comprehensible language becomes pointless; it instead lays itself ornamentally over the place to which it would otherwise merely draw attention. *Holes, Blanks, Ways Out*—the three words contained in the title all evoke absence. A (free) space that permits you to withdraw, fall in, fill in, or depart. Most vitally, however, this articulation describes borderline situations that catapult us in a single step from the private into the public arena, from familiar to unknown space, and vice versa. Each of these transitions brings with it expectations of a certain behavior. The artist switches focus toward these norms and conventions that govern our seeing, behavior, and especially our thought.

Ines Tondar, 2021

www.kunsthautbaselland.ch

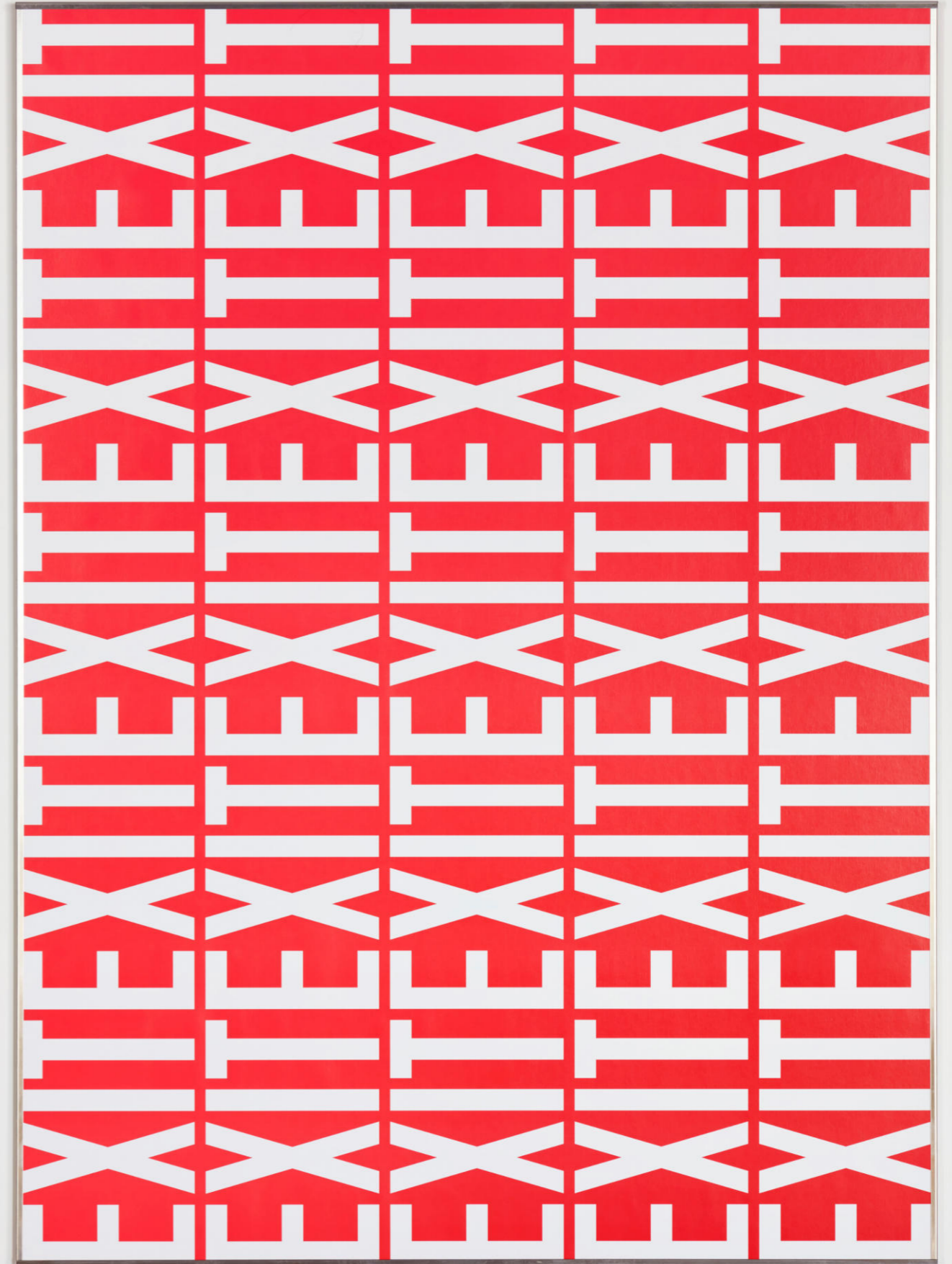
www.siliconmalley.ch

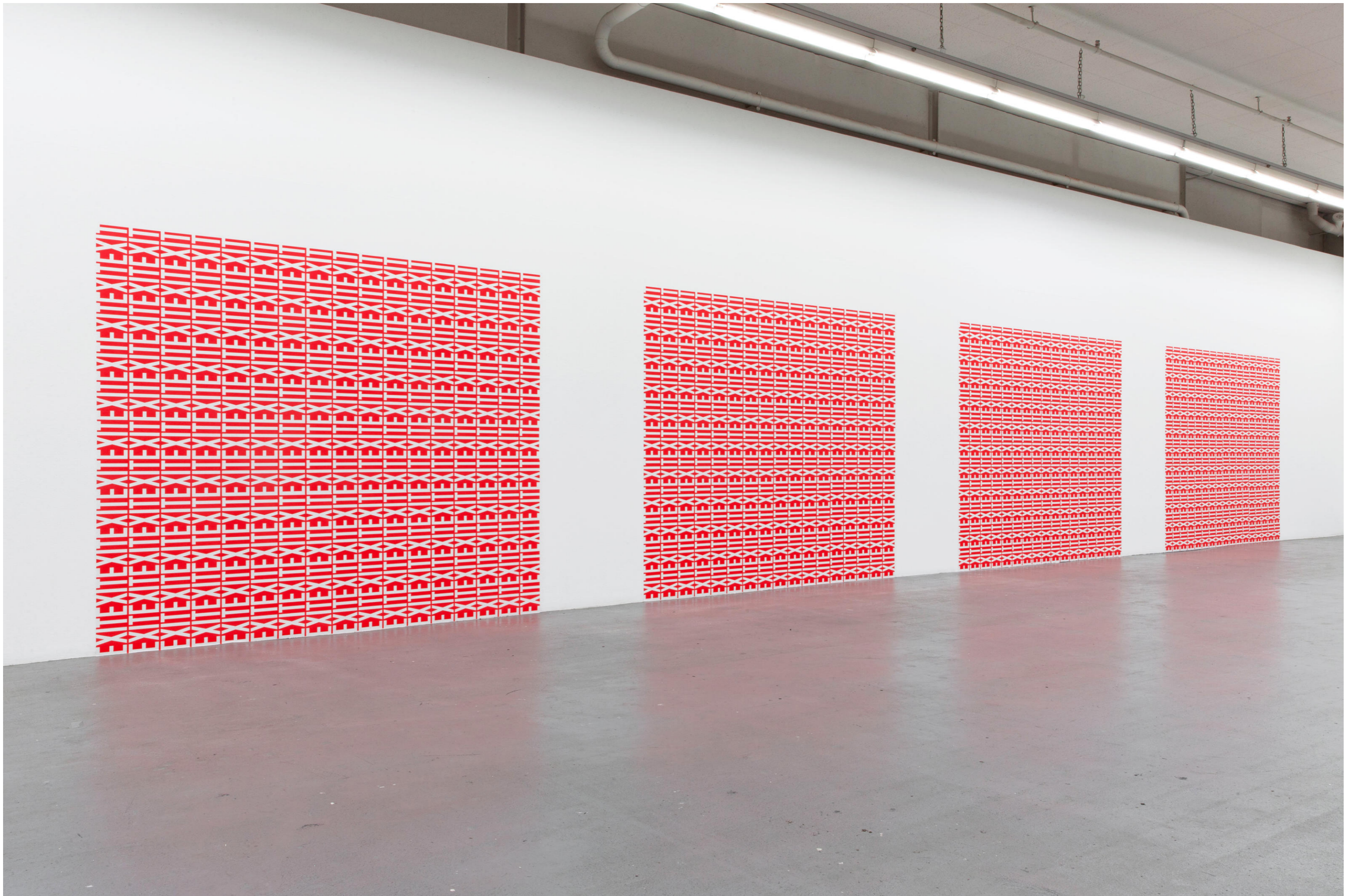
www.mhprojectnyc.com

www.eunichen.com

www.contemporaryartswitzerland.ch

www.contemporaryartpool.com





Holes, Blanks, Ways Out (garage doors). 2020. pasted offset prints. installation dimensions variable. Kunsthau Baselland. photo: Gina Folly.

This happened or maybe it did not. The time is long past and much is forgot.

24.10.2020—22.11.2020
Silicon Malley, Lausanne

The exhibition *This happened or maybe it did not. The time is long past and much is forgot.* consists of cinema chairs for 6-year-olds, that have signs of wear: The cushion is worn out and the back shows a burn mark. An audio piece plays a fictional Swiss German abc-lesson: The voice is of a child. Crows and organ sounds comment on what has been said. Exit signs are lined up next to each other, forming grids of houses, streets, and crosswalks. An exhibition text in future 2 thinks back to a New York City that had turned retirement homes into vertical green houses and plastic was shown in museums and used for study reasons only. This text was written by Clémence White and presented both, as exhibition text to take home and as a work on the wall within the exhibition. While the exhibition text was easy-readable, the text inside the exhibition was designed with a letter-spacing-randomizer software and needed more time to decipher.

