

Dominic Michel

Trance

april 1st – may 13th 2023

open saturdays from 4 – 8pm or by appointment

TRANCE

To icons of public space, in varying degrees,

I recognize my projection of your significance for my understanding of a particular image of the city I move in. Take a step, two steps. Out in the open, towards what you are drawn to, or rather, what draws you in. The difference being where the agency lies. Taxi: I merge you with countless placeholders in frames. Monument: I pass you by, tourists as-warm. Tag: I take notice of you mainly as gesture unless I'm in on the joke. You were quite specific, of course. A taxi in Athens is not a New York cab. A statue of Zwingli is actually quite funny – honoring a historical figure who rejected images of worship. Sprayed on construction panels, you, tag, make your mark for someone. In my mind, though, you become vehicles for me to lose myself in. Always out of the corner of my eye – in repetition you are impossible to overlook.

As artwork, now, your image is pushed into concept. The specific that you carried in your context, that I projected my idea of the city into, is extracted, flattened. Taxi Zwingli Tags – the traces of bodies, their gestures of conformity or resistance: Confronted with surface, representation falls behind. Away from the – my – symbolic charge that feeds mechanisms of judgement, of value, of dollar dollar bills, the icon falls, is forced to an image of an image removed.

Like lorries on the road without cargo, a negative space emerges, a state of profound abstraction or absorption. This may at first sound nihilistic, a fear of output that is immediately bound to a logic of production and consumption. It is in fact a space full of endless possibility, a suspended plane of quite controlled tension, that, once made useful, slackens and must take another shape. The panels, for instance: Initially mounted to fence off building sites, become a place for tagging, are removed – stolen – and used to shield a party, are then taken down, installed as art object, perhaps at some point, used as a different work entirely.

Text: Geraldine Tedder

Dominic Michel, *1987, lives and works in Zurich