

## Galerie Tobias Naehring

Robert Brambora  
'Good bye euch'

November 26, 2021 – January 15, 2022  
Galerie Tobias Naehring, Berlin

In his book *The Divided Self* (1972), psychoanalyst Ronald D. Laing describes self-consciousness as a state based on two forms: "An awareness of oneself by oneself, and an awareness of oneself as an object of someone else's observation. These two forms of awareness of the self, as an object in one's own eyes and as an object in the other's eyes, are closely related to each other."<sup>3</sup> In Robert Brambora's head-silhouettes, these two forms are unsettlingly intertwined. As we catch a glimpse of ourselves in their reflective surface, our mirror image merges with fragments of an extraneous face. These incomplete likenesses settle on our reflection like a continuous interference and tip our attempt at self-recognition into the grotesque, as we find ourselves reflected back as objects fraught with fractures and distortions. Brambora's meticulously researched text panels represent another attempt at cognizance. Fragments of text, closely arranged and engraved into the reflective lacquer surface, combine speculative housing market theories with personal reports from online forums on models for subterranean living. These private details on modes of existence reveal a precarious conformity to political or economic constraints. In their form, the cartographic depictions of these distant or juxtaposed realities are reminiscent of psychograms that attempt to shed light on the absurd excrescences of a social order. Brambora's head-silhouettes and text panels reveal his deep fascination for the physical and psychological resilience of the individual.

In *The Divided Self*, Laing further argues that schizophrenic behavior is not simply a mental illness, but a special strategy individuals develop in order to live in an unlivable situation. Using the example of one patient, Laing describes this type of defensive method as follows: "He could, he felt, be himself with others if they knew nothing about him. This was, however, a requirement that demanded exacting fulfillment. It meant that he had to go to another part of the country where he was a 'stranger'. He would go from place to place, never staying long enough to be known, each time under a different name. Under these conditions he could be (almost) happy – for a while. [...] He could be an embodied person if he was really incognito."<sup>4</sup> With this behavior, Laing illustrates the attempt to disengage from anything that can be perceived, registered, or expected by another.

The alienation from one's own identity and needs as a means for coping with the demands of the outside world is demonstrated by this defensive behavior. This unstable relationship between the inner and outer world, or between the individual and society, forms the core of Brambora's work, where it has developed its own inner logic, permeating all his decisions regarding content and form. His individual works, despite their clear contours, are interconnected and form a coherent architecture. Their reflective surfaces create convoluted spaces in which – depending on our physical movement – new forms are constantly shaped. On the one hand, they record everything and everyone in their surroundings, on the other hand their mirrored materiality is empty and insubstantial, and insinuates precisely this uncertainty of interior versus exterior. They draw us in, give insight, perplex, and cast our gaze back again. Ultimately, by always simulating the gaze of the other, the mirroring effect refers to the danger of being objectified and controlled by societal constraints.

Brambora's constellation of reflective objects generate an extraordinary coexistence of intimacy and rejection. In a sense, the juxtaposition of the head-silhouettes and text panels address the dual status of the body: as the center of one's own world, and an object for others. While the works reveal the twists and turns of a driven self, they also heighten the perception for an existence that is entangled in a web of analog, virtual, and economic relationships and dependencies – torn between flight into anonymity and the longing for communal connection.

– Text by Susanne Mierzwiak, translated by Anne Fellner

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<sup>3</sup> Ronald D. Laing: *Das geteilte Selbst. Eine existenzielle Studie über geistige Gesundheit und Wahnsinn*, 1972, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 159.



