



176, 175, 174, 173, 172, 171, 170, 169

Ohne Titel (für Mary Miss) / Untitled (for Mary Miss),
2017

Polyestertauwerk, Pfosten aus Recycling-Kunststoff,
Haken vernickelt, Acrylharzlack, Kabelbinder, Steine
/ Polyester rope, posts made of recycled plastic, nickel
plated hook, acrylic paint, cable tie, rocks

5 Teile, Maße variabel / 5 parts, dimensions variable

Odyssee, Möhnesee, Körbecke, organisiert vom / orga-
nised by Kunstverein Arnberg



176



175



174



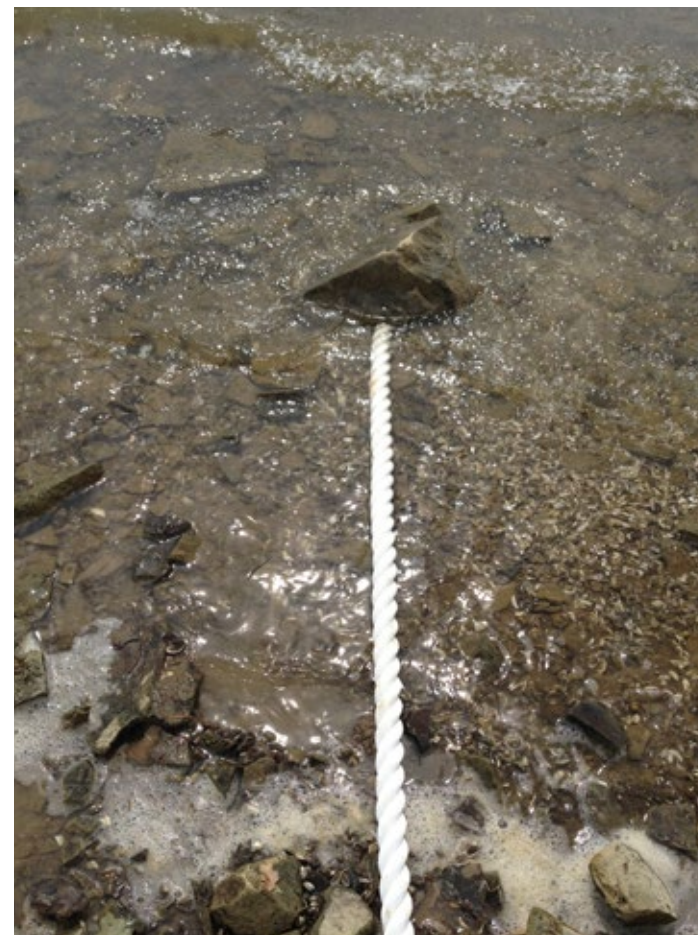
173



172



171



170



Installation von Ohne Titel (für Mary Miss) / Installation of Untitled (for Mary Miss), 2017

