

## **PEDRO WIRZ**

*Diplomatic Immunity*

Opening: Thursday, 16. November 2023

Exhibition: 17. November – 13. January 2024

Galerie Nagel Draxler Köln

## **PRESS RELEASE**

The Brazilian-Swiss artist Pedro Wirz, born in 1981 and based in Zurich, questions hierarchical power structures, class privileges, as well as archetypal and immutable social positions with his project, for which he won the 2023 Bally Artist Award.

The installation exhibited at the Nagel Draxler Gallery in Cologne (November 17, 2023 - January 13, 2024) consists of sculptures and several wall reliefs. The 11 busts symbolize figures of authority (king, president, pope, rabbi, etc.) representing various religious, political, or socio-cultural hierarchies. Wirz sees these sculptures, arranged on a circular red carpet, as a kind of exclusive closed circle. The precarious aesthetics of the busts made from recycled materials from the artist's studio become an allegory of the fragility and instability of the systems they represent.

The box-shaped wall reliefs are part of a series that Wirz started in 2019, metaphorically referencing TV screens or smartphones and depicting landscapes occupied by people or ecosystems synchronized by technological interventions.

The installation restricts the movement of visitors, and the busts become obstacles to navigate around. The work addresses the dichotomy between competition and cooperation and questions the significance of a "more sustainable society," often considered and evaluated only from an economic standpoint. "If we want to achieve a more sustainable existence, we must confront the reality and the challenges of coexistence [...] We should not think as individuals but as a species, as inhabitants of this planet, as Earth dwellers, as brothers and sisters destined to coexist side by side and with respect for each other", so Pedro Wirz. The exhibition in the gallery space is an evolution of the presentation at MASI Lugano this summer.

The works from the exhibition will be included in an extensive monograph set to be published next year as a co-production of Kunsthalle Basel and MASI Lugano in the Hatje Cantz Verlag.