Installation view: Robert Brambora, 'Good bye euch', November 26, 2021 – January 15, 2022  
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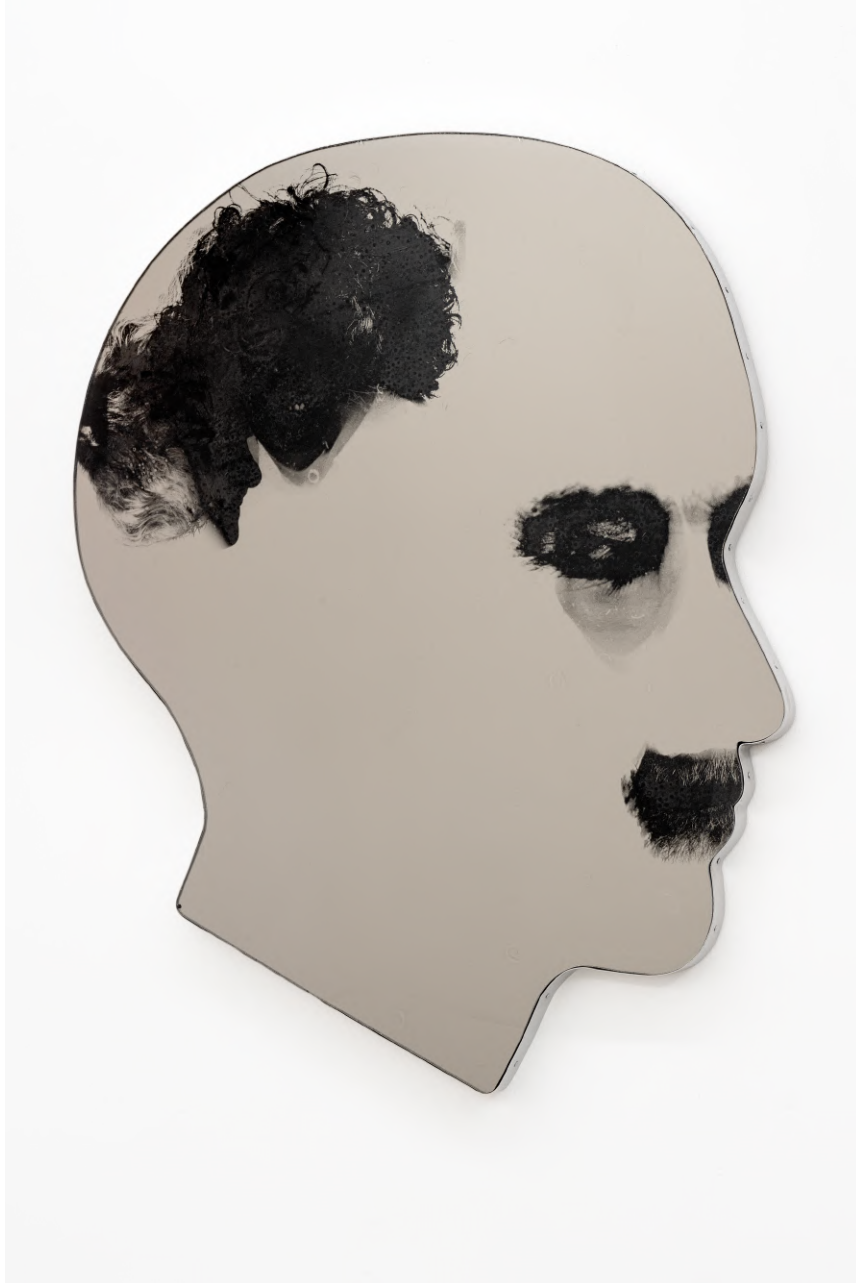