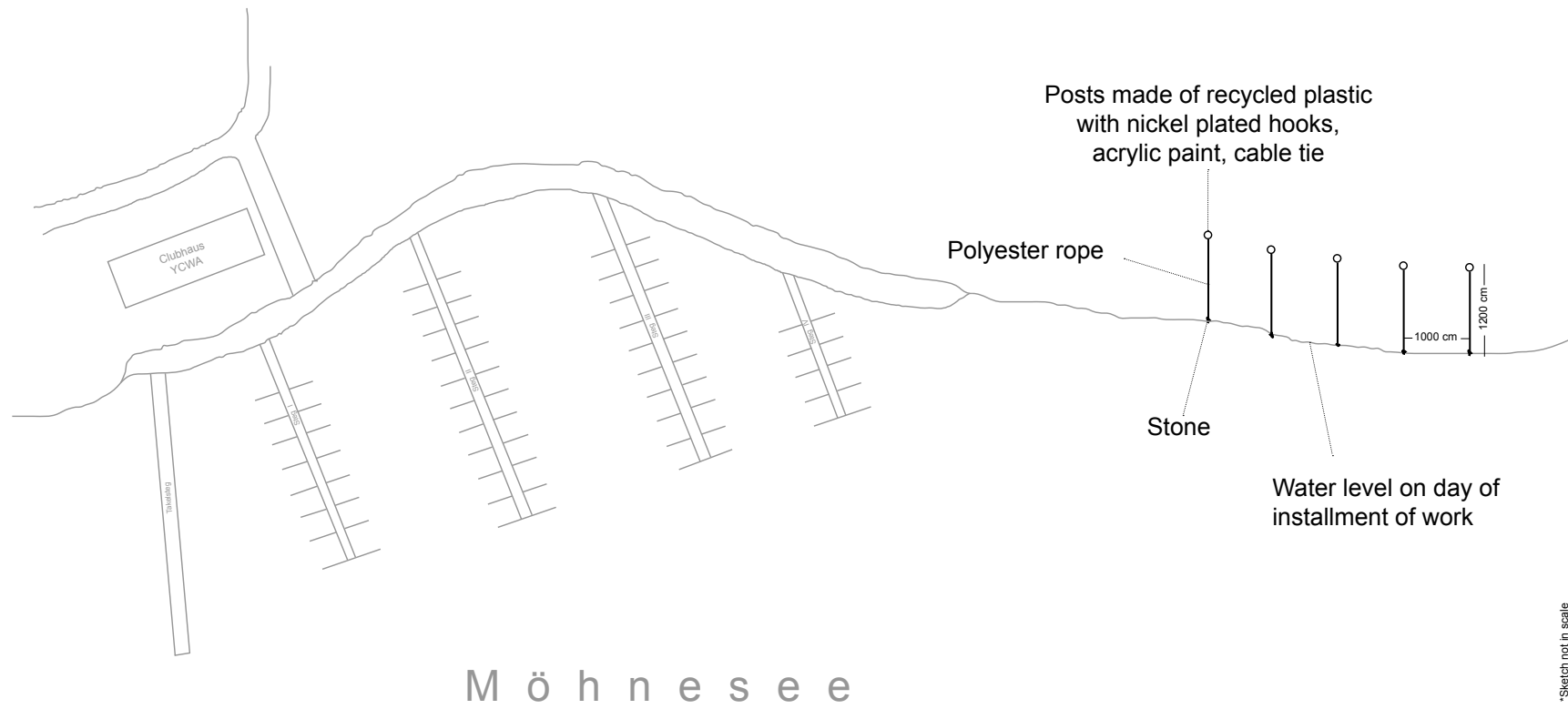
Odyssee, Möhnesee, Körbecke, organisiert vom / organised by Kunstverein Arnsberg



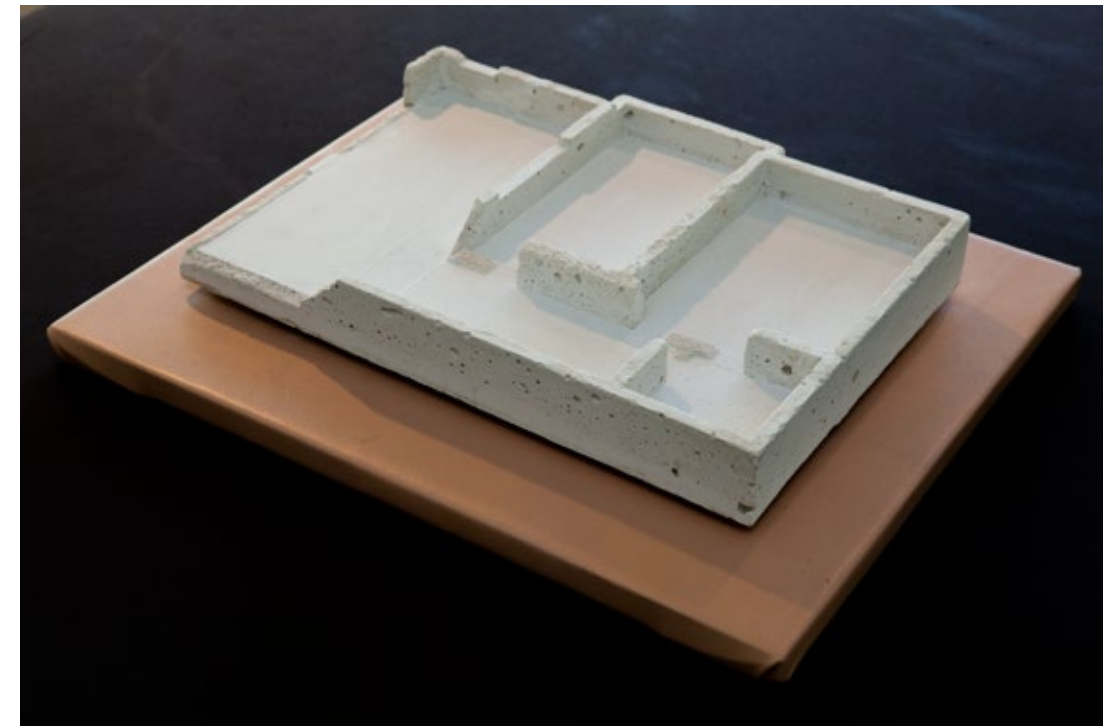
Architectural Model From Memory of Mackey Apt. #3 Accompanying a Letter to Esther McCoy, 2017

