

Mittel und Wege
10.05—06.06.26

Duo show by Jeanne Tara & Mathias C Pfund
Curated by Victor Sala

Milieu – Münstergasse 6, 3011 Bern

FOREWORD

This collaboration began in 2024, during my mentorship within the Bachelor in Visual Communication at HKB (Bern). Having a stronger affinity with the field of visual arts, I decided to invite two *young-yet-established* artists to follow my diploma project — this diverged from the expectations expressed by the graphic design department, but made sense in relation to my practice at the time — as their practices resonated with my interests and intersected with certain aspects of my research.

At the end of these exchanges, we became friends. As I was then deepening my curatorial practice, the idea of a duo show between their two practices seemed highly relevant and made complete sense as a curatorial proposition.

This is why, shortly after the mentorship, we decided to create something together and then brought the project into being. We emphasized a caring, horizontal, and respectful collaboration in developing the exhibition; the choice of theme, the production of the works, communication, funding, etc.

“Mittel und Wege” is an exhibition taking place at Münstergasse 6, within the current art space Milieu, which succeeds the activities of the galleries Francesca Pia and Lydia Megert; it is therefore situated within a rich cultural context, active since 1973, and proposes a situated reflection nourished by the history and multiple uses of the space.

Further exploring the theme of exhibition devices, the project presented at Milieu proposes a play with the elements accompanying artworks — space, plinths, light, architecture, labels — considering them no longer as mere secondary elements, but as active forms participating in the construction of meaning.

These devices are usually designed to remain invisible and to foreground the exhibits in art spaces, museums, or institutions. Reduced to essentials in terms of form and featuring neutral colours, they are multifunctional and unobtrusive. Yet they remain present in the way we apprehend artworks and artists’ intentions.

The exhibition “Mittel und Wege,” translated as *means and methods*, proposes a reflection on display devices and their role in the development of exhibitions. Here, they are reinterpreted and brought to the forefront. Understood as a “way of showing,” they become object-sites of experience accompanying the viewers.

The artistic propositions materialize — or dematerialize — within the space, highlighting the essence of the site, its architecture, and its history. They reuse pre-existing structures and constitute a new state between reality and fiction.

A forensic-police atmosphere emerges, a crime scene or perhaps the representation of a *camera obscura* — it is not entirely clear; in any case, something seems to be in the process of being revealed. The electrical system has been tampered with, visible through the exposed cables. Images are vaguely perceptible; a newsletter and photographs of exhibitions. Models of various materialities are present throughout the space, allowing us to imagine the very place in which we stand. Some evoke ruins or vestiges, others resemble a scan of the site. Finally, the basement has been used to present an archive file whose content remains unreadable — the red light does not allow the printed pages to be read.

