



ALEKOS HOFSTETTER

LAGE EGAL [BOOTH 18]
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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grand plan, which shapes society through the process of a comprehensive redesign and thus eliminates everything that is outdated.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