Beton, rotierender Teller / Concrete, rotary plate

11 x 40 x 29,5 cm



*Sketch not in scale



Letter to Esther McCoy, 2017

Auszug aus dem Vortrag / Excerpt of the lecture „She Was Born With an Attraction to Space“, Kunstverein am Rosa Luxemburg Platz, Berlin, 24. Februar 2017 / February, 24 2017

Dear Esther,

Although we have never met, it feels easy to write to you. You have the same name as my friend. Esther and I live in the same house, on the fourth and on the second floor; I just moved in some month ago. Although our apartments are of the same size, we live in quite different spaces. I wish I could show you; it is really striking how the shapes of the apartments differ. Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to live in Esther's apartment instead of mine. What kind of movements, actions, and behaviors would I get used to up there? The thing is, I am becoming more and more committed to the idea that it is not me who inhabits the space I live in but that it proposes some way of living to me instead. Have you ever had the feeling that the house owns you, rather than you own the house? It's funny how it is not really an object but more of a function, when I think about it like this.

Besides Esther's apartment, I imagine inhabiting other spaces, too. Therefore, I love to cruise the internet for floor plans. Some of them come by numbers. Lately, I got stuck with 4122WM, advertised

as a “popular home plan with options.” The bedrooms are big and private, and have high ceilings, and they open to the swimming pool, and one can imagine reading in one of them all night long, or writing a book, or closing the door and crying till dinner. Huge porches, front and back, and a third porch on the side give you great space to enjoy the fresh air. Comfort in this space is related to both intimacy and control. The most intimate room is like a theater box, placed just over the entrance to the social area of the house, so that any intruder can be easily seen. It is the kind of house that has a refreshment center in the living room. It is the kind of house that offers plenty of possibilities to let routines be done by the Internet of Things. It is the kind of house in which one does not really live, but there is no way to say this without getting into touchy and delicate and, finally, awkward questions of taste and ultimately of class. I have seldom seen a house plan so evocative of the unspeakable.

Esther, I am turning to you, because I want to work on a report on architecture and I want it to be interesting. Buildings are acts, they say, and not static pre-conditions and that in any space activities, of course, ideologies and norms

are repeated. There have been several artistic attempts to show that this also works the other way around, where subject positions are construed through the enactment of architecture. I believe that the good thing about spatial practices is that they are never just about meaning and metaphors, they are also about atmosphere and material. I think it is much more constructive to identify these links between theory and practice rather than to further the assumption that there are no connection. There is. When our hearts and minds are open we can recognize them.

For example I see it here: Lately I got hooked up on the concept of an “architectural autofiction,” a notion author Paul Preciado writes about in *Pornotopia*, from 2010. Autofiction is a term used in literary criticism to refer to a form of fictionalized autobiography. In this case, it would mean to write an autobiography based on the description and representation of spaces where one's life took place, like the sites where things actually happened. The interesting thing about Preciado is that he is not talking about vague symbolic influences; rather, he is talking about how architecture physically controls and constructs technohabits. This is less a theory about subjectivities

than it is an account of the total immersion of bodies and gender ideologies. “If you want to change a man, change his apartment,” Preciado writes. “If you want to modify gender, transform architecture.” Or to say it in the words of someone else: “Space is a pressing matter and it matters which bodies where and how press up against it.”

