

The exhibition 'New Model Army' at Ben Kaufmann Gallery presents two positions which not only feature model attributes in their material instability, open construction and architectural references, but also serve a template function extending beyond any merely phenomenological 'model character'. They hence allow us to re-evaluate the connections between model, sculpture and artwork, as well as providing an unusual insight into the relationships linking the model, the subject and the world.

Abstraction, idealization, distortion and analogy can all help us model certain real-world elements or phenomena. Attributes of these can then be examined and manipulated in the model for later projection onto its counterpart. What this attests to is the epistemological function of models as media aiding explanation, as well as our imagination, understanding and knowledge.

The word itself comes from the Italian term 'modello', describing a draft or template for a work of art yet to be created. Besides sketches, oil vignettes and maquettes, this also includes architectural models. In the form of a true-to-scale mock-up, architectural prototypes preserve the actual proportions of that which they model, though they differ in their material, which is often easier to work with, lighter in weight, or less expensive. Architectural models therefore illustrate the manner in which mock-ups can be utilized for planning, development and tryouts.

Poul Gernes' Paper Flower has been reconstructed for this Ben Kaufmann Gallery show for the very first time since the original 1977 installation. Concentrically suspended paper sheets form a tent-like space, at the centre of which they converge and terminate in a shape resembling a blossom. The architectural scale model is here inverted and expanded: the gallery space as defined by massive walls is reinterpreted as an almost floating expanse through the lightweight material. Rather than reducing it, the model enlarges the scale, so that the viewer is not placed above it in a controlling and observing fashion, but becomes part of it instead.

With this flower design Gernes returns to a motif he frequently used in his painterly ornamentation of buildings, particularly from the 70s onwards, once he had radically renounced the production of art objects as potential goods. In Paper Flower the two-dimensional blossom structure is transformed into an ornamental space that is as defined by seriality, stylization, symmetry and a lack of narrative as these two-dimensional ornaments. But the attribute Paper Flower first and foremost has in common with the ornaments is the connection created between a pictorial and a non-pictorial reality, as a creative intervention in the world. Paper Flower hence also functions as a model for directly linking the artwork, the recipient and the world, a model which renders the vision of an egalitarian art superseding the production of mere goods projectable, creating its own reality in the

process.

Robert Orchardson's sculpture *The future is certain, give us time to work it out* (2009), by dint of its lightweight materiality and meticulous construction, radiates the aura of a technical prototype or futuristic model. A grid of triangular aluminium panels sharply projects into the space and, owing to the iridescence of the metal surfaces, almost appears disembodied. The clear design has disassociated completely from any functional object, as if the formal elements had been peeled from their function like a skin.

In a suite of works on paper, Orchardson has overprinted nature photographs taken from *National Geographic* magazine with closed geometric forms or filigree lines. Similarly to the sculpture, these reprocessed photographs were inspired by an imaginary, hypothetical architecture, not unlike the dystopias created by the Superstudio group of architects. The black geometric elements partly project into nature like giant monuments, appearing to frame it in all its grandness.

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