

Sinta Werner

Bâtir en l'air

Tom Reichstein Contemporary, Hamburg

May 6–29, 2022

Opening: May 5, 6–9 pm

In her fragmented spatial images and pictorial spaces, Sinta Werner explores the question of how we perceive our built environment and navigate our way through the increasing dissolution and acceleration of our reality. Architecture and rhythmic façade structures are recurring motifs in her work. These structures are used in a process of translation between two- and three-dimensionality - through folds and breaks in the perspective view - to mesh virtual and real space and create illusions of the eye.

For the exhibition at Tom Reichstein Contemporary, Sinta Werner has gathered works from various years and combined them with new works. The exhibition title *Bâtir en l'air* (building in the air, the castle in the air) comes from a new room-sized sculpture by Werner. In the center of the exhibition hall is a scaffolding structure in front of which hangs a thin printed silk fabric that picks up the air movements in the space. The scaffolding picks up the perspective view of the glass façade in the motif, thus adding a spatial dimension to the photographic image. The light from behind creates an interplay of transparency and shadows that form. The work seems ephemeral and dreamlike, through the strongly protruding photo grain also like a photograph from the beginnings of modernism and thus like a promise from the past. The printed silk fabric shows us the facade of the Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris. The motif of the airport is also found in the series of works *Enjambement* (Leap of the Line). On the airfield are the usual marker lines, but some of them have detached themselves from the ground and rise up to the sky. Only upon closer inspection is it apparent that the 'flying' colored stripes were created by sanding the photographic surfaces. They create an analogy to the marking lines of the sports field outside the windows of the Tom Reichstein Contemporary gallery.

For the new photo sculpture *Partments*, Sinta Werner printed striped cutouts from a 1930s apartment building directly onto acrylic steles or the wooden structure behind the steles. The simplicity and uniformity of the building with its balcony projections is repeated in the rectangular, stepped arrangement of the acrylic glass stelae. The clearly defined building block-like spatiality of the residential area becomes a cabinet of reflections that challenge perception and the logical

breakdown of what is seen. While circling the sculpture, views alternate, making the building recognizable and transforming it in the next moment into a shimmering structure of floating geometric forms. The static of the building is set in motion. The frozen moment of the photograph takes on a temporal dimension. The simplicity and monotony of the building is broken up into a multiple perspective, reminiscent of the collapse of multiple viewpoints in Cubism. While the sculpture radiates a great presence through its cinematic character, fixed spatial coordinates are dissolved, and the building is dematerialized so that it appears like a hologram.

The series of works *Passages Marginales* shows a series of embassy buildings in Berlin. On the one hand, embassies are buildings that seal themselves off from the outside world with fences and security measures. On the other hand, they represent an exchange between countries and cultures, thus dissolving borders. With the flickering and immaterial appearance, Sinta Werner thematizes this ambiguity between shielding and permeability. She contrasts the distance-creating blurriness of the motif with the grinding marks on the surface of the paper. This draws the eye into the deep space of the picture, only to be caught by the vertical stripes suggesting a fence on the picture's surface.

Transparency was the leitmotif of classical modernism. There is something visionary about glass as a building material; it stands for an overcoming of conventional building and is interpreted as an expression of progressiveness and openness to the future. The architecture interacts with the light, creating the impression of the ephemeral, dematerialized. The generous use of glass dissolves the seclusion of the space. Glass is also a recurring material in Sinta Werner's works, due to its optical property of setting a pictorial space in motion through reflection and refraction of light, redefining aggregate states of the urban space: A kind of 'liquefaction of the city' is created and solid, monumental buildings are broken up into fragile structures. In this way, Sinta Werner transfers the flickering of the big city into her works.