I learned a lot from you about the arrangements of bodies and how aesthetic decisions are made along the way: choices that control the views, sounds, smells, and the overall feel of a place. People say you were born with an attraction to space. You always valued that architecture does come out of people, and those people come out of backgrounds. With this approach, our understanding of space turns; it is no longer a prior condition of something else—like a specific place—but rather an outcome, the product of an activity, and thus it necessarily has a temporal dimension. I think that this is an important detail; it undermines the long-standing binary that founds our notions of space in gendered terms: that which poses movement (conceptualized as masculine and related to linear modes of time) against location (conceptualized as feminine and related to static or cyclic temporalities). You wrote about how Ru-

dolph Schindler's houses are wrapped around space, and how he has created a new definition of buildings: “His house is in movement,” you state. “It is in becoming. Form emerges from form. It is like a bird that has just touched earth, its wings still spread but at once it is part of the earth.” A bird that has just touched earth... , Esther, you almost made me cry. To think about a building that hovers above things and is deeply connected to them at the same time touches me deeply. Wouldn't it mean that it is finally possible to get out, at least for a moment? Free like an eagle while sitting inside? Such a Better Living!

You might wonder why I'm writing all of this to you. My own sculptures, installations, textual and printed works have focused on issues of space for some time now—ways of dislocating it, attenuating it, flattening it, turning it inside-out, always attempting to explore it without ever giving myself or others the permission to penetrate it. In 2014 and 2015, I stayed at the Mackey Apartments built by Rudolph Schindler in the 1930s in the residential area of Miracle Mile in Los Angeles. At the end of the residency we were asked to exhibit the outcome of our projects. I didn't manage to come to terms with anything concrete. But I

learned from you and other sources that I consulted during my stay that art and architecture must take hold of the public imagination in order to remain relevant in regard to the question of how we want to live, especially now since the loss of the public sphere changes the built environment and the crucial part it plays in the social fabric even more. This was and is, says Kimberli Meyer, former director of the MAK Center, especially true in Los Angeles, where the forces of real estate speculation so often trump architecture. The work I finally showed—and which only existed for a few days—was called *I Had The Key But Not The Key*. It consisted of three so-called “window splashes,” advertising signs which are applied directly to the window glass of shop windows. The window splashes that I designed and commissioned were completed by John King of the company King Sign & Graphics, West Hollywood. King, who usually works as a window painter on Fairfax Ave. and other commercial parts of the city, painted large-scale splashes on the windows of the apartment where I lived and worked during my stay. In this way, the conventional, neon-colored advertising signs like arrows and ticks have been combined with the color palette Schindler has chosen for the inte-

165, 164, 163, 162, 161, 160, 159, 158, 157, 156, 155

Aufstellung (Women and Space),
Teil / Part 1, 2010/2016
Beton, Glas / Concret, glass, Ralph
Lauren Paint Lifestyle Color *Exposed*
190 × 90 × 30 cm

Aufstellung (Women and Space),
Teil / Part 2, 2010/2016
Beton, Glas / Concret, glass, Ralph
Lauren Paint Lifestyle Color *Trophy*
190 × 90 × 44 cm

Aufstellung (Women and Space),

Teil / Part 3, 2010/2016
Beton, Glas / Concrete, glass, Ralph
Lauren Paint Lifestyle Color Studio *Purple*
190 × 90 × 30 cm

Aufstellung (Women and Space),
Teil / Part 4, 2010/2016
Beton, Spiegel / Concrete, mirror, Ralph Lauren Paint
Lifestyle Color *Studio Cream*
192 × 90 × 48 cm

Aufstellung (Women and Space),
Teil / Part 5, 2010/2016
Beton, Glas / Concrete, glass, Ralph Lauren Paint Life-
style Color *Artist Grey*

rior design of the Mackey Apartments: from downstairs to upstairs, from the basement to the penthouse, light gray to turquoise to orange. It was embracing. Especially from the inside, which only I could see as the resident of the apartment. The painted windows produced a peculiar intimacy and an almost uncanny weirdness in the apartment and at the same time they were bright, shining, message-less signs to the outside world. In one of his Architectural Site Drawings From Memory, part of the 1995 project Educational Complex, Mike Kelley made a note about the four kinds of life happening in a floor plan: institutional life, daily life, symbolic life, and unconscious symbolic life. I agree with him; I believe that architecture is both real and imagined, open and fragmented, and we most often glimpse space in pieces: in the background, in our peripheral vision, and in our recollection. That all reminds me of you.

