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GALERIE

IMPERMANENCE

with works by **Tony Conway, Rainer Fetting, Jay Mark Johnson, Karl Kunz, Lies Maculan, Deborah Sengl** and **Yukiko Terada**

Auguststrasse 61
D-10117 Berlin, GERMANY

+49(0)30 Tel 283 32 88
+49(0)30 Fax 283 32 89

www.deschler-berlin.de
info@deschler-berlin.de

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The theme of the exhibition „Impermanence“ is—in the sense of “vanitas”—particularly the transience of human life and all its endeavors and efforts. The focus of the exhibition is on two young Austrian artists, Lies Maculan and Deborah Sengl. **Lies Maculan’s** space-filling installation “Impermanence” transforms the basement of the gallery into a tomb, a mausoleum. The large-scale photographs, mounted on aluminum panels, of tomb stones, sarcophagi and other symbolic objects create an almost sculptural impression by following the outlines of the depicted objects and omitting any kind of background. Maculan’s works examine how society expresses the way it deals with human mortality in the arts and crafts of ritual objects of the death cult. They also raise the question how this culture has been transformed in the last decades. Dying has become institutionalized, become the responsibility of hospitals, these days hardly anybody passes away in the circle of his family. In a culture that idolizes success, health and eternal youth, death has become almost shameful, disappearing from everyday culture, precluding a thoughtful and existential reflection on the topic. **Deborah Sengl’s** work “The Last Days of Mankind” stages scenes from the famous play of that title by the Austrian writer Karl Kraus (1874-1936), using taxidermied rats as figures in the play. With this year’s hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War—Kraus’ tragedy was written as a reflection on the war—and the background of current wars, this work assumes a disturbing timeliness.

NOTES
ON THE
EXHIBIT
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These two series are supplemented by selected works by other artists that approach the topic in their very own manner. **Jay Mark Johnson’s** experimental photo works literally depict the flow of time in a spatial dimension by dedicating the vertical axis of the image to the passage of time, thus capturing an actual temporal progression as it unfolds. **Tony Conway’s** series “Man on the Floor” depicts tumbled-down monumental statues as an expression of historicizing representation and the changes that even this is subject to. **Yukiko Terada’s** subtle works that often create new forms and objects out of segments of another form are, with all their contemporary approach, also informed by a rich Japanese tradition where the topic of transience and impermanence always played an important role.