



ALEKOS HOFSTETTER

LAGE EGAL [BOOTH 18]
DRAWING ROOM MADRID

www.lage-egal.net
+49 173 1807226 (Pierre Granoux)

ABOUT THE ARTIST

In your work, you reflect on the constant changes in architecture from 1950 to 1980, what interests you about this period?

The visual world of my cycle of works TANNHÄUSER TOR is significantly influenced by modernist architecture through my childhood memories. In my drawings on paper, the process of thinking about the concepts of time and memory plays a decisive role. The first time I thought about the relationship between architecture and modernism as a child, was after seeing the film "Adventure in Rio" (original title: L'Homme de Rio) at the German School in Bangkok. The film was inspired by the comic series Tintin by the comic artist Hergé, but also by the classic adventure stories of one of my favourite authors: Joseph Conrad. The film left a long-lasting impression on me. I was in particular fascinated by the fact that here, against the horizon of the vanished Maltec culture, such different places were brought into connection with each other: the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, Brazil at the stage of a large construction site but also Transamazônica driven by the rainforest. As a child, I found it terrifying and brutal when I realised that modernity is impossible without the vision of the grand plan, which shapes society through the process of a comprehensive redesign and thus eliminates everything that is outdated.

There is often a strange, alienated landscape to be seen in your works; what is the relationship between these estranged environments and the brutalist-like buildings?

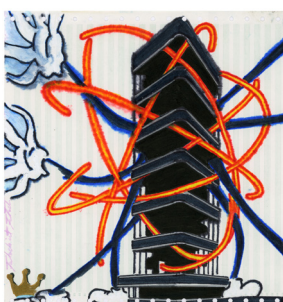
I construct a new relationship between architecture and its environment in my drawings, using mixed media (including ink, coloured pencils and permanent marker), by adding layers of drawings. The progressive disappearance of post-war modern architecture from our environment alone makes the failure of its former utopian promises obvious. The resulting experience of loss is thematised in my work. After the end of my cooperation with the Dresden artist Florian Göpfert in 2016, the theme of the landscape integration of architecture lost relevance for me. Now the focus of my drawings is on the relationship between time and memory.

While working with different layers, such as comic drawings, graphic elements, illustrations, lettering and optical patterns; what are you looking for when you bring these elements together?

In the context of my work cycle, I work on the layering of iconic, emblematic architecture with lettering and elements from comics. I use of a seemingly anachronistic drawing technique - reminiscent of old printing processes, but simulated with ink and permanent marker - to counteract the moment of vanished utopia. In this way, my works, partly existing in large formats, oscillate between painting, comic and the aesthetics of graphic techniques.

When you look at your drawings and paintings, a kind of movement appears through the layering of the elements, but also through the combination of straight lines and the optical illusion of depth in contrast to the often static brutalist architecture; they seem to reflect the urban cityscape and the speed of its development. What ideas inspire you in these works?

In my works, several stories are told using different codes and symbols, that are taking place in parallel in one image. The codes are loosely or more strictly connected with each other through associative, intervening assemblage. I do not connect different scenes of a story, but a scene or a code IS the story, or rather: becomes the story and connects with other scenes, usually carefully weighted to balance the image. I use the tension that "modernity" cannot be thought of without comparison and only as a dynamic process. Modernity detaches itself - as this becomes clear in the contrast of "modern" versus "non-modern" - from a pre- or a non-modernity. Not only a comparative but also a temporal dimension emerges, because modernity means development and progress. Through this, the "modernity" of Western societies is marked by a timeline directed to the future, because paradise on earth is called progress.



Alekos Hofstetter
Futsch ist Futsch, 2022
Colored pencil and
permanent marker
on paper, framed
24 x 28 cm



Available Works by
ALEKOS HOFSTETTER

Each 1,400,00 €
All prices exclude VAT



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ABOUT THE ARTIST

In your works you combine different techniques, collages, sampling, text, drawings. How would you describe the artistic process of bringing these techniques together?

