

# REMO STOLLER

*Plethóra*

30.08.–19.10.2024

The point of departure for Remo Stoller's work is his collection of image- and text-based documents of various origins: images that chronicle his own childhood and youth, illustrations from antiquarian books, or materials found in media, advertising, and pop culture. He is interested in narratives, image-generating industrial processes, the social zeitgeist, and the associated sense of unease inscribed in such media creations. Through his means of artistic investigation and an affirmed systematic approach, Remo Stoller creates a translation of the original images and a sense of distance to them. At the same time, it is an attempt to reappropriate a realm of lived experiences and to reinterpret given narratives in a fable-like manner.

At Stadtgalerie Bern, in his largest solo exhibition to date, he draws from this vast trove of material to create a new video work, objects, and installations that shed light on the complex interplay between image, image support, and their technical means of reproduction.

The title of Remo Stoller's exhibition, *Plethóra*, is a reference to the mass of media images we are confronted with on a daily basis. Borrowed from the Greek, *Plethóra* means "abundance" or "overabundance." Remo Stoller thus describes the attempt to grasp the complexity of the world through language and images—an endeavor that is only ever fragmentary, attests to a momentary impulse to take stock in things, and, over time, seemingly becomes questionable and deserving of critique.

## Room 1

In *Die Garfield Revue, 1986*, Remo Stoller presents a selection of antiquarian editions of an anthology of Garfield comic strips, which was published in German translation in 1986. The illustrated comics drawn by Jim Davis are one of the most popular and best-selling publications of the time. Stoller removes them from their ordinary use, drawing attention to the book itself as object: What households do the editions likely come from and what impact did they have on their respective owners? What traces did the latter leave on the individual covers? What memories are preserved

between the covers of the books? The books are presented in a white sprayed-painted aluminum frame, reminiscent of displays from archives or museum collections. Through this framing, the books function as artifacts of a particular realm of lived experiences and are a potential starting point for more detailed examination.

*Engine* might depict the inner workings of a machine and evokes associations with self-assembly kits and wooden toys. A human figure appears to be strapped into a crude apparatus made of brightly painted blocks, presses, and gears. This suggests mechanical movement and a certain functionality that is not easily deciphered. *Engine* is the outcome of Remo Stoller's fascination with physically impossible constructions such as the perpetual motion machine and the cultural history of related contrivances. The object presented in the exhibition represents Stoller's playful exploration of aspects such as efficacy and self-empowerment in relation to his own artistic practice.

## Room 2

In the *Poster Shop* series of works, Remo Stoller has assembled a variety of image objects stemming from his preoccupation with tales of adventure, fantasy, and discovery from his childhood and youth. His interests here lie in fantasy imagery, narrative spaces, and the illustrative representational conventions of these media creations. Painted, wooden-panel image supports recall blank books covered with outlined groups of figures, comic characters, book titles, or proverbs. Stoller mechanically etches the drawings and lettering directly into the wet paint. This translation, seemingly cumbersome at first glance, is an attempt to distance himself from the source material and to trace an image culture that has shaped the artist: how is a certain way of viewing the world represented in images and what place do these images, in turn, occupy in one's inner reality? Stoller addresses the interconnectedness of image, image support, and display structure by embedding the objects like props into wall-mounted shelves and presentation stands. These stage-like structures are modeled on the interiors of living rooms or displays in book-stores and libraries. Stoller contrasts the domestic with the will to conquer that is intrinsic to the literary source works; the homely appearance cannot mask the sense of unease that the depictions at times evoke.

The wall work *Ex Libris* opens up another stage-like pictorial space. The silhouettes, machined out of plastic, are staggered spatially and mounted with hanging elements. Remo Stoller takes children's wardrobes illustrated with figures as his starting point; the graphic image element is reminiscent of an embossed cover motif. Remo Stoller sees the object as a tangible means for facilitating the envisioned transition into narrative space.

*SJW, 1961* is from the same series of works as *Die Garfield-Review, 1986*. Since 1931, the booklets for promoting reading have been published by the Schweizer Jugendschriftwerk; these are distributed in schools and still influence generations of children and young people to this day. The selection consists of SJW issues from the 1960s that largely conveyed conservative and socially accepted values: featured are local history topics, technological developments, fairy tales, and travelogues. In the booklets, explorers, adventurers, and researchers set off for "foreign" lands and share their experiences—often with a superior, Eurocentric, and colonialist tone. Stoller purposely only shows the backsides of the booklets in order not to reproduce the problematic content. The cover pages are printed with the logo of the time and offer insights into the design conventions and production technologies in use then; content information is not shown.

In *A Song of Ice and Fire*, Remo Stoller extracts English terms from various contexts and relates them to one another in new ways. The selection of words evokes associations with leisure culture and fantasy worlds; in sequence, the terms take on the quality of a list or glossary. The oversized, hand-drawn letters recall analogue advertising lettering; the complex construction suggests a moving montage and potential rearrangement of individual letters. The specific choice of language, font, and color creates a typeface that prompts reflection on the interplay of design and meaning, medium and message.