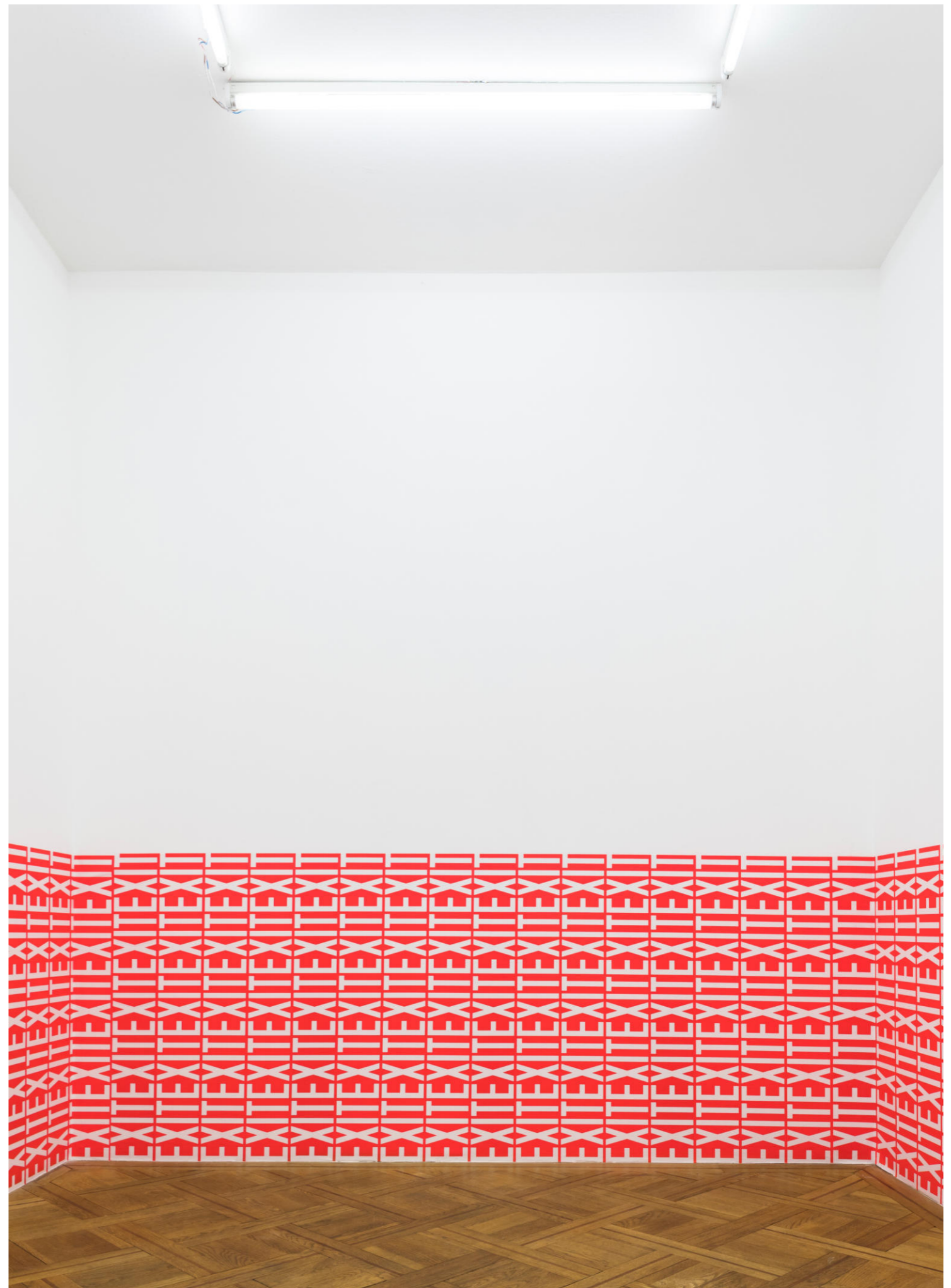
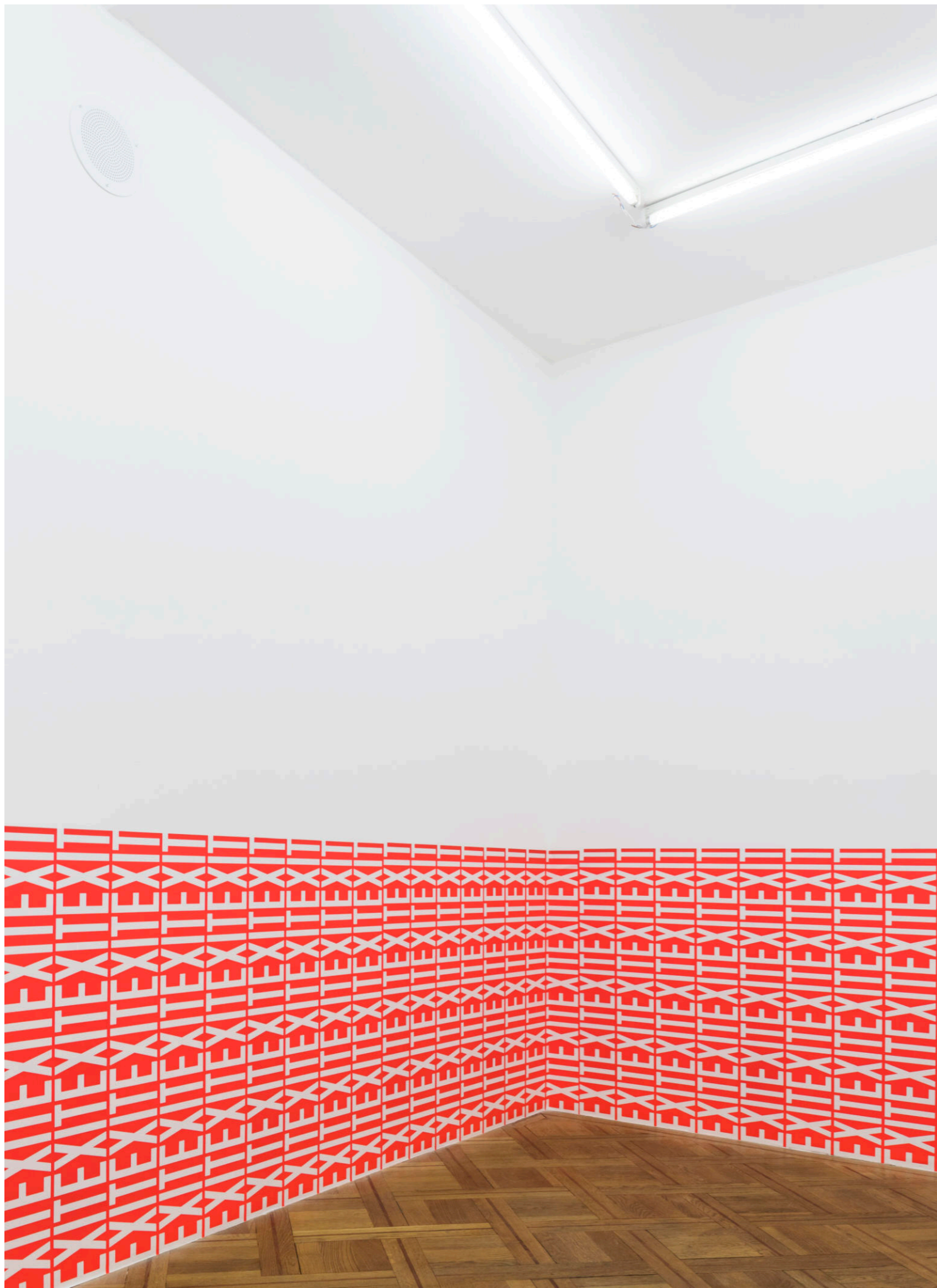




Used Cinema Chairs for 6-Year-Olds. 2020. velour, polyester fiberglass laminate, aluminum, car paint. 100 × 55 × 70 cm. photo: Claude Barrault.



details of: *Used Cinema Chairs for 6-Year-Olds*. 2020. photo: Claude Barrault.



Holes, Blanks, Ways Out (picket fence). 2020. pasted offset prints, installation dimensions variable. photo: Guadalupe Ruiz.



ABC. 2020. powder-coated steel, speaker, mono wav-file, 15' loop. photo: Claude Barrault. [listen on soundcloud.](#)



exhibition view: *This happened or maybe it did not. The time is long past and much is forgot.* 2020. Silicon Malley. Prilly. photo: Claude Barrault.

All of the leaves on
ev
ree in New York City all
on the same night. Every year, I take a cold late in
st to try to catch the shedding. Ev
ar
l miss
smorning, I woked to find the streets already carpete
ans. I'm turning ninety-nine this year. It seems increasingly unlikel
y that I will
eginkgoleaf drop. Back in 2035, afte
r the decades of escalation
ing climate distress, the two-hundred-million-year-old
went extinct in the wild, but somehow, mirac
ulously, continued to survive in our ci
ty. Although some com
plain about the putrid
rotting o
dor of the fruit dropped by f
rees in the autumn, I don't mind. They are my fa
vorite trees. We have b
oth lived through so much. I am not very nost
algicabo
ut the past but I als
king about it like some of the other elder
s. I am grateful to be old t
der and I onlier for elders when I was a child. I used to visit my grandmot
h
craper that only the elder l
ived in. It was
the sole tall bu
lding for miles
next to the highway. I still think about her: alone in her ch
air, crouched over, terrible posture like mine, a fragile old woman per
ched amidst the clouds. Each time I visi
ted, I would go down
he brig
ent of her building to pick up the
aged caramel that she lik
d. Everything t
ouble what it would at another store. We returned that
ding into a vertical greenhouse. We fe
s. And we bl
iked we were living th
roug
amed the generationsthat
came before us for the pe
rpe
tua
found ourselves. My ne
ig
kered yesterday w
hen none of the
m refused to take h
is year 'sh
arvest. Con
flicts still lari
se. Our fragile
egoshave endured so much change: we have long repre
ssed the
miserliness tha
t we practiced in order
to survive in our former society and west I don't always know
ow to handle the surplus in our current one. So my ne
hbors accuse o
ne another of being over
ly selfless by not taking more
than their share
ti
ful harvest
- Noonewantstowaste. I'm
falling into m
y old ways so
f thinking. I
spent my youth participating in weekly therap
y sessions and still draw on psy
choanaly
tic tools
eventho
ugh that is
nowso dated. I look for underlying moti
ves, repress
ed wounds, attachment styles, all of the concepts explained to me week a
fter week
by a mid
e-aged brunet
te woman whose profess
ion was to opi
neon m
y inner li
feor, oftentimes, to just sit in silence while I talked about it.

