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BRETT GINSBURG
Wind, Water, Wood
Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin
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Wind, Water, Wood, Brett Ginsburg's first solo exhibition with the gallery and in Europe, owes its namesake to Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilization*, 1934, a philosophical analysis of the history of technology and its reciprocal relationship to humanity. Wind, water and wood are the elements which, according to Mumford, predicate a machinized society. They allegorize the vacillating relationship between the natural world, industrial development, and in turn, the way in which industrialization dictates the material constitution of society. These raw materials define the eotechnic period, and act as a mold, or forming device, from which the exhibition emerges. Ginsburg raises ideological questions around the ways in which technologies develop and the often unseen systematized codes, standards and considerations that comprise them. Saturated with references to art history, architecture and mechanical imagery, the exhibition acts as a constellation of interconnected parts, unraveling the technical aspects of Ginsburg's research, while materially testifying to the aforementioned paradigm.

Ginsburg pierces the empty volume of the gallery space with nine strands which stretch from floor to ceiling, heightening an awareness of the space and suggesting invisible axes onto which the physical space is plotted. Their position is constellated in relation to a diagram present in Marcel Duchamp's painting, *Network of Stoppages*, 1914, scaled to the footprint of the gallery. The chords, when experienced in real space, function as linear vertical axes, also serve as coordinates of Duchamp's diagram. This reference- embedded into the work yet eclipsed by the dominance of the chords' physical presence, underscores unseen yet omnipresent institutionalized codes, language, and systems. A composition of metal brackets and glass fixtures rest at varying heights, forming horizon lines across the room and directing one's vision to the space in between the artworks. For the center of this composition, Ginsburg repurposes a thermo bulb link, an element that lined the upper ceiling perimeters of the industrial spray booth he previously worked in. This device is installed in spaces where an atmospheric reading tool, such as a smoke detector, does not function due to vapors in the air, and a positive thermally actuated mechanism is required to operate in the event of fire. The metal bracket holds a glass bulb containing a mauve-colored fluid rated at a temperature of 182 °C / 360 °F, which would burst until breaking the bulb into small fragments if the space exceeds this temperature. This micro-explosion would trigger a sprinkler and the whole space would soon afterward be filled by blinding particles which would fully extinguish a fire. This pea-sized bulb would be able to unfold a spectacular scenario, not quite as spectacular as a 9 cm diameter piston, such as the one after which Ginsburg modeled the red and green resin objects in his sculptures allowing the transport of goods and people over thousands of kilometers.

Psychedelic and, to most, illegible compositions intersperse the figural painting in *Wind, Water, Wood*. Among other processes and machinery, the seemingly abstract works in the exhibition depict a combustion chamber within an engine and a compression space. The starting point for *Extracted from a Flow*, 2023 is a research artifact image of flow simulations run on the combustion port, showing the movement of fluids when compressed within the space. This technical imaging which Ginsburg refers to uses fluorescent colors to trace the movements and maximum compression. Contrast fluid visualizes the negative space in fluorescent green. He references a technical application of color coding in his works: primary colors are related to different fluids, coolants, greases and lubricants that allow machinic parts to glide against one another. Secondary and tertiary colors therefore dissolve into the 'in-betweenness,' as the emphasis of negative space obscures information. *Sinuuous Trace*, 2023, a radial of candy colored liquid, also operates within Ginsburg's use of industrialized color theory. His expropriation of the optics and formal aspects of often invisible technical infrastructure renegotiate the boundaries between categories of painting, namely a binary placed on abstraction and figuration. Ginsburg's passage through these canonical categorizations examine a relativism of semiotics, and a paradox in which the same technological mechanisms and systems which are intimately embedded into

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everyday technical devices are also atomized and alienated from humanity through the specialization of labor. The works examine the space between sign and signifier, lingering between the represented object and the means to materialize and make it visible. They create a mode of abstraction through omission: visualizing technical spaces that are withheld from us, or sequestered behind layers of information and thresholds.

A three legged figure, lifted from Marlene Dumas' *The Human Tripod*, 1988, appears in Ginsburg's Multiplier series, emerging repeatedly and in fragments, in a distinctly digital array of glitches. Dumas' *The Human Tripod*, is in itself an interrogation of the function of painting and photography and their relationship with perception. The work employs a reverse anthropomorphization of the human body, transmuting the figure with camera equipment, therefore depreciates the body into a supporting role for a machine. Ginsburg references and manipulates Dumas' figure, employing the document scanner as a blind gestural drawing device for capturing images and surfaces. This technique introduces chance operations that shuffle and destabilize compositions, all the while serving as a visual multiplier of parts that move backward and forward against an image. The gesture of the scan allows for visible movement and the coexistence of increments of time. Thus, Ginsburg differentiates between Dumas' initial reference of the camera and his superimposition of the document scanner, underscoring the glitch, or rather- feature, of its use. These works serve as symptoms or testimonies of certain technological developments, almost like archaeological finds, and engage with the endlessly self referential medium of painting. Through referencing what was already a renegotiation of portraiture- using the figure as a proxy, Ginsburg expands upon this reflexivity of the medium, mimicking the gesticulation of a scanner through analogue means of painting. The figurative reference becomes a motif, which even when stripped of its defining characteristics, is iconicized through its reproduction, present even in its absence.

BRETT GINSBURG (b. 1990), lives and works in New York. He received an MFA in Painting/Printmaking from Yale University (2022), and a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute (2013). His painting and sculpture respond to the vibratory and unseen technical systems that proliferate our surroundings, engaging in the spatial navigation of infrastructural, automotive, and ecological sites. Ginsburg's work contemplates the influence of entomology and evolutionary biology on technological progress. By inter-scaling visual information from first hand encounters and research artifacts, his work serves as an abstract proposition for questioning and perception, rather than a definitive thesis. Ginsburg's interests also encompass imaging through machines, microscopes, scanners and casting simulation technologies to consider the internal and engineered complexities of his subjects. By adapting the indexical processes of mold-making and mono-printing, he compresses industrial materials and diverse modes of representation into singular picture planes. This technique creates subtle interferences and adds pictorial tension, reflecting the simultaneity that characterizes our attention-driven society.

Ginsburg's work has been shown in exhibitions at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin (2023); Anonymous Gallery, New York (2023); Lo Brutto Stahl, Paris (2023); Jeffrey Deitch, New York (2022); Below Grand, New York (2022); Green Hall Gallery, New Haven (2022); The Bunker West, Santa Monica Mountains (2020); and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2014).