

What remains of a naturalist

Richard Frater

Exhibition

10 Dec 2023 – 12 May 2024

Screening: 27 Apr 2024, 8pm

Winter inaugurates the search for partners and courtships amongst raptors anticipating spring and a new breeding season. For this time, Richard Frater is designing a site-responsive structure at the ruin, adapted to local raptors that he had been observing onsite over the spring and summer.

In conjunction, the artist presents a comparative video-study that studies the shrinking and expanding territorial ranges of avian species—whether into increasingly remote and hostile environments or into urban expansion—as two unsettling threads of the same conservation reality today. The temporal differences touches on Frater’s own experiences of birdwatching and avian conservation. On one timeline, raptors inhabit the cliff-like skysrise buildings surrounding the Klosterruine complex. On the other timeline, it is summer in Aotearoa. There are traps being monitored along trails in the Ruahine Ranges of Aoteroa, New Zealand, where whio (Blue mountain duck), a fast-flowing river species, threatened and endemic, are reported to remain.

Within the frame of the exhibition, Frater’s video study is joined by one more screening event on April 27. In “Nicky’s conversion”, Frater records his own biological father’s reflections of their trans-identity and gender journey. Here, too, dominant notions of biological determinism, environmental and cultural constructs are combated, however this time through an anthropological moderation of such questions.

klosterruine berlin

Richard Frater graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Arts from the Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland, in 2006, followed by a Master of Fine Arts from Glasgow School of Art in 2012. Significant solo exhibitions include: *Off season*, Kunstverein München, Munich (2023); *Common Birds*, Oracle, Berlin (2018); *Compound series*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2017) and *Living Cities 2011-*, Adam Art Gallery Te Pataka Toi, Wellington (2015). Frater's work has also been included in international exhibitions including: *Image Ecology*, C/O Berlin (2023); *Im Volksgarten*, Kunsthhaus Glarus, Switzerland (2020); *Farewell Photography*, Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie, Mannheim (2017); *Umwelt Inversion*, Galerie Conradi, Hamburg (2016) and *Let's Destroy the Earth but Keep Humans*, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich (2014). In 2020 Frater was awarded the Parehuia Artist's Residency at McCahon House, Titirangi. Richard Frater lives and works in Berlin.

List of works

Split nest

2023

Dimensions variable

Bricks, mortar, wood, iron, sand, pigment

whio whio

Manawatu/Whanganui, Dec 2020 - Jan 2021

HD video & audio, 10min

Turmfalke

Berlin Mitte, Juni - Juli 2023

HD video & audio, 10min

*Editor note: Vergleichende Videobeobachtungen von zwei Vogelarten und ihren jeweiligen Lebensräumen

HD video & audio, 20min