In
erow
g about
n life but I
always looked f
or clues. We end o
wed our therapists with endless authority; t
he power to help us un
derstand ourselves and s
hape our decisions. Afri
end of m
i moved in wit
h his therapi
st. Another friend of ours, also a psychoa
naly
t, was appall
ed. Personally I just envied th
e presumably perf
ect psyche of my
friend
whosetherapist h
ad chosen him as a roommate
veto justify our rage about the ethics of this
In any case, our rents were too expensi
type of cohabitation configurati
on. I b
riefly considered becoming a therapist myself but cou
ld
n't afford the schooling. In order to be certified,
you had to be able to pa
y f
or theee
xpens
ive degree. A select few received financialawa
rdstocoverthecosts, asthoughthesmallsymbolicgestureofahandful
ofscholarshipsc
ouldalleviate
thedeepinequality
ofoursociety. In
my twenties, I got into a driv
ing
cident with my then-girlfrie
nd. She was a terrible
driver; anxious and always
ou
fsyncwiththespeedofsurrounding
cars. W
e both had bruises, visib
le cuts, bone fractures. And yet I begged the ambulanced
riverstonottakeustothehospital. M
y medic
al costs were covered by
the insurance plan paid for by my employe
r but we spent over a year sol
iciting small contributions from friends and family to cover my girlfr
iend's hospital bills.
We
often relied on collective networkstomeetou
r needs. I am surprised by the things that I d
om
iss. I remember the w
arm, stale breeze just before the metro-plane arrived—our ov
er
cro
wed
inefficient, and polluting system of mass aviati
on transit. One evening, my vehicle broke down abov
ethe Manhattan Bridge, suspended over t
heriver
for five hours, panic m
ounting amongst the p
assengers wh
i
l the sky rewar
ded our patience with a radiant
sunset. Although we relied on
our mass transit systems, each ride was expe
nsive,
so
othoseofuswithunlimitedmonthlymetrocardsoft
nswipedinf
riders on the wa
yout. F
ellow
or years I
kept one of my plastic
metroc
ards. A yellow and blue artifiact of my young
er life. Th
e production of plastic is, of course, long
discontinued and most o
fth
ose alive today donot
know
hat the material looks like beyond the t
iny, compact ping-pong b
al
l into which m
uch of the world's
existing plastic has been compressed. The ball
isheld,
with all other objects of
historical significanc
e, in our collective pos
session, accessi
ble
for all to
stu
dy and understand the society f
rom whic
hw
ecame. Each year, any recent lyc
ontribu
ted pla
stics are added to it. I sent in my own li
ttle metrocard over a decade ago. Another Time, Clém
ence White, 2020

All of the leaves on every ginkgo tree in New York City fall on the same night. Every year, I take cold late-night walks to try to catch the shedding. Every year, I miss it. This morning, I woke to find the streets already carpeted by the golden fans. I'm turning ninety-nine this year. It seems increasingly unlikely that I will ever witness the ginkgo leaf drop. Back in 2035, after the decades of escalating climate distress, the two-hundred-million year-old ginkgo biloba species went extinct in the wild, but somehow, miraculously, continued to survive in our city. Although some complain about the putrid, rotting odor of the fruit dropped by female trees in the autumn, I don't mind. They are my favorite trees. We have both lived through so much. I am not very nostalgic about the past but I also don't avoid talking about it like some of the other elders. I am grateful to be old today. It was much harder and lonelier for elders when I was a child. I used to visit my grandmother in her apartment on the thirtieth floor of a skyscraper that only the elderly lived in. It was the sole tall building for miles, right next to the highway. I still think about her: alone in her chair, crouched over, terrible posture like mine, a fragile old woman perched amidst the clouds. Each time I visited, I would go down to the brightly lit, overpriced convenience store in the basement of her building to pick up the inedible packaged caramels that she liked. Everything there cost double what it would at another store. We turned that tall building into a vertical greenhouse. We felt like we were living through the end times. And we blamed the generations that came before us for the perpetual crisis in which we found ourselves. My neighbors bickered yesterday when one of them refused to take home any of the romanescos grown in this year's harvest. Conflicts still arise. Our fragile egos have endured so much change: we have long repressed the miserliness that we practiced in order to survive in our former society and we still don't always know how to handle the surplus in our current one. So my neighbors accuse one another of being overly selfless by not taking more than their share of the bountiful harvest. No one wants to waste. I'm falling into my old ways of thinking. I spent my youth participating in weekly therapy sessions and still draw on psychoanalytic tools even though that is now so dated. I look for underlying motives, repressed wounds, attachment styles, all of the concepts explained to me week after week by a middle-aged brunette woman whose profession was to opine on my inner life or, oftentimes, to just sit in silence while I talked about it. I never found out anything about her own life but I always looked for clues.

We endowed our therapists with endless authority; the power to help us understand ourselves and shape our decisions. A friend of mine moved in with his therapist. Another friend of ours, also a psychoanalyst, was appalled. Personally I just envied the presumably perfect psyche of my friend whose therapist had chosen him as a roommate. In any case, our rents were too expensive to justify outrage about the ethics of this type of cohabitation configuration. I briefly considered becoming a therapist myself but couldn't afford the schooling. In order to be certified, you had to be able to pay for the expensive degree. A select few received financial awards to cover the costs, as though the small symbolic gesture of a handful of scholarships could alleviate the deeper inequalities of our society. In my twenties, I got into a driving accident with my then-girlfriend. She was a terrible driver; anxious and always out of sync with the speed of surrounding cars. We both had bruises, visible cuts, bone fractures. And yet I begged the ambulance drivers to not take us to the hospital. My medical costs were covered by the insurance plan paid for by my employer but we spent over a year soliciting small contributions from friends and family to cover my girlfriend's hospital bills. We often relied on collective networks to meet our needs. I am surprised by the things that I do miss. I remember the warm, stale breeze just before the metro-plane arrived—our overcrowded, inefficient, and polluting system of mass aviation transit. One evening, my vehicle broke down above the Manhattan Bridge, suspended over the river for five hours, panic mounting amongst the passengers while the sky rewarded our patience with a radiant sunset. Although we relied on our mass transit systems, each ride was expensive, so those of us with unlimited monthly metrocards often swiped in fellow riders on the way out. For years I kept one of my plastic metrocards. A yellow and blue artifact of my younger life. The production of plastic is, of course, long discontinued and most of those alive today do not know what the material looks like beyond the tiny, compact ping-pong ball into which much of the world's existing plastic has been compressed. The ball is held, with all other objects of historic significance, in our collective possession, accessible for all to study and understand the society from which we came. Each year, any recently contributed plastics are added to it. I sent in my own little metrocard over a decade ago.

Kaltes klares Wasser

29.05.2019—09.06.2019

Villa Wenkenhof, Basel

«Shut your eyes and trust in me. You can sleep, safe and sound, knowing I am around. Sleep into silent slumber. Sail on a silver mist. Slowly and surely your senses will cease to resist. Just relax, be at rest like a bird in a nest. Shut your eyes and trust in me.»

Kaltes klares Wasser was an exhibition held at Villa Wenkenhof as part of the Alexander-Clavel culture prize. Besides a laudatory speech written by Kiki Seiler-Michalitsi the quote above was the only exhibition text given to the audience. This lullaby from *The Jungle Book* is sang by Kaa the snake to hypnotize Mowgly into sleep.

The rooms at Villa Wenkenhof are visually stuck in the past, although there are some signs that speak of a present: the chimneys and drinking fountains are sealed, the chandeliers are equipped with LED-candles. For this exhibition I changed all LED-candles from warm to cold lights. The center room held a 5.1-surround audio-installation. For this work I collaborated with Benjamin Kilchhofer—a musician that produces entirely synthetically. The audio plays dripping water and crackling fire. Birds are singing from outside the garden. Suddenly, the birds stop and a thunderstorm breaks out. A goose cries—once, twice, three times—and then it's silent. Similarly to a Michael Haneke movie something bad happened which we know but did not see. In the other rooms *Cinema Chairs for 6-Year-Olds* were shown: A group of 4 and a single one. And a drawing of a watch without numbers shows 00:32.





exhibition view: Kaltes klares Wasser. 2019. Villa Wenkenhof. Riehen. photo: Claude Barrault



One Afternoon. 2019. physical modeling & additive synthesis, 5.1 dolby-surround audio installation. 28' loop. photo: Claude Barrault. [listen on soundcloud](#).