Yours truly,
Mirjam

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190 × 90 × 50 cm

Women and Space, Galerie Krobath, Einzelausstellung /
Solo exhibition, Wien, 2016





164



163



162



161



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159



158



157



156

154, 153

Women and Space, 2016

Digitaldruck, gerahmt / Digital print, framed

Drei Teile / Three parts, je / each 29,7 × 21 × 1,5

152

Installationsanleitung für / Installment instruction for
Women and Space, 2016



155



154



153



152

151

I Had The Key But Not The Key, Teil 1 – 6, 2015/2016

Digitaldrucke, gerahmt

je / each 60 × 42 × 2,5 cm

Installationsansicht / Installation shot *Women and Space*, Galerie Krobath, Wien, 2016



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150

I Had The Key But Not The Key, Teil 1 – 6, 2015/2016

Digitaldrucke, gerahmt

je / each 60 × 42 × 2,5 cm



150

149, 148, 147, 146, 145, 144, 143, 142, 141

Lean in 1-3, 2016

Lackiertes Stahlrundrohr, Rohrklemmen, lackierte
Blechdose / Painted steel, steel pipe clamps, painted can

Drei Teile, je / Three parts, each 85 × 60 × 16 cm

*Unknown Landscape. Nordkystens Kunst Triennale /
Northcoast Art Triennial, Gribskov, Nakkehoved Fyr /
Lighthouse, Gilleleje; Rudolph Tegnors Museum &
Statuepark, Dronningmølle, Munkeuphus, Dronning-
mølle*



149



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147





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144





143



142



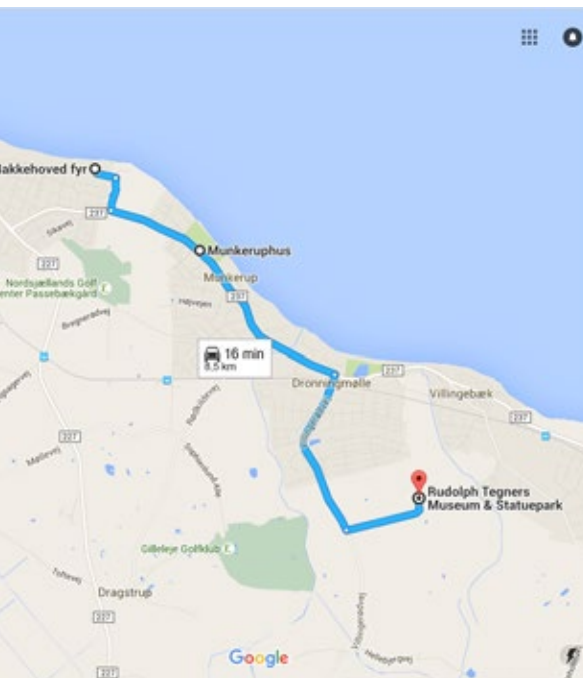
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Position von / Positions of *Lean in 1–3* Nakkehoved Fyr / Lighthouse, Gilleleje; Rudolph Tegnens Museum & Statuepark, Dronningmølle, Munkeruphus, Dronningmølle, Denmark



Einladungskarte / Announcement

Better Living, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Einzelausstellung / Solo exhibition, Berlin, 2015

Better Living

Presstext / Press release

Text: Mirjam Thomann; Übersetzung Deutsch – Englisch / Translation German – English: Karl Hoffmann

Better Living, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin, 2015

Mirjam Thomann
Better Living

We offer you a warm welcome. On this planning page, you will find useful information for arranging your trip, including getting here, finding your way around and to our show—we wish you a memorable stay.

Dear Suitcase,

Of course it's strange writing to you. You're just a suitcase. But I'm concerned about you—I've had to deal with you for so long. Ever since I moved out, I've been pulling you behind me, having you stand beside me, you're waiting for the next employment or the return. I hear you all hours of the day and at night, as well. And I watch you whenever I get the chance. I've noticed that many people don't have a good grip on you. You often topple over if you haven't been packed well, your wheels break if you're too cheap, or the zipper jams if you're too fat. Even when you do your job smoothly, moving around with you in one's hand often looks strange. As if you were always

standing in our way while simultaneously bringing us ahead. There's this commercial in which a woman rides you like a horse, plays you like a guitar, hangs you over her shoulder like a handbag, and hugs you like a monstrous friend.