I started painting in the 80s in East-Berlin. It was the time of so called neo-expressionism. The 90s took a different direction with new impressions. I used 19th century patterns as a background for large paintings of 3 to 4 metres, and filled them with found artificial flowers. Working with collage-like techniques often means working with unknown elements, when you bring them together in a painting, you have to react as an artist, learning the effect of each material and find a balance. In my work, I also often react to the zeitgeist of the moment, for example advertising, design and music. Currently I am experimenting with combining painting with LED-light, or trying to express the interior of buildings, spaces or studios in the paintings.

To what extent does your work play with or relate to music?

I like to listen to music while I experiment with the materials and techniques. The adventure of listening to music in the studio while making art is important to me. If I read a song title somewhere or hear a lyric that speaks to me, I make a note of it, that I might use at a later point, either for inspiration or titles. In the 80s I listened to a lot of industrial music, especially the album *Halber Mensch* or song *Seele Brennt* from the band Einstürzende Neubauten, the latter I took as a title for a painting of a man burning. The image was already there, but when you then synchronise it with the music that is heard at that moment, a certain composition emerges. For me, the title adds another layer and opens up a new context.

This is then where the titles *Die Welt ist eine Scheibe* (The World is a Disc) or *Woodstock* come from?

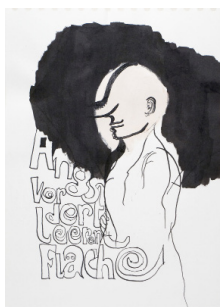
The painting *Woodstock* actually has to do with Woodstock, we went there once to visit the area and at that moment there was an old Volkswagen bus with ticket sales. I photographed it and used the interior of the bus for a painting. The interior interests me a lot because it resonates with a state of mind, it somehow needs this narrowing, where things are placed in a certain place and order. The title *Die Welt ist eine Scheibe* (the world is a disc) I liked because in German they also say *Scheibe* (disc) to a record. The title has a double meaning, referring to both vinyl and at surfaces, which are also found in my works.

Both your drawings and your paintings use abstract forms and collage-like techniques that are different from each other but still share a common aesthetic. What is the relationship between your drawings and your paintings?

They somehow belong together through the way I approach my work. With drawing I don't have this pressure like with the canvas, there you just try, throw it away, but it needs concentration, I can't correct it. I get into an inner state, and that's where surprises come from. The material I use in my drawings and paintings as a template also comes from fashion magazines or photos of bands. A painting is always something else. Painting means that I am constantly correcting it. Then suddenly something develops and I have to act on it. Something I always come back to is the use of vinyls (which I have been working with since 2000), and colours – there is a certain colour palette in all my works. Now my focus is on light again, but I am trying it with LED and this works very well.

You have a series of works that you call *Remix*, a reproduction of existing works that have previously been sold. The works are not only a recreation, but also play with the meaning of remix. Can you explain these works in more detail?

This refers to the works I made in the 1980s, which are now sold and no longer belong to me. I loved these works so much because they are connected to the fall of the Wall and the 1980s in East Berlin. I started with the painting *Seele Brennt* and reinterpreted it freely, then I continued with other works. I listened again to the music I heard in the studio at the time, recalling memories of that period. Images are so memorable, for me they represent a certain time and a certain moment in my life. Through these remixes, I try to reactivate the moment when the works were created. The works do not look the same but have a similar aura. Someone told me by seeing a remix at an exhibit at the gallery Lage Egal, that he was flashed immediately. He revealed, 30 years ago he saw the original painting in a Museum show in Budapest. What a coincidence. This is what fascinates me.



KLAUS KILLISCH
Angst vor der leeren Fläche, 2015
Ink and acryl on paper, framed
29,7 x 21 cm (framed: 37 x 28,5 cm)



Available Works by
KLAUS KILLISCH

1.350,00 €
All prices exclude VAT