Cold Lights. 2019. chandelier, LED candles. dimensions variable. photo: Claude Barrault.



exhibition view: *Kaltes klares Wasser*. 2019. Villa Wenkenhof. Riehen. photo: Claude Barrault.



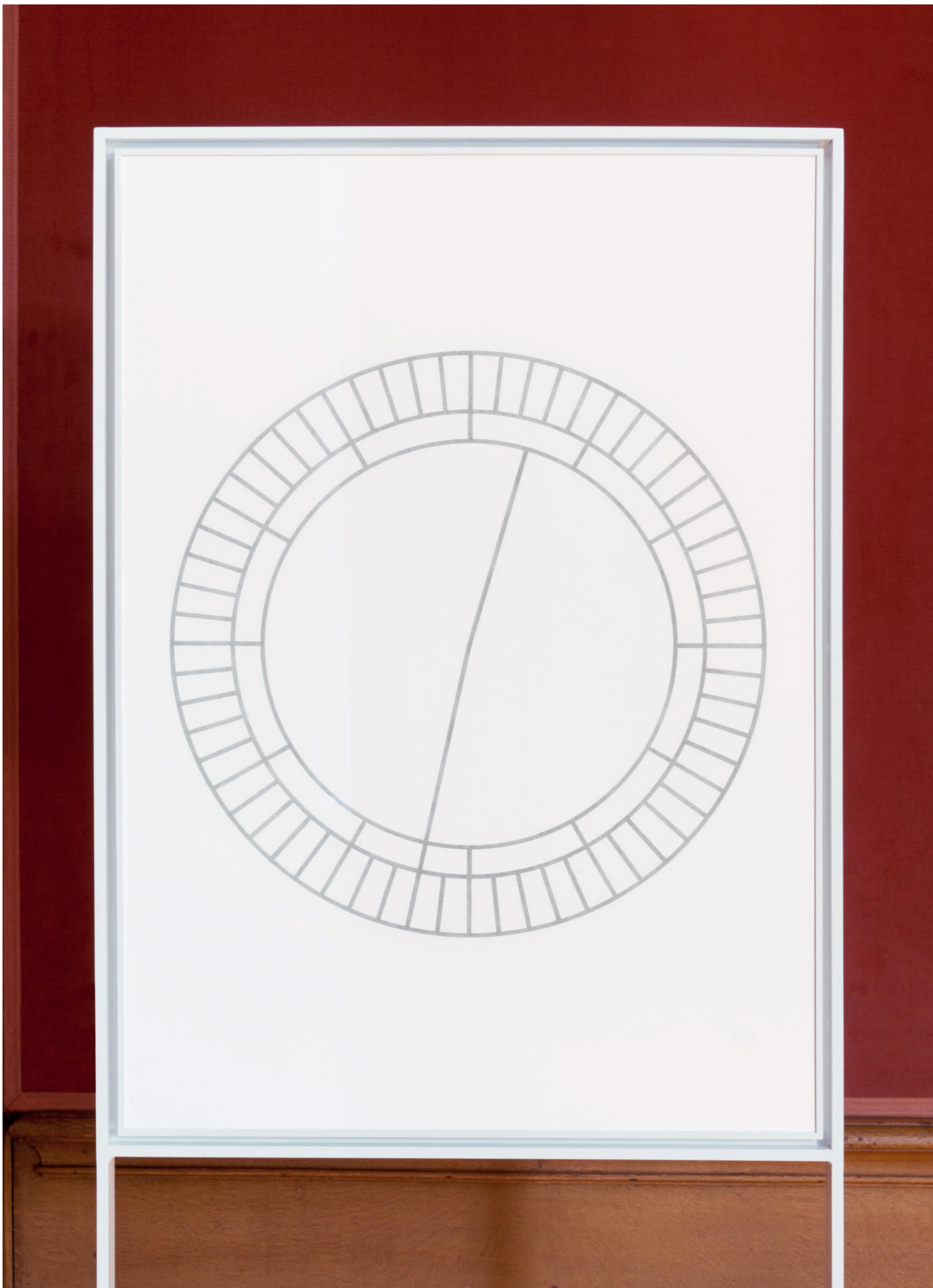
Cinema Chairs for 6-Year-Olds. 2019. velour, polyester fiberglass laminate, aluminum, car paint. 200 × 55 × 70 cm. photo: Claude Barrault.



exhibition view: *Kaltes klares Wasser*. 2019. Villa Wenkenhof. Riehen. photo: Claude Barrault.



exhibition view: *Kaltes klares Wasser*. 2019. Villa Wenkenhof. Riehen. photo: Claude Barrault.



left: *00:32*. 2019. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame, white aluminum stand. drawing: 90 × 63 cm. stand: 80 × 30 × 195 cm. photo: Claude Barrault.
right: *Cinema Chair for 6-Year-Olds*. 2019. velour, polyester fiberglass laminate, aluminum, car paint. 50 × 55 × 70 cm. photo: Claude Barrault.

Twelve Cinema Chairs for Six-year-old Children, 2019

chipboard, car paint, velour
175 × 165 × 45 cm

The sculpture *Twelve Cinema Chairs for Six-year-old Children* quotes the cinema as a heterotopia par excellence: another space, a counterpoint or even a realized utopia. As an individual 'enchanted machine' it is able to concentrate disparate spaces simultaneously in a single location and put things in relation to each other without them having anything to do with each other. Connections are created where there aren't actually any. At the same time, the cinema acts as a social space. It gathers an audience in the here and now and forms a mixture of different perspectives, which first collide and then are adjusted and rescaled into an order. If one imagines Matthias Liechti's sculpture not only as an abstract modular structure, but as a real arrangement into which (fictitiously) 6-year-old children could be squeezed, it loses its original lightness. The logical relationships between children and cinema chairs and the numbers «6» and «12», implied by the title, reinforce the latent uncanny: Connections are created where there are none. The transformational and at the same time organizing and normalizing potential of cinema-like structures could - when combined - become dangerous. In Matthias Liechti's armada of red velvet chairs, however, the threat is not obviously presented, but merely sounds like a possibility. Based on our temporally condensed and spatially layered present, Liechti creates model-like scenarios and deviant topoi that invite viewers to a thought experiment. As fantastic catalysts, they lead into a world in which the usual perspective can hardly be applied and in which the boundaries between reality and fiction are dissolved.

Deborah Müller, 2019

www.plattformplattform.ch
www.contemporaryartswitzerland.ch



Gate (Schillerndes Warenhaus), 2018

galvanized steel, glued,
460 × 280 × 13 cm

«Schillerndes Warenhaus» (=dazzling department store) was one of many terms to describe the rise of large scale department stores in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The work *Gate (Schillerndes Warenhaus)* takes its form from Romanesque stepped portals, whose architectural structure is able to create a hypnotic pull effect. As if cut through, we are able to see the sculpture's inner structure: winding, labyrinthine corridors. As a modular composition, consisting of 5 parts, the work can be installed in various ways. Here at Kunsthalle Bern the doors were removed from their original position and rearranged vertically one above the other. Since, unlike a maze, a labyrinth always offers only one path that inevitably leads to the supposed goal, the only way to allow for other options is to rearrange its components.



00:00—24:00, 2017—19

pencil on paper, white aluminum frame.
90 × 63 cm.

As if it were about a specific point in time, a historical event, or the moment when a workshop—this boiler house, for example—was shut down, Matthias Liechti's clock shows the time as 10:10. Or is it different because it is only a drawing of a clock and the dial without numbers is rather vague in its meaning? With the reduced, stylized clocks, of which the artist has created several with different times, their convention as an image, as a symbol, may be questioned, as may their function as a control and measuring instrument: among other things, from a Marxist point of view, according to which human labor is comparable to a commodity and is measured by the clock rather than by the scales, and is payable according to its value. Matthias Liechti also understands the clock as an instrument for synchronizing our different bodies and our individual experiences of time. Coupled with the constantly «circular» nature of time, this is accompanied by a continuous repetition, which the artist associates with his own thesis on collective hypnosis. Advertising and consumption also rely on patterns of repetition: almost every watch is advertised with the hands set at 10:10. Perhaps because the smiley face or victory sign that appears when the hands are in this position has a particularly sales-promoting effect. Matthias Liechti's clocks were created as pencil drawings in an extremely fine style, also over a longer period between 2017 and 2019. Snapshots of time that are removed from temporality, yet can be traced back to the repeating times.

