

Lin Olschowka: Copy of a Wall

Becoming is always in between, always in transition.¹ Perhaps an image can be located precisely here: not where something is fixed, but where it has not yet been decided. Between one state and the next, between what becomes visible and what remains concealed. In the solo exhibition *Copy of a Wall* by Lin Olschowka at Kunstverein Friedrichshafen, the painter's works unfold within such in-between spaces: between image and object, between sacred iconography and everyday aesthetics, and between reality and representation. What interests the artist most are the original, the copy, and the moment of transition from one to the other: when do images come into being, and what alters their function in moments of transfer?

The two nearly identical self-portraits in front of the chalk cliffs on Rügen initially appear calm and familiar. A figure stands in the foreground of the landscape, her gaze lowered, the horizon open. The scene recalls a classical pictorial tradition in art history in which sacred experiences of nature and romantic, subjective sensation are central. Yet in *Jailed First 1* and *Jailed First 2*, this familiarity begins to tip. Through repetition, Olschowka undermines the claim to uniqueness; the self-portrait loses its status as a singular expression and becomes part of an ostensibly serial order. At the same time, the artist turns the figure away from contemplative observation of the sea toward the contemplation of something that remains hidden from the viewer outside the image. The aura of the original thus no longer appears as an immutable quality, but as something fragile that changes in the process of reproduction.²

Unlike the classical diagnosis of loss, however, repetition is understood here as something productive: originality does not emerge in spite of the copy, but rather through it. This becomes especially evident in the medium of painting. No image is ever entirely identical to another, yet its meaning arises in comparison, in minimal difference and in the distance that separates and simultaneously connects them. A mirror in the space intensifies this movement. It is not a passive medium of reflection; it opens up a wall and renders it permeable. Reality and representation begin to overlap, and the exhibition space itself becomes a threshold. Through this repetition and overlay, the image also loses its stability. The subject no longer appears as an autonomous origin but becomes part of a visual circulation. Art history, self-image, and contemporary visual worlds interlock, just as in the image "the present is the threshold where the future (horizon) turns into the past."³

This logic continues in the works *Mäuseloch 1*, *Mäuseloch 2*, and *Get-together*. The mouse hole alters scale and subverts hierarchies and systems of order. Simone Martini's angel alongside Jerry the mouse: Olschowka shows the threshold between divine and earthly spheres by overlaying times, styles, and subject positions. What is perceived as real depends on context, scale, and viewpoint. This attitude is also evident in the work *S 285/1*. The canvas adopts exactly the dimensions of an existing table by Marcel Breuer. In the exhibition space, the actual table is also present, not as a work of art, but as a real object. Object and representation once again encounter one another without a clear hierarchy.

In *Copy of a Wall*, nothing appears as a linear sequence, even though the exhibition presents itself with clarity. Repetition, displacement, quotation, and transfer are strategies of opening in Lin Olschowka's practice. Perhaps this is precisely the position of her work: not in fixing or holding fast, but in becoming permeable.

Lin Olschowka, born 1995 in Münsterlingen (CH), is a painter living and working in Karlsruhe (DE). She holds a master's degree from the Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe. Recent exhibitions include Liste Art Fair Basel 2025 with Windhager von Kaenel; Meyer

Riegger, Karlsruhe; Rosgartenmuseum, Konstanz; Hamlet, Zurich; and Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen.

Footnotes

1. Gilles Deleuze / Félix Guattari: *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated from the French by Gabriele Ricke and Ronald Voullié, Berlin: Merve Verlag, 1992.
2. Walter Benjamin: *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, in: *Collected Writings*, Vol. I.2, edited by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1974, pp. 471–508.
3. Lin Olschowka on *Jailed First 1* and *Jailed First 2*, January 8, 2026.