

Nora Schultz's work examines the genesis of pictorial representation and production as an artistic dynamic. She is less interested in the finished work than in how images and objects come into being and in the physical traces that process leaves behind. The actualities of production accordingly play a central role in her prints, printing machines, installations, and performances; process always remains legible.

Nora Schultz's show is the first solo exhibition to occupy the lower as well as the temporary upper floor at Portikus. In the present show, which comes after her participation in the group show *Flaca* last year, Nora Schultz continues to address the two floors, which could not be any more different in terms of architecture, atmosphere, and acoustics, taking her engagement with the spatial situation to a new level. Even the two-part title of her exhibition, *Portikus Printing Plant and Portikus Sounds*, points to the work's spatial and acoustic superimposition responsive to the divided exhibition space. The artist uses this duality to develop parallel production cycles composed of sculptural sound works and printing installations that repeatedly intersect over the course of the show.

In the downstairs gallery, a "microphone sculpture" is suspended from the ceiling. A microphone, a dictaphone, and a speaker are mounted in delicate balance on a pole that, like the long hand of a watch, rotates through the room in full circles. Not unlike the needle of a gauge, the device explores, measures, and records the acoustic activity in the room and renders it in the form of a simultaneous multidimensional spatial scan. In preparation for the exhibition, Nora Schultz made several "field recordings"—to be played in the exhibition in parallel with the live recording—capturing noises from Frankfurt's metropolitan spaces, the Maininsel, and Portikus's urban environment, as well as sound fragments from movies, television, and radio. The artist thus subtly confronts different realities, as exemplified by two contrasting views of Portikus: in one direction, there is the sprawling vegetation that covers the island in the summer; in the other, the bridge groaning under too much traffic and the construction site of the new European Central Bank tower. The sound represents her attempt to bring the outside "reality" into the interior of the institution, conveying within this confined space a form of authenticity.

The floating microphone registers a continuous sonic fabric composed of the playback sounds and other noises produced during the setup and opening of the show and the performances in the exhibition room. These "mega-uploads," as the artist calls them, are subsequently used for the printing installation *Portikus Printing Plant* and during Schultz's two performances. The noise produced by the printing processes is conversely fed back into the sound construction.

Taking the idea of doubling one step further, the multipart printing plant primarily serves to print

images of all objects in the exhibition, visualizing them in a new dimension. With the printing process, which involves materials such as metal, wood, synthetic foam, plastics, and paint, Nora Schultz refers to a primitive writing technique in which ideas are set down or pictured directly as they come to mind. The artist examines the act of translation that such a process of visualization entails by treating the inserted ceiling as a permeable membrane; her extensive installation is the first work to use the phenomenon of the divided room in a concrete and physical manner. She has drilled holes into the ceiling, mounted funnels, and cut openings which the beholder can look through. The communication this establishes between the two rooms plays an active role, both during the preparations for the exhibition and in her performances. A machine-like and indissoluble rotation builds between the printing activity flowing downward, the ambient noise filtering upward, and the simultaneous sound uploads. Like a rattling multi-floor (and extremely high-capacity) newspaper printing installation, Nora Schultz's "Portikus Machine" produces images, objects, colors and sounds that construct a language, which takes on new dimensions as it undergoes perpetual transformation.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication. Nora Schultz has also developed an artist's edition for the Portikus.

Performances: June 2, 4pm and July 13, 7pm

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