Marc Munter, 2022

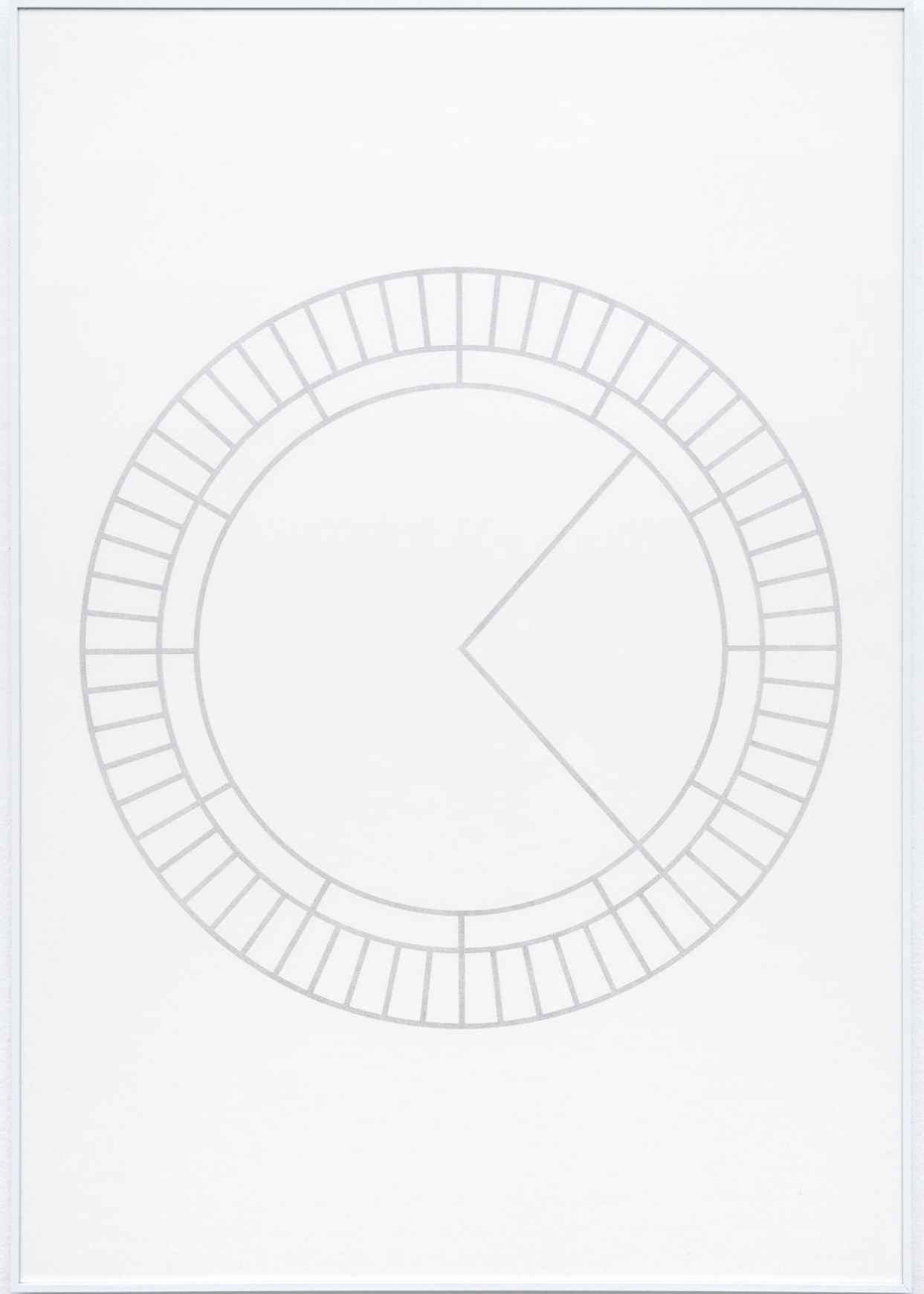
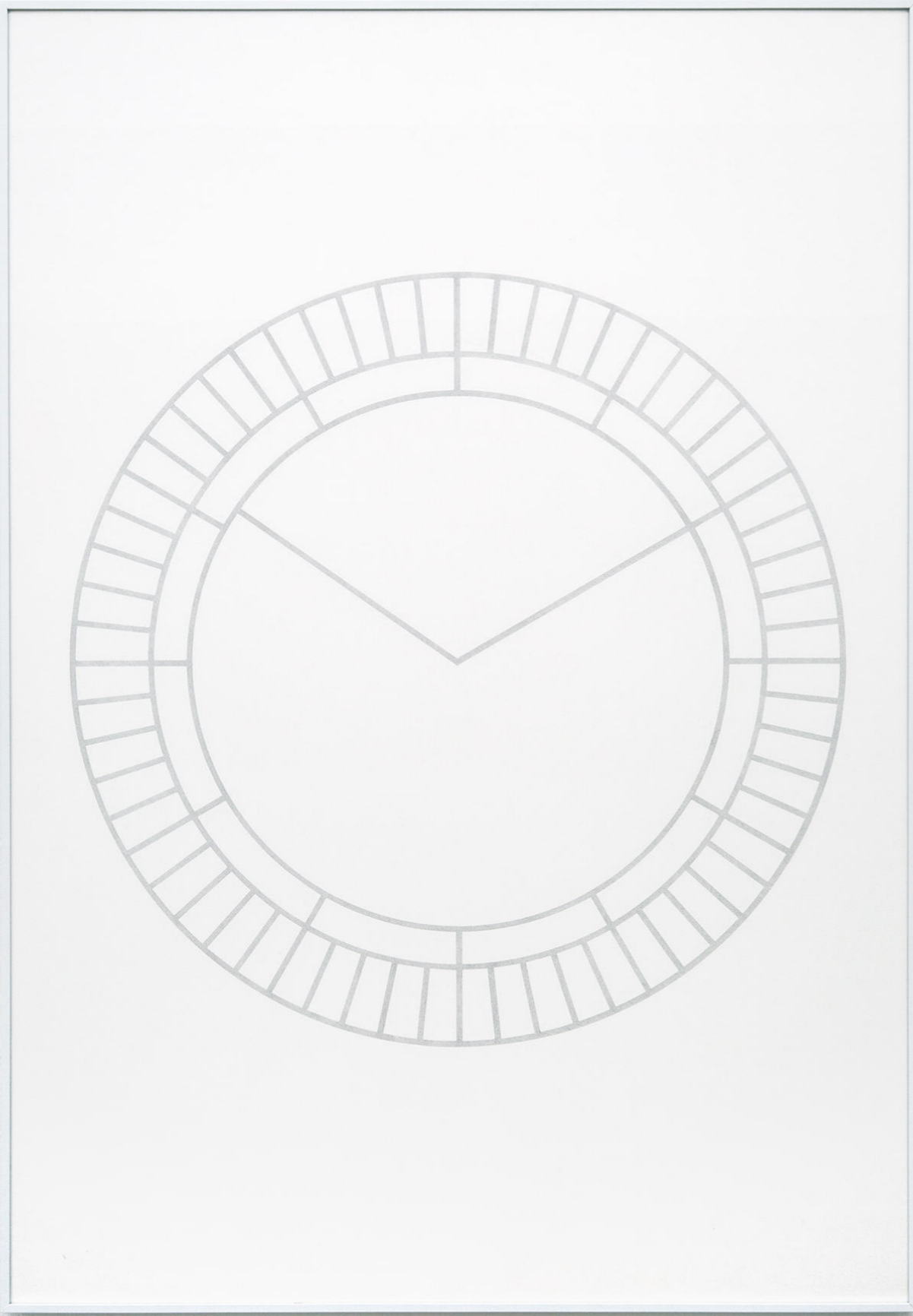
www.osagegallery.com