### Room 3

The video animation *Printing (CGAxis Computer Multifunction Printer)* presents a digital printer spitting out images every minute in a seemingly endless loop. These continue to pile up in a never-overflowing output tray, while the lighting, color, and surface texture of the device vary significantly. Printer noises mix with pop songs audible in the background and with everyday sounds from an invisible environment, creating a pulsating

audiotrack and further enhancing the seductive visual aesthetic. The printer, a symbolic object for the age of digital reproducibility, is a mere simulation—for the price of a standard printer, Stoller acquired the digital data to create a computer-generated animation of a printer. Remo Stoller thus pushes to the point of absurdity the question of what is original and what is reproduction, what is an image and what is an imaging process. Are the images shown merely to demonstrate the printing process or is it about the meanings inscribed in the images? Stoller creates an experimental setup that reveals the multitude of perspectives that can be taken relative to what is shown: this includes the level of the various image types and their technical reproduction—from the selection of manual prints to scans of book covers, to photographed game packaging and digital renderings. But it also involves the staging/presentation of the image material, which ranges from stock photos to color charts to illustrations and advertising images. In addition, there is the clearly defined duration of image viewing, which gives our attention a pace, as well as the ostensible camera, whose slight movements and changes in focus draw our attention to it.

3D Animation: Simon Tschachtli  
Sound Design: Samuel Baur  
Audio Recordings: Robert Aeberhard

## *Publication*

Remo Stoller's artistic publication *ORINOKO* accompanies the exhibition. It is based on the idea of a coloring book and features around eighty b/w illustrations. These are translations of motifs from Stoller's collection of images on the theme of travelogues and adventure stories. Stoller uses a specially developed drawing machine to translate these into felt-tip pen drawings that appear to have been drawn by hand. This abstracts the original images in a stencil-like manner, exposing their often-stereotypical constellations of figures and visual messages. Interspersed with fictitious flyers for future exhibitions, the artist's own artwork is also fictionalized. The artist inscribes himself in the realms of his imagery, appropriating these in both a critical and playful way.

## *Events*

Opening  
29.08.2024, 6 pm

Guided tour with Remo Stoller and Eva-Maria Knüsel  
18.09.2024, 7 pm

Guided tour with translation in sign language  
17.10.2024, 6 pm

## *Team*

Direction: Eva-Maria Knüsel (from August 2024),  
Luca Beeler (until July 2024)  
Administration: Andrea Bracher  
Exhibition technique: Verena Dietze  
Exhibition support: Christoph Studer, Urslé von Mathilde  
Graphic design: Kornhaus Atelier  
Audio and video support: Victoria Holdt & Thalles Piaget

## *Remo Stoller thanks to*

Merja und Helena Rinderli, Nadja, Margrit, Erwin and Urs Stoller, Adrian Remund, Céline Beyeler

Stadtgalerie  
PROGR  
Waisenhausplatz 30  
3011 Bern  
stadtgalerie@bern.ch  
www.stadtgalerie.ch

Opening hours:  
Wednesday to Friday  
2–6 pm  
Saturday  
12 am–4 pm

The exhibition and publication are generously supported by the Werner Stiftung.

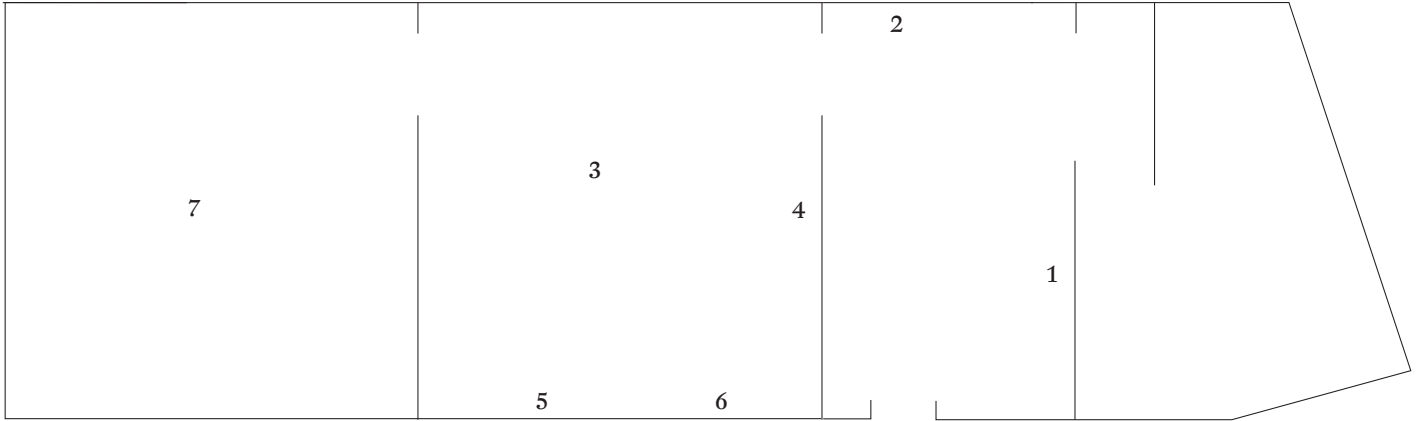


**SWISSLOS**  
Kultur Kanton Bern

# REMO STOLLER

## *Plethóra*

30.08.–19.10.2024



1  
*Die Garfield Revue, 1986*  
Metal, antiquarian books  
120 x 160 x 20 cm  
2024

2  
*Engine*  
Wood, lacquer paint  
60 x 50 x 20 cm  
2024

3  
*Poster Shop*  
Wood, lacquer paint, metal  
Grösse variabel  
2024

4  
*Ex Libris*  
Plastic, metal  
180 x 220 x 14 cm  
2024

5  
*A Song of Ice and Fire*  
plastic, wood  
200 x 340 x 16 cm  
2024

6  
*SÿW, 1961*  
Metal, antiquarian books  
28 x 43 x 6 cm  
2024

7  
*Printing (CG.Axis Computer  
Multifunction Printer)*  
Videoinstallation,  
5-channel-sound, 20 min  
2024