

Sebastian Utzni

M-MAYBE

Februar 27 – April 8, 2017

Opening: Sunday, Februar 26, 2017, 11 am – 4 pm

Featuring a loan from the Annette and Peter Nobel Collection

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Performance: Anne Rochat, *SEPIA*

Sunday, Februar 26, 2 – 3pm

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The exhibition is completed by a loan from the Annette and Peter Nobel Collection: The collection focusses on Press Art and supplied Sebastian Utzni with a selection of works to serve as a visual footnote to the exhibition.

For the first time in the history of Counter Space an artist dedicates the entire exhibition space to one single artwork. Sebastian Utzni's newly produced installation *M-MAYBE* is based on a collection of comics from the 70s to the 90s that seem to anticipate the destruction of the World Trade Center. The fateful attack in 2001 known as 9/11 left an incision in our reality. 9/11 also forced us to reconsider our relation to medially created and disseminated images. The alteration of this dispositive is inscribed into the work *M-MAYBE*.

The installation that fills the space does not include pictures. The visitor is surrounded by sound instead: The comic's soundscape has left the printed page and expanded into space. In order to perceive something, the visitor has to move between several speakers. Childrens' voices describe scenarios that are fictional and historical at the same time: No super hero was involved in the attack on the World Trade Center. Still you might make you feel like travelling in a time machine – in this spiralling cloud of atoms – when you find yourself confronted with a picture of the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2017, the picture being. You are in 2017 and the picture is from 1976. The publishing date and title of each comic can be found in the works' taglines.

The voices we hear belong to children born into a world that can no longer be understood without taking into account the effects and consequences of 9/11. Their voices describe a fear that manifested itself in images, a fear from the era before 9/11, when pictures still were material, limited in number and showed their age: before the seemingly eternal shine of the omnipresent screen. Comics from this era stand for childlike fantasy, escapism, the entertainment industries, – and America. Sebastian Utzni makes us look at our image of America in a moment, in which this image is about to change dramatically. The efficacy of anticomplex polarities, confining things to be either black or white, either good or bad, has left the comic page and is expanding into the sphere of control of the super power's sphere of control.

Sebastian Utzni investigates our cultural predispositions. The carefully researched artefacts that his work incorporates are saturated with a conceptional rigidity – regardless of whether they are comic spreads, molds, or fragments of our collective memory. While media and materials appear to change their aggregational status right in front of our eyes, the intersections of represented power and its execution seem to become tangible for a split second. Whereas the audio installation at Counter Space focusses on sound, the visual level of

M-MAYBE is on display at the gallery Herrmann Germann Contemporary: During the whole exhibition they will show the framed comic spreads, which were the starting point of the audio installation.

Text by Mirjam Bayerdörfer

Performance: Anne Rochat, *SEPIA*

During the day of the opening a performance of Anne Rochat will be taking place. It is the first part out of three the artist will develop and show in the course of 2017 together with Counter Space.

Sebastian Utzni, biography

– Solo shows (selection):

2017: Art Rotterdam; Herrmann Germann Contemporary, Zurich; 2015: *MEMORIA*, Kunsthaus, Grenchen, Switzerland; 2013: *JE DIS TOUJOURS LA VÉRITÉ... PAS TOUTE..*, Herrmann Germann Contemporary, Zurich; 2012: *MANDALAS*, Galerie Bernard Jordan, Zurich, Switzerland; etc.

– Group shows (selection):

2016, 2014: *WERK- UND ATELIERSTIPENDIEN DER STADT ZÜRICH*, Helmhaus, Zurich, Switzerland; 2016: *WERKSCHAU*, Fachstelle Kultur Kanton Zurich, Switzerland; *GRÜEZI! BIENVENUE! WELCOME!* Kunstmuseum Olten, Olten, Switzerland; 2015: *GROWING UP IS GIVING UP*, Rosa Brux, Brussels, Belgium; 2014: *HERE AND NOW. UND DIE FERNE WIRD ZUR NÄHE*, Perla-Mode und Winterhalder Areal, Zurich; 2013, 2012: *IMPRESSION 2013*, Kunsthaus Grenchen, Switzerland; 2012: Katz Contemporary, Zurich, Switzerland (Curator); *BRIDGE OVER TROUBLE*, Yizhao Space, Beijing, China; *XYLON JUBELDRUCK & ACHT WEISS*, Graphische Sammlung ETH, Zurich; Kunstmuseum Reutlingen, Germany; 2011: Residency at Cité internationale des Arts, Paris, France; Westport Arts Festival, Westport, Ireland; etc.

– Awards: 2016: Werkbeitrag Kanton Zurich; 2014: Werkstipendium Stadt Zurich; 2011: Atelierstipendium Paris Stadt Zurich.

Counter Space

Counter Space is an independent exhibition and project space in Zürich, which aims to present the use of temporary and process-like methods in artistic work. With fervor, we seek to show chosen glimpses and fragments of work, through a cross-generational approach.

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