www.wallriss.ch

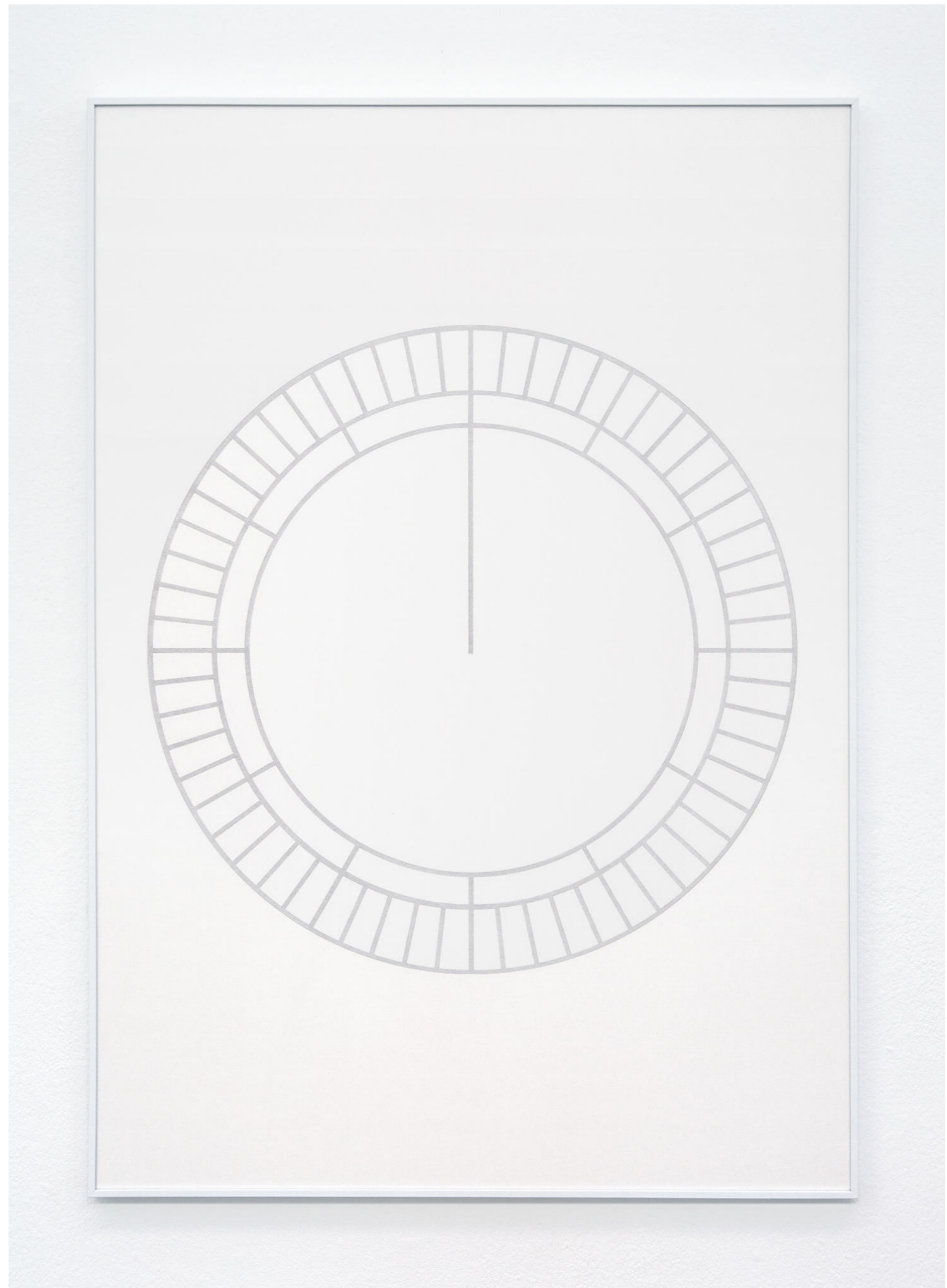
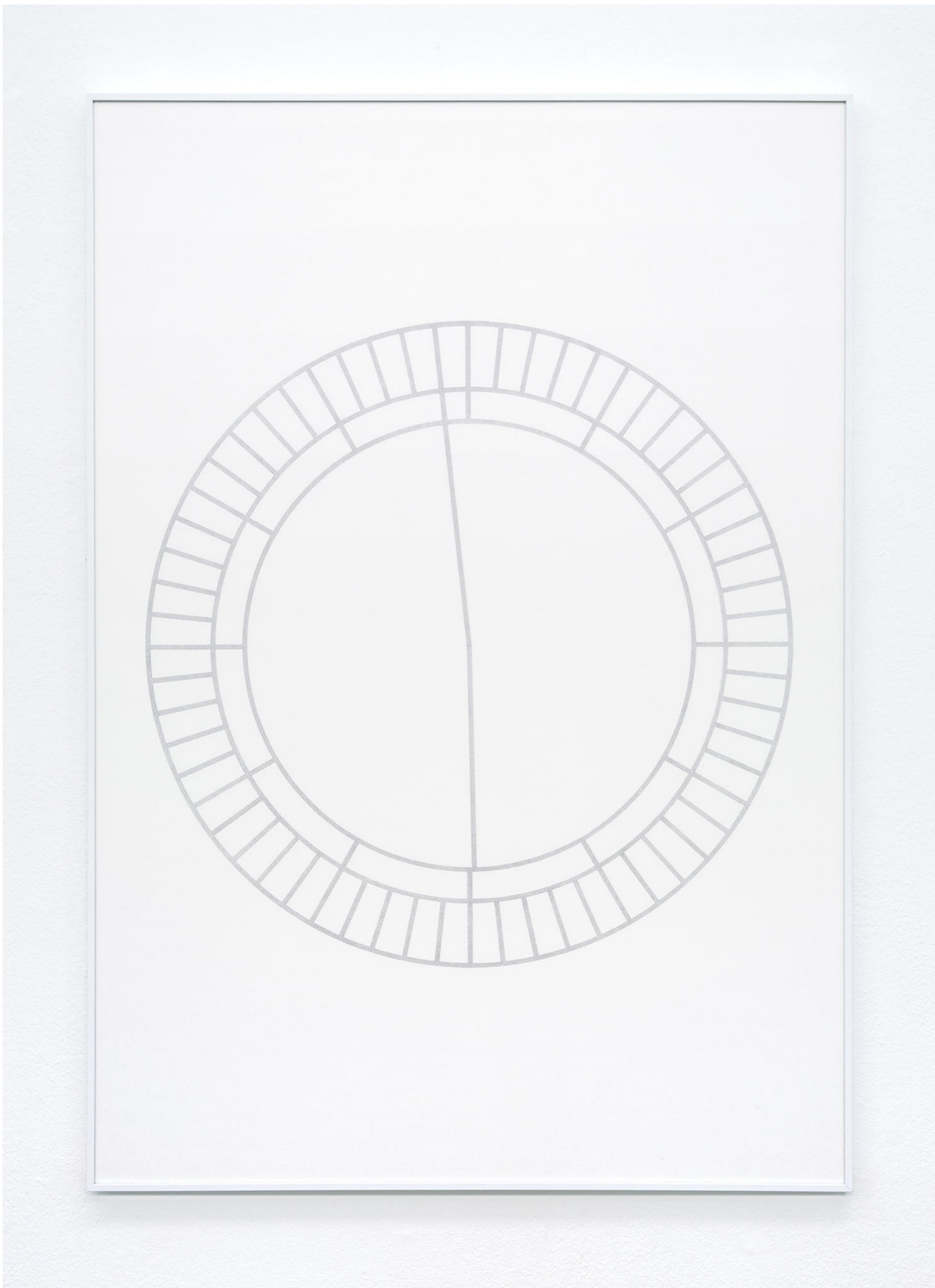
www.gelateriasognidighiaccio.com

www.contemporaryartswitzerland.ch

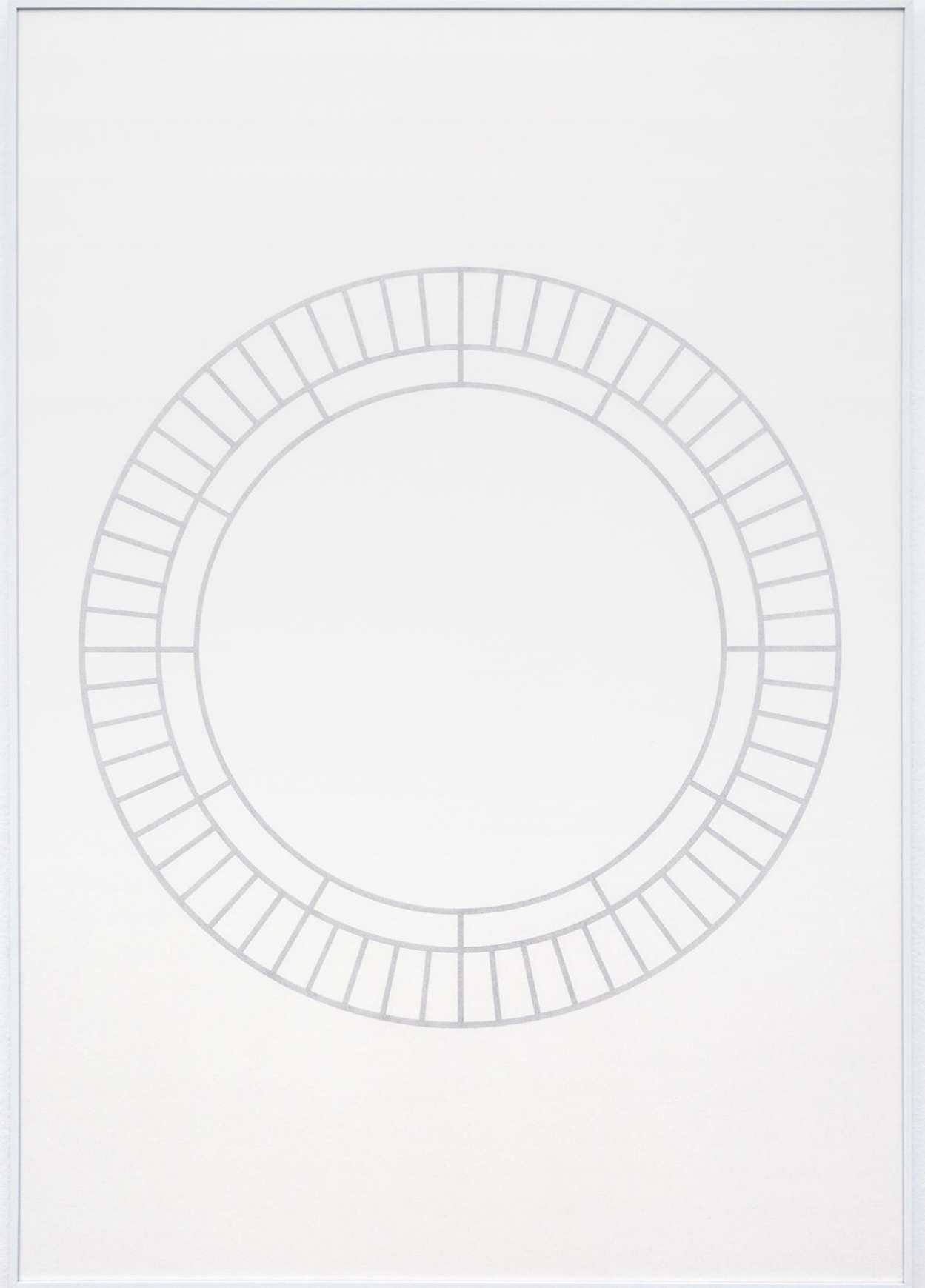
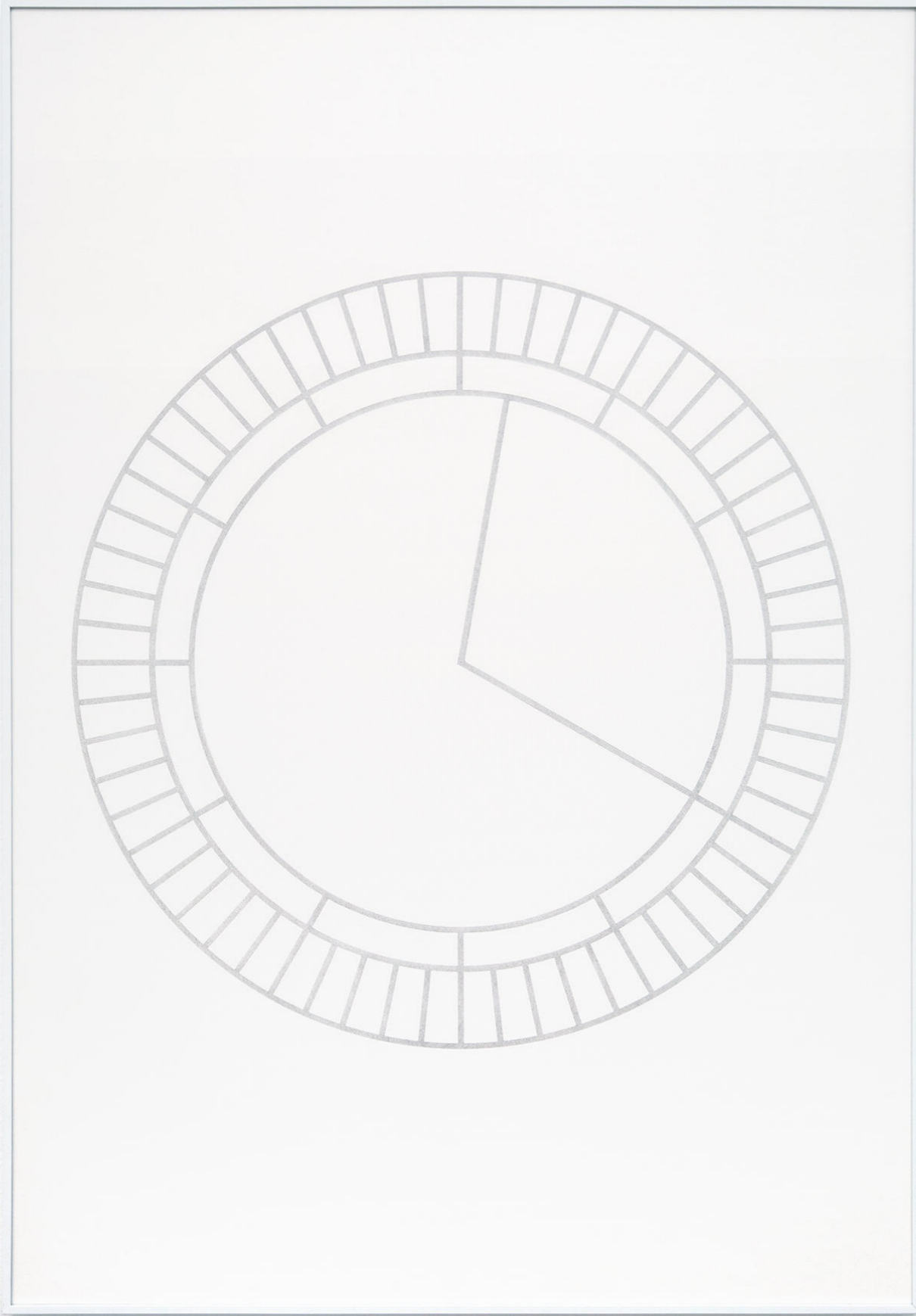




