

Galerie Max Mayer

10 Nov 2022

**Galerie Max Mayer
Schmela Haus
Mutter-Ey-Strasse 3
40213 Düsseldorf**

**J. Parker Valentine
Eccentric Cache**

Starting from a visceral, vertigo-like feeling she encountered during her first visit to the gallery's space, as well as a reflection on its architectural history and associations, J. Parker Valentine developed a new body of work including large scale drawings on canvas and sculptures for her fourth exhibition and ten years of collaboration with Galerie Max Mayer. As her line work on canvas plays with dynamics of visible and invisible forces, as well as perceptions of spatiality, the canvases themselves, as massive objects, do so with the dynamics of the real space of the gallery through a redirection of its architecture.

Bringing together a multiplicity of viewpoints, the drawings carve out a balance between a trace of the body as well as its representation: in a fine line between these two poles, large dynamic gestures meet shapes such as eyes, hands and faces. Semi-abstract and geometric forms not only converge with the imagery of the works, but also depict structures that can be read as shelters for the figured. The activity of the drawing can be seen through the lens of pataphysics, a science of imaginary solutions, and is articulated through the eccentric - a deviation from a geometric center. In a plurality of forms, J. Parker Valentine references language of varied sorts: elements resembling letterforms, musical notations and the graphic iconography of dynamic lines that represent movement in cartoons. Standing in its own right, the drawings are not looking to further translate into other media and thus hint at the impossibility of developing into the three-dimensional sphere.

Other new sculptures, made through a sand casting technique, appear as miniature landscapes or civilizations, but also as mysteriously familiar, perhaps handheld, objects. After developing an interest in Aldo van Eyck's sandboxes and the playfulness inherent to these, J. Parker Valentine recreated the "silt casting" technique developed by another architect, Paolo Soleri, whose Utopian concept village of Arcosanti in Arizona was built with the process. This technique, in which forms are carved into the earth and then used as molds, is essentially characterized by playing with sand. Working through the negative to achieve a positive is an oft-used process for the artist, as is the blurring of parameters such as back/front or up/down. Wooden wedges jammed between the gallery's pillars and the canvases create a palpable tension to hold them in place. In addition sculptural elements carved from a fallen tree mimic the preexisting stairs, and produce an unsettling feeling when walked upon. Both demonstrate Valentine's urge to provide a corporeal experience for the visitor - one that she experiences in the process of making the work herself.

J. Parker Valentine (born 1980 in Austin, Texas, USA) lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Her work has been exhibited at Ceysson & Bénétière, New York, USA (2022), Vin Vin, Vienna, Austria (2021), La Maison de Rendez-Vous, Brussels, Belgium (2020), Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, USA (2017), Barbara Gladstone, Brussels, Belgium (2017) (selection). Solo shows include Wschód, Warsaw, Poland (2021), Paul Soto/Park View, Los Angeles, USA (2020), Misako and Rosen, Tokyo, Japan (2019), KRIEG, Hasselt, Belgium (2019), The Juan & Patricia Vergez Collection, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2016) and Langen Foundation, Neuss, Germany (2014).