I need you. They want to make us believe that mobility is a game, an almost light-footed affair, but of course we both know that isn't true. At times, our movements appear nothing less than choreographed, like a disciplined workflow. I really can't remember the last time I spontaneously broke character or stepped out of line with you. The ideal of movement is apparently different than what we actually experience. Why is that so? Are there too many barriers? Does mobility love ambivalence? Is it an endless interplay of relief and hardship, leeway and restriction, dynamism and interruption, transgression and limitation? Many places spontaneously come to mind where there's no way forward, where motion comes to a halt—for example, in waiting zones, deportation camps or border regions. And then there's the projection onto the potential objects in the suitcase. In the press, there were recently two very different examples: an eight-year-old boy smuggled across the border from Morocco to the Spanish ex-

clave of Cueta, whose huddled silhouette appeared in a luggage X-ray scan, and a bomb. But the latter was just a rhetorical question on the front page of a news magazine next to the photo of a suitcase left behind on a station platform.

Dear suitcase, you are the zero point of temporal and symbolic change of location, of an original moment after which all familiarity is lost and change and difference begin shaping life. A gallerist interviewed for a travel magazine went on record as saying: "I'm definitely a different person when I travel. Usually I'm really polite, but the first thing I tell the stewardess is: 'Please don't wake me up'. And then another one will come and ask: 'Don't you want champagne?' I'm like 'No, I don't want your fucking champagne!'" – You'd really say "fucking champagne?" – Yeah, well... (laughs) maybe. I curse a lot, it just comes out. And then the next one will come and ask 'But what about the biscuits?' And I'm like 'Fuck your biscuits! Keep your goddam biscuits! I want to sleep! I haven't slept in three days!'" – Poor transnational professional assholes.

Better living is just a stale promise. That's why I like to withdraw to the world of ideas. I imagine the movement of people, thoughts, images, objects, news, waste

136, 135, 134, 133, 132, 131, 130, 129, 128, 127, 126, 125

Trolley II, 1, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, Gepäckbänder / Concrete, luggage pull handle, luggage straps
51 x 77,5 x 26,5 cm

Cabin Trolley 1, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, gefärbtes Leder / Concrete, luggage pull handle, dyed leather
40 x 55 x 20 cm

Notebook Case / Beauty Case I, 2015

Beton / Concrete
40 x 35 x 11,5 cm / 38,5 x 25 x 24,5 cm

Trolley I, 1, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, gefärbtes Leder / Concrete, luggage pull handle, dyed leather
44,5 x 68 x 26 cm

Pilot Trolley, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, gefärbtes Leder, Gepäckband, Transportroller / Concrete, luggage pull handle, dyed leather, luggage straps, dolly
50 x 44,5 x 23 cm

Notebook Case / Beauty Case 2, 2015

Beton, Pigment / Concrete, pigment
40 x 35 x 11,5 cm / 38,5 x 25 x 24,5 cm

Cabin Trolley 2, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, Transportroller / Concrete, luggage pull handle, dolly
40 x 55 x 20 cm

Notebook Case, 2015

Beton / Concrete

40 x 35 x 11,5 cm

Trolley I, 2, 2015

Beton, Teleskopgestänge, Stretchfolie / Concrete, luggage pull handle, stretch film
44,5 x 68 x 26 cm

Better Living, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin, Einzelausstellung / Solo exhibition, 2015

products, and money. That reminds me of the paradoxical state of always to a certain extent remaining at the place one started off. Movement is a state in which individuals are at once present and absent at a place, or are simultaneously in another place. One then has a relationship to both places. But one shouldn't project all that much onto this state, I once read, neither being euphoric about movement nor scandalizing it are appropriate—one should instead understand it. A famous philosopher sees it similarly, but he also says: "My intensities are without expectation motionless." In his view, travels always have something of a false break about them, a break that is obtained too cheaply. He cites Beckett: "We're stupid but not to the point that we travel for pleasure," and adds with a peal of laughter that most people travel to find a father. And they even admit it – to find a father! Haha!