left: 10:10. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.
right: 01:23. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.



left: 05:59. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.
right: 12:00. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.



left: 12:20. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.
right: 00:00. 2017. pencil on paper, white aluminum frame. 90 × 63 cm. photo: Valentina Sutter.

不着边际 | Cannot See with Liao Fei, curated by Yao Mengxi

09.08.2016—10.09.2016

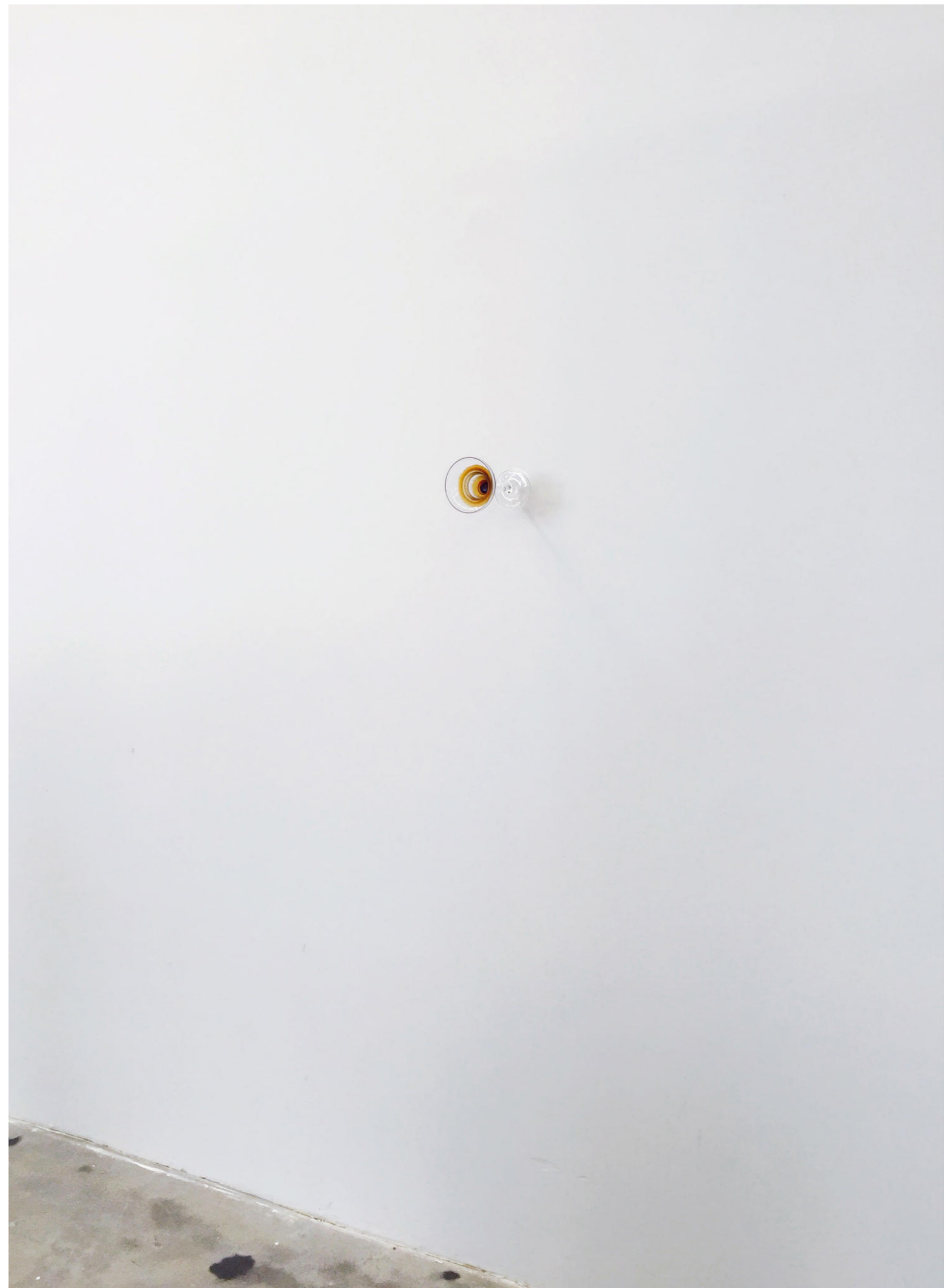
V Space, Shanghai

The exhibition *不着边际 | Cannot See* explores the extent to which architectural structures (in private and public spaces) influence our habits, both physically and mentally. Physical laws such as gravity, but also socio-cultural considerations, like the rise of gated communities in urban China since the 1980s, played an important role in the development of the project. For this presentation I showed 2 free standing gates: *Re* and *W*, both built out of steel. While *Gate (Re)* is inspired by heavy industrial gates, *Gate (W)* is more of a symbolic kind: With its semi permeable structure it only functions as a border for some kinds. On a flipped metal serving tray different circle-shaped wood objects are installed. Titled *Gesetz* it can be understood as a play on words: «Gesetz» means «law» but can be understood in a literally way as «something that is placed» (=gesetzt). Another work titled *Dear Margarita* consists of a Margarita cocktail glass, installed horizontally onto the wall, showing hypnotic coffee grounds.

www.vanguardgallery.com

www.trueart.com

www.leapleap.com





exhibition view: 不着边际 / *Cannot See*. 2016. V-Space. Shanghai. photo: Matthias Liechti



left: *Gate (Re)*. 2016. galvanized steel, welded. 350 × 280 × 7 cm. photo: Matthias Liechti.
right: *Dear Margarita*. 2016. coffee grounds, margarita cocktail glass. 12 × 12 × 17 cm. photo: Matthias Liechti.





left: *Dear Margarita*. 2016. coffee grounds, margarita cocktail glass. 12 × 12 × 17 cm. photo: Matthias Liechti.



right: *Gate (W)*. 2016. steel, welded. 260 × 280 × 4 cm. photo: Matthias Liechti.



exhibition view: 不着边际 / *Cannot See*. 2016. V-Space. Shanghai. photo: Matthias Liechti



Gesetz. 2016. cherry wood, steel, stone. 72 × 45 × 7 cm. photo: Matthias Liechti

CV *1988 Bern, lives and works in Basel.

education

2018 Master in Fine Arts. Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK. CH.
2017 October School. Shiv Nadar University SNU. New Delhi. IN.
2013 SpringTime. HKB & PROGR. Bern. CH.
2012 Bachelor in Fine Arts. Bern University of the Arts HKB. CH.
2008 Vorkurs. Schule für Gestaltung. Biel/Bienne. CH.
2007 Matura. Gymnasium Hofwil. Bern. CH.