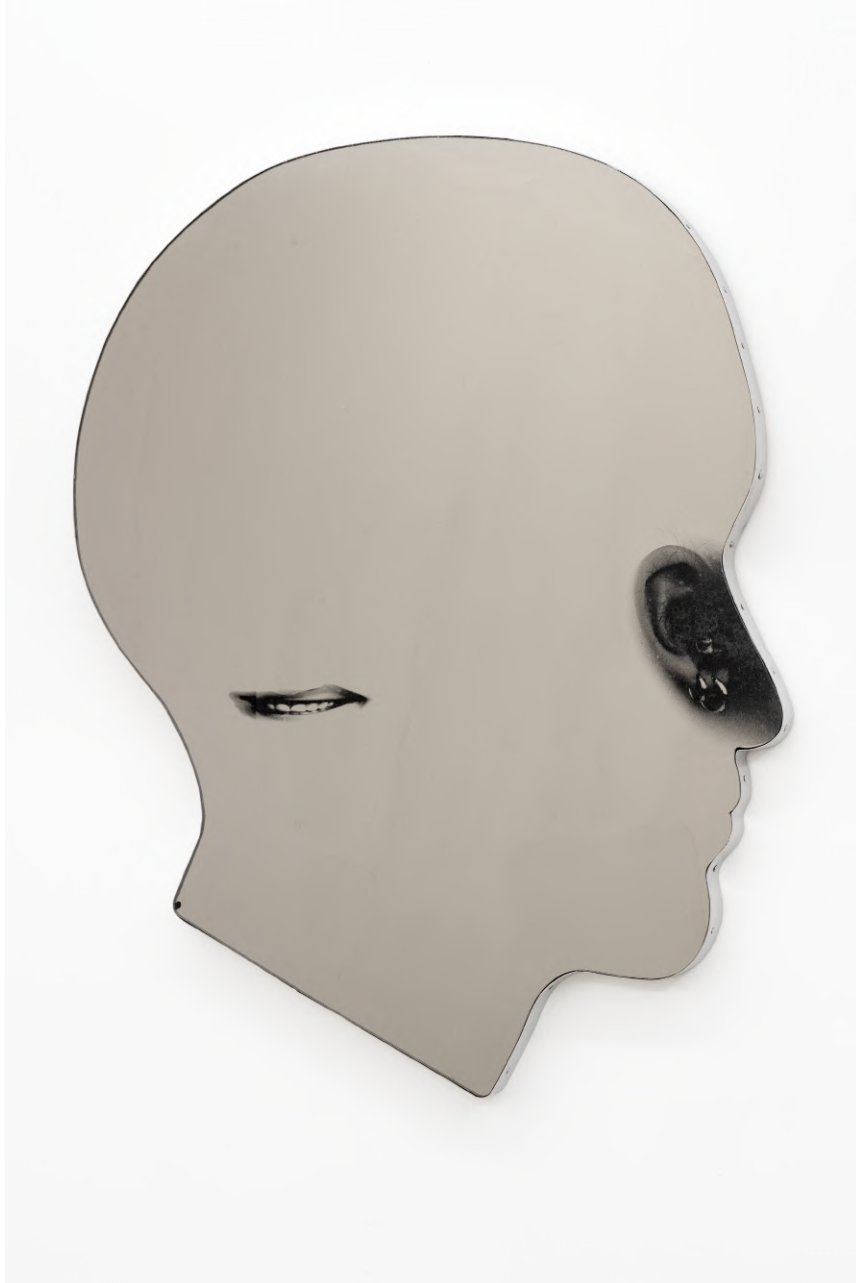
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Robert Brambora, 'CGM', 2021, laser engraving behind glass, lacquer, stainless steel, 68 x 56 cm



Robert Brambora, 'Haar', 2021, laser engraving behind glass, lacquer, stainless steel, 68 x 56 cm



Robert Brambora, untitled (simple), 2021, laser engraving behind glass, lacquer, stainless steel, 68 x 56 cm



Robert Brambora, 'Ines', 2021, laser engraving behind glass, lacquer, stainless steel, 68 x 56 cm



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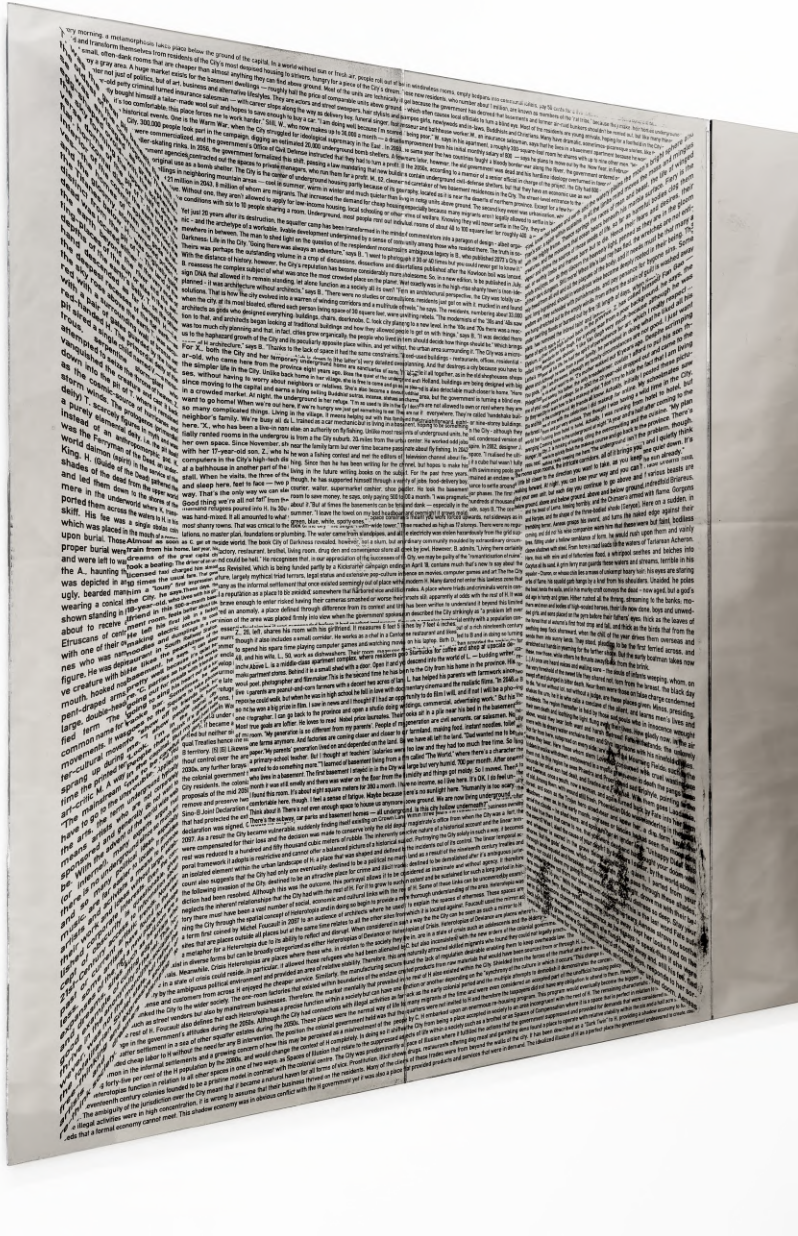