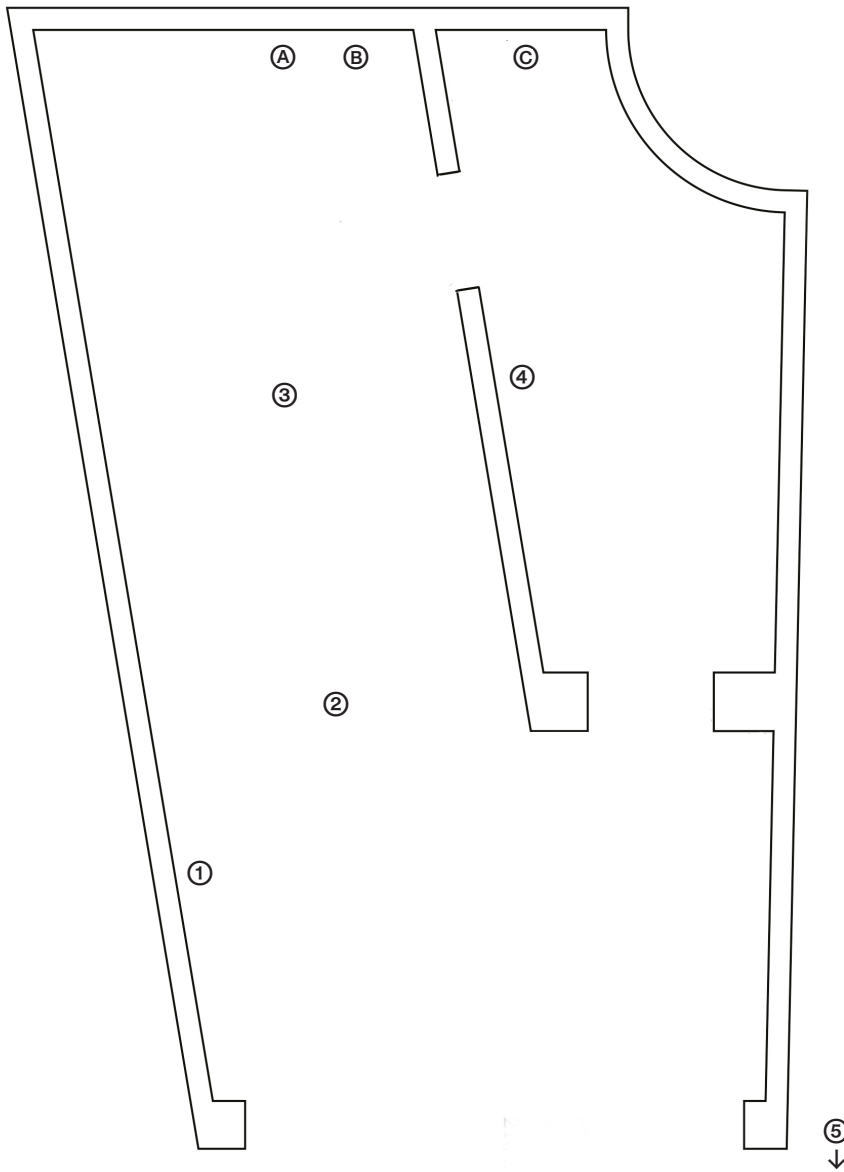
The model-objects are reused as a narrative method, emphasizing temporal and spatial aspects. Commonly used as tools for reflection, such as future projections or reconstructions of the past, they also propose a *mise en abyme* of the viewer within the space in the present moment. The proposition of these model-objects notably seeks to draw attention to the space — to show emptiness, to materialize space, and to offer an imprint of the site.

The reconfiguration of the lighting using Milieu's luminaires requalifies the space. The use of ultraviolet fluorescent tubes brings forth images drawn from the history of the venue.

Then, the exhibition extends into the basement, a non-place by default, a space of storage, archiving, and memory. Opening this space to the public tends to make the site speak and to highlight invisible details. Inside, a red light — evoking the safelights of photographic darkrooms — renders the content of the documents invisible here. Although the logics are inverted in comparison with those of the main room, the same regime of visibility governs both installations.

The exhibition invites viewers to observe the workings of a system, analyze its components, and question the norms and modes of consumption induced by these devices. The exhibition thus proposes an in-situ experience that plays with the codes of contemporary display, interrogates their meaning, and places their role in accompanying artworks under tension.

Victor Sala :-)



- ① *If walls had ears*, 2026
Jeanne Tara
160 x 120 x 0.5 cm
latex
- ② *Unica Sede*, 2026
Mathias C Pfund
13 Blacklight fluorescent tubes
36W, crocodile clips, T8 clips,
electrical cables, 3 white digital
prints on Lessebo Smooth Bright
300 g/m² paper DIN A4, label maker
tape.
- ③ *Milieux*, 2026
Jeanne Tara
62 x 40 x 60 cm
wood, pexiglas
- ④ *Breathing Breezing*, 2026
Jeanne Tara
7 x 13 x 18 cm
plaster
- ⑤ *Unica Sede (basement)*, 2026
Mathias C Pfund
Red safelight bulb, archive box,
red risograph prints on paper in DIN
A4 format, label maker tape.

Ⓐ Retouched photographic reproduction of the group exhibition No Joke at Milieu from February 1 to March 7, 2020; Lorenza Longhi, Improved Accuracies, 2020 [6 fluorescent tubes welded together in pairs, argon gas, transformer]. Photographic credit: Claude Barrault.

Ⓑ Retouched photographic reproduction of the exhibition Vesica Piscis by Terry Fox, held from February 15 to April 5, 1997; details of the lighting installation.

Ⓒ Retouched screenshot taken from the website of Stephen Zilkens, insurance broker; fragment of the newsletter KOBEL'S ART WEEKLY 44, 2025, written by Stefan Kobel and published online on October 27, 2025.



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