

In the exhibition '*Protocols*', visitors were able to familiarize with a series of model designs of the houses by Jean-Pascal Flavien. The artist devises and constructs fantastical houses, that interrogate and expand popular ideas about the role and use of architecture.

His constructions don't comply with any building norms, instead turning them on their head. He is interested in states of being, feelings and dreams, as well as surprising situations and actions that are called forth by his buildings. Literary quotes and narratives are woven into his designs as fictional elements.

So far, Flavien has been able to realise eight houses out of the extensive collection of his designs, which were exhibited in an exterior space. In 2018, we will have the opportunity to erect the 'house with things behind' from the 'short story houses' series in the hall of the Heidelberger Kunstverein. A house that, through its open structure – it does not envisage a roof or back wall – investigates the limits between sculpture, architecture and installation, particularly between the work and the exhibition space.

As with all models of the 'short story houses', the 'house with things behind' also includes a short story by the artist. The stories deal with coexistence, and the dialogue between friends, couples or different living beings amongst other things. It also speaks of cohabitation or the neighbourly ignorance of two environments that do not recognise one another at all.

But they are also reflections on his own design work. The texts create poetic main themes for the houses, in which inside and outside, physical and psychic space overlap and are juxtaposed.

The 'house with things behind' includes a storage space behind the lightblue facade. This is where raw materials used for cladding and isolation can be found. With minimal gestures, Flavien creates a concentration of the sensual qualities of the materials. Piled next to the brittleness of steel wool are leather scraps and wool fibres. In the middle of this unslaughtered wealth of materials are improvised constructions: a tent made of cotton wool panels serves as a roof over one's head which the three-sided facade house doesn't appear to predict. Conversely, there are fenced off exit areas that designate the outside.

In Flavien's short story, the friends Baku and Alexis live in front and behind the house: one is concerned with maintaining the facade and the outdoor area – revelling in the sky-blue and the sun – whilst the other spends his time sorting out and lending form to the things in storage and behind the house. Both are occupied with the upkeep of the house, which gives each of them a particular

function, and divides their movement radius into 'in front' and 'behind'. They interact with the house and are simultaneously actors in the mise-en-scène of the house.

This scenario also reveals itself to the visitors who experience the house from different perspectives. Though a distanced outside view is possible, the fusing of the house with its outside areas, and the exhibition space, involves the viewer in the surrounding composition. In the same way, the fixed categories of inside and outside are shifted. Yet this does not involve spatial expansion alone. Rather, the common ideas surrounding spaces and their functions are up for debate.

The ideas laid out by the model of the 'house with things behind' unfold with extensive potential in the hall of the Heidelberger Kunstverein: the house opens up individual experiences on differing levels for each of the visitors. It is a counterpart which demands new exchanges and new perspectives, fostering reflections on constructed environments and living spaces.

Jean-Pascal Flavien's houses develop during a long process, which is often incited by observation, text, objects, an idea or a feeling. Sketching, text and the model are artistic means for the development of a design and are the preliminary stage to the house, which is inhabited and enacted as a building.

In a series of artist books, Flavien presents these intertwining processes. With progressive development towards the house that is constructed to scale, the aspects of the houses gain shape: details such as clothing and furniture design or the arrangement of the exterior is developed. Finally, the house becomes the setting for various actions. The construction of the house is thus not the culmination, but a highlight in an ongoing process.

Jean-Pascal Flavien was born in 1971 in Le Mans, France. He studied Fine Arts in Rennes, Bologna, Lorient, and participated in the Graduate Program of the University of California, Los Angeles. The artist lives and works in Berlin.

Flavien's recent solo exhibitions include: *dancers sleeping inside a building*, Les Ateliers de Rennes – Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Musée de la Danse, Rennes (2016); *folding house (to be continued)*, NMNM – Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2016); *folding house*, NMNM – Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2015); *statement house (temporary title)*, RCA, London (2015); *night house at daytime, textes de nuit*, Angle Art Contemporain, Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux (2013); *Cinonema, no drama cinema*, South London Gallery, London (2012); *breathing house, la maison respire*, Parc Saint Léger, Centre d'art contemporain, Pougues-les-Eaux (2012); *Jean-Pascal*

*Flavien*, Kunstverein, Langenhagen (2012), and *PLAY, HEDAH*/Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht (2011).

Recent group exhibitions include: *The Way We Perform Now*, Ujazdowski Castle – Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw (2017); *Meeting Points 8*, Beirut Art Center, Beirut (2017); *Variable Dimensions – Artists and Architecture*, MAAT, Lisbon (2017); *The House of Dust* by Alison Knowles, The James Gallery, New York (2016); *Jump*, CAC Brétigny – Centre d'Art Contemporain, Brétigny-sur-Orge (2016); *L'Esprit du Bauhaus*, Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris (2016); *De toi à la surface*, Le Plateau – FRAC Ile-de-France, Paris (2016); *La collection des objets que l'on utilise sans les toucher*, CNEAI, Chatou (2015); *All that falls*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014); *Was Modelle können*, Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen (2014).

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