

## WOJCIECH BAKOWSKI: ROUTE PHANTOM

Duration: May 5<sup>th</sup> – July 30<sup>th</sup>

The work of Polish artist Wojciech Bakowski seems dark and poetic at the same time. His detailed drawings, films, installations and soundpieces activate the closed mechanics of the emotional, cognitive and economic night sides of life in a way that is both familiar and disconcerting way. By means of visual and acoustic irritations, including ramified track systems, endless corridors ,or an overloud heating system, Bakowski permanently operates at the gates of perception. Above all, the techniques of lucid dreaming in their modulation of perceptual processes inform Bakowski's composition and motifs, although childhood memories from Poland's post-communist phase as well as present day experiences also feed into the artistic production. Generally speaking, Bakowski's particular approach enables him to realise complex folds of a spatial and temporal nature in his drawings.

"Route Phantom", Bakowski's first institutional solo exhibition outside of Poland, concentrates mainly on the drawing part of his branching oeuvre. A broad selection of dark, diffuse realities from the last few years provide access to Bakowski's complex, frequently hermetic wanderings of consciousness. Again and again works function as a cross-fading of mutually exclusive states of consciousness, for example waking/sleeping or real/imaginary. For example, the wall sculpture "Dry Bay" with a mast and a seagull suggest the open sea's endless expanse, while the sculpture makes a penetrating heating noise, which makes the spatial expanse seem to be set in a cramped flat. Similarly, the trains and trams (and metonymically inserted rails) are used as leitmotifs), which often reach into human twilight and sleeping states through their sounds. Additionally, rail vehicles in Bakowski's work, similar to his second leitmotif of the carp, may stand for a fatalistic irreversibility that narrates life primarily as a path to death.

Wojciech Bakowski (b. 1979) lives and works in Warsaw. His work has been shown in numerous international museums, including New York's New Museum, the Kunstsammlung NRW, and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw. Bakowski was a member of the artist group *Penerstwo* and is also known in Poland as a musician and poet. In 2015, he won the Grand Prize of the City of Oberhausen at the International Short Film Festival. Parallel to the exhibition at the Kunstverein, the artist presents a work in a former kiosk in the city space.

The exhibition is a cooperation with Urbane Künste Ruhr as part of *Ruhr Ding: Sleep*

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