

Edition VFO

monotypes shift Part II

Opening: Thursday, December 7 at 6 pm

Exhibition: December 8, 2023 – January 27, 2024

With new works by Ralph Bürgin, Cédric Eisenring, Andrea Heller, Charlotte Herzig, donna Kukama, Izidora I LETHE and Rebekka Steiger

Following the exhibition "MONOTYPES" at the Kunsthalle Zürich, we are pleased to present the follow-up exhibition "monotypes shift". "monotypes shift" explores the theme of print as a conceptual and original means of expression in art production and runs alongside the anniversary exhibition "A unique piece in series" at Kunsthaus Grenchen. The two-part exhibition shows works that were conceived as part of the productions for the previous exhibition at the Kunsthalle Zürich. In the second part, the works in the group show explore figurative and performative positions, as well as artists who work with fabric and ceramics as a medium.

Two monotypes by Ralph Bürgin show declinations of the same motif: a seated male nude. Typical of Bürgin is his stylized treatment of proportions, which often lend his figures a robust and archaic character. Even though the head here is much smaller than the body, everything appears very harmonious. Bürgin often explores the same motif with variations - the present figure also appears in at least two other oil paintings. This continuous exploration of the pose shows how a body can fill a surface or a space. The figures and their poses have a relief-like, almost sculptural form.

Rebekka Steiger's monotypes were created after her residency in Vietnam. The artist is known for her multi-layered landscapes and abstract figures inspired by the traditions of Far Eastern painting. Steiger's painterly approach is spontaneous by nature and finds exciting possibilities in the monotype through an openness to the unpredictable results of the creative printing process. This is also evident in the use of residual colors remaining on the matrix for successive print runs. In the current, newly created works, unrecognizable figures repeatedly appear embedded in monochrome color palettes. Instead of imposing a specific interpretation, the imagination is stimulated to recognize the mysteriousness of what is depicted. The artist used a small monotype to design the anniversary stamp of Edition VFO for Swiss Post 2023.

Cédric Eisenring has produced two paintings made of velvet fabric sewn together. On them we see a figure that was printed on the surface as a woodcut using relief printing. The print is perceptible as an embossing and varies in intensity depending on the perspective. The mythical creature with a baroque wig depicts the figure of a judge lost in thought, who appears to be a phantom and strongly characterizes the monochrome image. Here, too, the mysteriousness and interwoven nature of the protagonists are defined in the artistic play with color and surface. Printmaking in intaglio and relief printing plays a central role in Eisenring's oeuvre, as he uses these primarily as elementary embossing forms in his works.

Izidora LETHE created three works that play with flowing color gradients and strong color accents. The monotypes have both a painterly and performative character. Initially, LETHE explores color as a formal tool and uses the flat, red-toned background as a contrast to the powdery green. While the uniform color gradient was classically created with a printing roller, the green accents are blown color pigments. The performative approach of the "blowout" series lies in this repetitive and physically strenuous act of exhalation. LETHE's works often examine physical presence as well as its formal limitation in space. By determining the composition of the present works through the breath, LETHE simultaneously creates artistic presence and a physical boundary of the body.

donna Kukama is showing a diptych in gold and black titled "amidst all the uncertainty that came with darkness, the stars still recognized us as their own flesh". Whether through writing, drawing, performance or sculpture, Kukama's art can be interpreted as a poetic gesture that explores the

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nuances of time and memory. In her practice, she interweaves fragile and brief moments of "strangeness" in historical, social and political contexts. Her works are to be understood as gestures of poetry with a political intent, questioning existing canons regarding the way we view reality. Her creations symbolize alternative realities in which both the tangible and the intangible merge as substance and text.

Charlotte Herzig presents monotypes in which poetically arranged objects can be seen against a pink background. Herzig's imagery seems to carry the materiality of dreams. The monotypes depict an imaginary, weightless world beyond the rational boundaries of everyday life. The planes and objects found in the works are simultaneously still and in motion, making them both real and ephemeral. They are everyday and inconspicuous signs and forms that allow us to imagine the possibilities of magical worlds.

Andrea Heller has created new works based on her research into the technique of monotype. The process-oriented creative method is based on transferring pigments to clay. Heller then rolls out the clay so that the color mixes and spreads out in ever new structures. The work can be seen as a monotype, painting, object, relief or ceramic. Like Heller's other work, the present pieces are characterized by the clever combination of transparent and colored surfaces that touch and overlap like landscapes.

The exhibition "monotypes shift" examines fundamental questions of painting and printing in relation to the work with individual pieces, which can be seen in groups of works and series. All works are based on the medium of print as they were conceived, painted and then produced as a singular work.

For further information and additional press material, please contact David Khalat
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