Robert Brambora, untitled (Schmuck), 2021, shirts, necklace, cardboard box, 42 x 40 x 28 cm (Detail)



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Robert Brambora, 'Textraum (2)', 2021, laser engraving behind glass, lacquer, stainless steel, 95 x 40 cm



Installation view: Robert Brambora, 'Good bye euch', November 26, 2021 – January 15, 2022  
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Robert Brambora, 'Fatigue', 2021, ceramic, steel, paper, lightning, 140 x 40 cm





Robert Brambora, 'Fatigue', 2021, ceramic, steel, paper, lightning, 140 x 40 cm (Detail)



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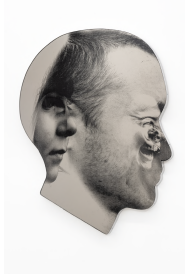
Robert Brambora, 'Aggression', 2021, ceramic, steel, paper, lightning, 140 x 40 cm





Robert Brambora, 'Aggression', 2021, ceramic, steel, paper, lightning, 140 x 40 cm (Detail)

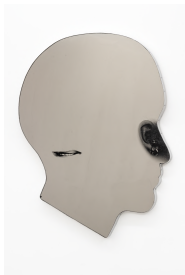
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Robert Brambora  
'CGM', 2021  
laser engraving behind  
glass, lacquer, stainless  
steel  
68 x 56 cm



Robert Brambora  
'Aggression', 2021  
ceramic, steel, paper,  
lighting  
140 x 40 cm



Robert Brambora  
untitled (simple), 2021  
laser engraving behind  
glass, lacquer, stainless  
steel  
68 x 56 cm



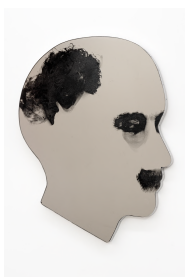
Robert Brambora  
'Fatigue', 2021  
ceramic, steel, paper,  
lighting  
140 x 40 cm



Robert Brambora  
'Ines', 2021  
laser engraving behind  
glass, lacquer, stainless  
steel  
68 x 56 cm



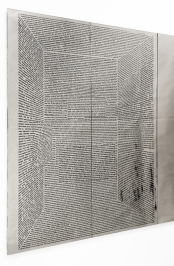
Robert Brambora  
untitled (Gefäße), 2021  
ceramic  
each approx. 11 x 8,5 cm



Robert Brambora  
'Haar', 2021  
laser engraving behind  
glass, lacquer, stainless  
steel  
68 x 56 cm



Robert Brambora  
untitled (Schmuck), 2021  
shirts, necklace,  
cardboard box  
42 x 40 x 28 cm



Robert Brambora  
'Textraum 2', 2021  
laser engraving behind  
glass, lacquer, stainless  
steel  
95 x 40 cm

For further information please contact the gallery:  
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