

Jakob Kolding: Shadow Architectures

Opening: Thursday, 18th January 2024, 7–9 pm

Duration: 19th January until 24th February 2024

Galerie Martin Janda is pleased to present Jakob Kolding's latest solo exhibition, *Shadow Architectures*, from 19th January until 24th February 2024.

Exploring Kolding's longstanding interest in architecture and built spaces as contested sites of legacies, ideals, histories, power, politics and use, the exhibition touches upon a number of 20th century architects and architectures with a Viennese or Austrian connection.

Using his preferred tools of cut and paste, Kolding revisits buildings and archival materials, layering and deconstructing them to reveal the intricacies of multiple readings.

In the early stages of research in preparation for the exhibition, Kolding searched “are there any Neutra buildings in Austria?” in reference to the iconic modernist architect Richard Neutra. In response, Google suggested the alternative “did you mean: are there any *neutral* buildings in Austria?” This comically dark twist to the original question ironically circumvents the ongoing challenge to any idea of neutrality of architecture and urban space in Kolding's practice, and as such forms the basis for the exhibition.

In a series of works titled after Google's suggestion, the collages are composed of only two elements—one from a building by Richard Neutra and one from a building by Roland Rainer. As both Neutra and Rainer worked within a modernist tradition, the collages can at first glance appear to be a single, unified space—a space created by one architect. This effect is echoed by the removal of all contextual elements, leaving the collaged spaces to exist on their own, floating in a “neutrality” of nothingness.

The seductive ease of Kolding's cuts betrays an erasure that is central to the works and to the exhibition. The pulsing, underlying current of tension that comes through the collages derives from what has been omitted or obscured, from what is not there—from what lies in the shadows.

In the work *Castles in the Air*, Kolding references the famous architectural models of Konrad Wachsmann—utopian dreams in themselves of a non-hierarchical, open-use and, in theory, eternal building structure of connectivity. Turned in on itself, the collaged structure is punctuated by a photo credit belonging to the original image of the models which Wachsmann created for the US Air Force, as Kolding eloquently reminds us of the reality, function and financing that underpins buildings and architectural projects.

The influence of Wachsmann shows itself in the practice of Hans Hollein and markedly in his “non-physical environments” which go one step further in fully detaching themselves from what we consider a building environment. Kolding references two projects by Hollein in works that—in the spirit of Hollein himself, as well as contemporaries such as Haus-Rucker-Co and Missing Link—balance between the

non-physical, the counter-cultural and consumer products that continue to dominate our domestic and urban context. An everyday life that exists between science fiction and furniture companies.

Kolding's interest in the uses of architecture and the contested spaces of ideologies and the everyday is present throughout the exhibition. *Shadow Architectures* revisits well-known histories and myths of the near future in an exercise of disintegrated pattern recognition.

Jakob Kolding, 1971 born in Albertslund (DK), lives and works in Berlin (DE).