One always wished to come back changed. Maybe that's why "global" rhymes especially well with "legal", "mental" and of course "fatal". At any rate, it doesn't make sense to grasp you as a metaphor. You stand neither for the new beginning nor for the tragic end. Your narration is different: Something is always permanently in motion here and

you have to do with that. You are a language and dynamism itself. You are what is out of the ordinary, out of the context and the invisible net of belonging. You are the feeling of sadness, sadness at leaving, sadness of parting and of memory. You are matter and mind. You are poetry: a movement, a process, a melancholy, the promise of learning something new, of getting rid of old knowledge, and forbidden nostalgia. You are the material reality of displacement, of flight, of exile and migration. You are the past that cannot be exchanged and the future that one cannot imagine.

But the world has long been explored, processed and conveyed. One click and we know where the journey leads to. We don't even have to take it ourselves anymore. Perhaps that's the newest luxury, the ultimate privilege: sedentariness. Don't move. Don't even travel failingly, have the entire world before your eyes and be everywhere without moving. In one way or the other we traverse space and time, circulate faster, and are today here with you more or less by chance.

See you soon,
Mirjam

Los Angeles, Berlin 2015

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129



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127



126



125



124, 123

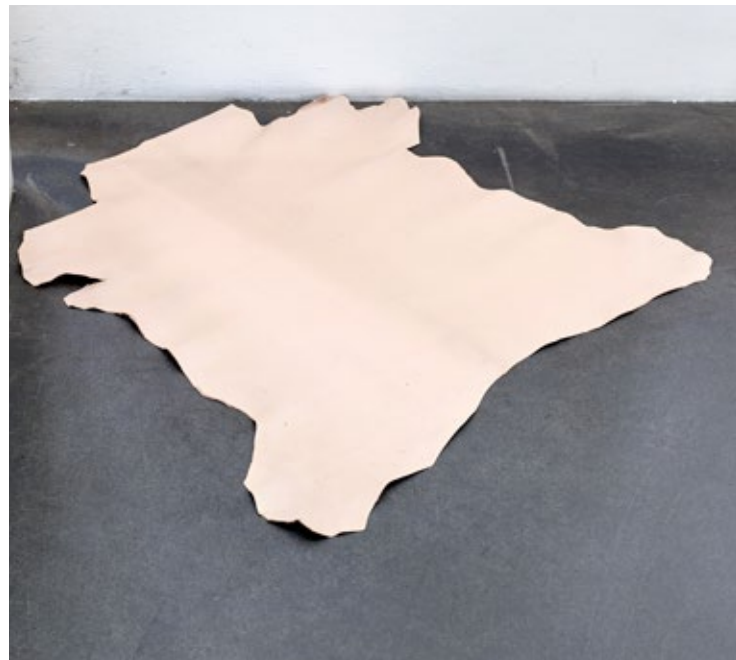
Better Living (Door), 2015

Scharniere, Tischlerplatte, Lack, gefärbtes Leder /
Hinges, wood, lacquer, dyed leather

Maße variabel / Dimensions variable



124



123

122, 121

Better Living (Google bike), 2015

Digitaldruck / Digital print

42 × 59,4 cm

Unlimitierte Auflage / Unlimited edition

Better Living, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin, 2015



122



121



120, 119, 118, 117, 116, 115, 114, 113

I Had The Key But Not The Key, 2015

Window splashes (Acrylfarben auf Fensterglas des Mackey apartment, unit #3, 1137 Cochran Av., Los Angeles 90019), Digitaldruck, Ständer / Window splashes (waterbased paints on windows of Mackey apartment, unit #3, 1137 Cochran Av., Los Angeles 90019), digital print, sign stand

Window splashes: 106 × 156 cm, 120 × 215 cm, 104 × 204 cm; Digitaldruck: ANSI Letter; Ständer: 160 × 30,5 × 38 cm / Window splashes: 41.75 × 61.5 inches, 47.25 × 85.0 inches, 41.0 × 80.25 inches; Digital print: 11 x 8.5 inches;

Sign stand: 63 x 12 x 15 inches

Ausführung / Application window splash: John King, King Sign & Graphic, West Hollywood, Los Angeles

Final Projects Exhibition, MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Mackey Apartments and Garage Top, Los Angeles



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119



118





117



116



115



114



113