solo & duo exhibitions

2026 Realpolitik. cur.: C. Frautschi. Lokal-int. Biel/Bienne.CH.
2022 Holes, Blanks, Ways Out. cur.: Mayumi Hayashi. mh space. Kagoya. Aichi. JP.
2020 This happened or maybe it did not. (...). cur.: B. Wardlaw, F. Gabioud. Silicon Malley. Lausanne. CH.
2019 Kaltes klares Wasser. cur.: K. Seiler-Michalitsi. Villa Wenkenhof. Riehen. Basel. CH
2016 不着边际 | CANNOT SEE. with Liao Fei, cur.: Yao Mengxi. V Space. Shanghai. CN.
2016 No Massage. Espace Libre. cur.: B. Meyer Cesta. Biel/Bienne, CH.
2015 L L L L L L. la rada. cur.: R. Lisi. Locarno. CH.
2013 Room Room Shift. cur.: M. Jovičević. Gallery 42. Cetinje. ME.
2013 Some Steps Two Correctness. cur.: J. Theodoridis, D. Widmer. Widmer+Theodoridis. Zurich. CH.
2013 Das Henne-Ei-Problem. cur.: C. Frautschi. Lokal-int. Biel/Bienne. CH.

group exhibitions (selection)

2025 Réfléchis bien. cur.: B. Rebetz. EAC les halles. Porrentruy. Jura. CH.
2025 In My Room. cur.: M. Comuzzi, F. Senn. Burned Out. Basel. CH
2024 Werte im Wandel, cur.: H. Kraemer, Kunsthaus Interlaken. Bern. CH.
2023 Spielact. cur.: A. Elmay. Le Commun. Geneva. CH.
2023 PH, BF, AF, KM, RL, HS, KS, ML. cur.: H. Kraemer, J. Stoll. Lotsremark. Basel. CH.
2022 No Ground Floor. cur.: A. Moser, M. Sturzenegger, L. Salafia. Gassner Areal. Bern. CH.
2022 Swiss Art Awards. Basel. CH.
2022 Boundless Flow. cur.: E. Chen. SVA. cp project space. New York City. US.
2021 Galleria Di Berna. cur.: L. Beeler, R. Stoller, M. Sturzenegger. Stadtgalerie Bern. CH.
2021 MACHARTEN VON OST BIS WEST. cur.: R. Hardlitz. HKB. Bern. CH.
2020 Mode. cur.: A. Kalbermatter, D. Michel, M. Sanchez. Riverside. Basel. CH.
2020 Spoiled. Regionale 21. Kunsthaus Baselland. cur.: G. Honauer, I. Tondar. Basel. CH.
2020 Postcards From Home. cur.: A. Bell, I. Indolfi, J. Hartmann. Residency Unlimited. NYC. Online.
2020 Unreal Estate, cur.: C. E. Bruckmann, C. Jarema, HAMLET. Zurich. CH.
2019 DRAWN. cur.: A. Hofmann, F. Karrer, J. Rossi, V. Meyner. m3 Studio. Zurich. CH.
2019 Plattform19, cur.: D. Müller. Centre d'Art Contemporain. Yverdon-les-Bains. CH.
2019 AirBn3. cur.: N. Haliti, T. Moor. Rue des Eaux-Vives. Geneva. CH.
2018 Cantonale. cur.: A. Selg, V. Knoll, G. Tedder. Kunsthalle Bern. Bern. CH.
2018 If it's Conceivable it's Possible. cur.: P. Baggi, G. Sugnaux, M. Dafflon. WallRiss. Fribourg. CH.
2018 From the Studio, cur.: G. Dal Molin. ZHdK. Zurich. CH.
2018 Private View, cur.: K. Borer, D. Kurth. Haltingerstrasse 98. Basel. CH.
2018 Episode 3. cur.: C. E. Bruckmann, A. Bargetzi. RETA. Zurich University of the Arts. Zurich. CH.
2017 Interval in Space. cur.: H. Krämer, J. Stoll. Osage Gallery. Hongkong. CN.
2017 Porzellan & Gold...still going strong. cur.: B. Berger. Stadtgalerie. Bern. CH.
2017 Interval in Space. cur.: H. Krämer, J. Stoll. Fundaziun Nairs. Scuol. CH.
2017 Rhein am Reno. cur.: R. Lisi. Gelateria Sogni di Ghiaccio. Bologna. IT.
2017 AC-Stipendium. cur.: S. Merten. Kunstmuseum Bern. CH.
2016 Better Ideas for Life. cur.: J. Jansa, R. Feller, M. Liechti. Karlin Studios. Prague. CZ.
2016 Better Ideas for Life, cur.: J. Jansa, R. Feller, M. Liechti. Ausstellungsraum Klingental. Basel. CH.
2015 Old Friends New Ideas Old Ideas New Friends. cur.: R. Pia, V. Meyner. Milieu. Bern. CH.
2015 Die Basis. cur.: S. Fahrni, R. Feller, M. Liechti. R. Dörig. Kunsthaus Langenthal. CH.
2015 New! New Too! cur.: K. Seiler-michalitsi. Kunst Raum Riehen. Basel. CH.
2014 30 X Young Swiss Art. cur.: E. Schenini. Museo d'Arte Lugano. Lugano. CH.
2014 Swiss Art Awards: Kiefer Hablitzel Award. Basel. CH.
2014 Gap. cur.: K. Borer, D. Kurth, L. Wiederkehr. Schwarzwaldallee. Basel. CH.
2013 AC-Stipendium. cur.: C. Metzger. Kunstmuseum Bern. CH.
2013 HOT JAM. cur.: C. Frautschi. Les Urbaines. Lausanne. CH.
2013 THERE IS NO NEED TO LOOK ANY FURTHER. cur.: V. Meyner, R. Pia. Milieu. Bern. CH.

awards, grants, residencies

2025 Swiss Art Awards. finalist with For in the critic category Swiss Art Awards. Basel. CH.
2023 Kunst und Bau. new building for Hofwil high school. competition by invitation. 1st place. CH.
2022 Swiss Art Award. finalist in the art category. Swiss Art Awards. Basel. CH.
2021 Research grants for curatorial projects. Pro Helvetia. CH
2020 Artist in Residence. Atelier Mondial Basel & Residency Unlimited. New York City. US.
2020 Swiss Art Award. finalist in the art category. (cancelled, COVID19). CH.
2019 Kulturförderpreis. Alexander Clavel Foundation. Riehen. CH.
2017 AC-grant. finalist. Bern. CH.
2015 Kunst Preis Riehen. Riehen. Basel. CH.
2014 Artist in Residence. Swatch. Shanghai. CN
2014 Kiefer Hablitzel Award. Swiss Art Awards. Basel. CH.
2013 Artist in Residence. Culturescapes. Cetinje. ME.
2013 AC-grant. finalist. Bern. CH.
2012 Trächsel-grant. artists collective Feld 65. Bern. CH.
2009 Prix Kunstverein Biel/Bienne. Biel/Bienne. CH.

public collections

2023 City of Basel. Basel. CH. (12 Cinema Chairs for 6-Year-Olds, 2019).
2023 City of Bern. Bern. CH. (Environments to allow, owe, own. 2022)
2023 Bilder in die Schulen. Basel. CH. (Big Circles. 2014).
2013 Canton of Bern. Bern. CH. (Métalisé: Sunset Red. 2012)
2014 The JoAnn Gonzalez Hickey Collection. NYC. US. (Big Circles. 2014)
2009 City of Biel/Bienne. Bern. CH. (Ganz viele Linien. 2009)

jury work

2022— Member of Kunstkommission Riehen. Riehen. CH.
2026 Bachelor in Fine Arts and Art & Design Education. 1st, 2nd, 3rd year. HSLU. Lucerne. CH.
2023—2024 Member of Kunstkommission city of Bern. Bern. CH.
2023 Bachelor in Fine Arts. 1st & 2nd year. HGK. Basel. CH.
2022 Master in Contemporary Arts Practice. 1st & 2nd year. HKB. Bern. CH.

publications

2025 Kunst und Demokratie. Waxmann. eds: Sabine Eggmann, Martina Röthl and Barbara Sieferle: Erfahrung.
2025 Réfléchis Bien. EAC Les Halles. ed.: Boris Rebetz.
2025 Vampire ANT Moth Maids. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2025 Free Market Solidarity Fear. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2025 Forget Long Belong Remember. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2024 Easy Cool Cute Swipe. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2024 Think Trust State Crisis. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2024 Duty Rules Work Wage. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2024 Moral Economy Confidence Game. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2023 Local Origins Propaganda Persistence. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2023 Lust Ideologization Public Property. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2023 Pleasure Refusal Nonsense Anarchy. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2022 Desire Regret Depression Nostalgia. For. eds.: Valerie Keller, Matthias Liechti.
2022 Swiss Art Awards 2022. Federal Office of Culture. eds: Federal Office of Culture.
2020 Swiss Art Awards 2020. Federal Office of Culture. eds: Federal Office of Culture.
2018 If It's Conceivable it's Possible. WallRiss. eds: I.W.W.T.
2018 Art, Self & System. SternbergPress. Zurich University of the Arts.
2014 Unter 30 X. Junge Schweizer Kunst. VFMK. eds.: Kiefer Hablitzel Stiftung, Museo d'Arte, Lugano.
2014 Swiss Art Awards 2014. Federal Office of Culture. eds: Federal Office of Culture.
2013 Room Room Shift. Gallery 42. ed.: M. Jovičević.

curatorial work

2022— For. with Valerie Keller. Basel. CH. www.for-space.ch
2015—2020 Milieu. with Simon Fahrni, Ramon Feller, Valerie Keller. Bern. CH. www.milieu-digital.com