

ACTINISM

Anouk

2.10.2020 – 01.11.2020

Opening 1 October, 5 - 10pm

LONGTANG

Hagenholzerstrasse 106
8050 Zürich

office@longtang.life
www.longtang.life

Monday to Friday 10 am to 3
currently by appointment

Longtang is pleased to present the first comprehensive solo exhibition of the Bernese artist Anouk. Her work includes photographic and sculptural works. The exhibition divides several groups of works according to their form and realization.

The photographs of leaves titled „Blätter“ (Leaves) are taken analog. The negatives are handprinted by the artist in the darkroom. In her printing method she influences the imaging light beam manually. This results in individual pictures in baryta paper, which are framed with specific frames. Anouk photographs with 35mm film, medium format and large format cameras.

Anouk combines the leaves with sculptures made of aluminum and silver, titled „Visors“. These wall objects consist of two parts: a mounting support and the curved metal piece. The individual parts are composed of pressed and drawn metal which Anouk embosses, mills, files, grinds and polishes.

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LIST OF WORKS

Foyer:

Visor I, 2019

aluminum

Untitled , 2020

gold toned silver gelatin print , framed

Untitled (horizontal) , 2020

gold toned silver gelatin print , framed

Blatt, 2019

silver gelatin print, framed

Kitchen:

Blatt, 2019

silver gelatin print ,framed

Room 1:

Blätter, 2019 - 2020

silver gelatin prints, framed

entry Room 2:

two Visors, 2020

aluminum

Room 2:

six Visors, 2020

aluminum, silver

Blatt, 2019

silver gelatin print, framed

corridor:

Blatt, 2020

colored silver gelatin print, framed

Visor, 2020

silver, brass

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Federico Nicolao

The gaze is a desire without measure.

Its progress encircles the world like a ghost, creating images. Sculptures for a vision, devices for a face, Anouk's objects, instead of being confined to making use of any utility, instead of being built around a necessity or function of use, open the body that observes them entirely to the sensation of being seen. So much are we impelled to this singular gaze by the nature of their very existence, that we realise we have been connected by their bias with a gaze that unmask. Are we the invisible object of this gaze or the artist, almost blinded by the joy of being open in turn to the test of sight, defends and protects us from it?

Where the brilliance reveals something of the order of a withdrawal, playing on the full and the empty, linking the visible to the invisible, these sculptures question our capacity to abandon ourselves to a limit, to suppress through our gaze the distance between bodies. It is in this sense, it seems to me, that it is appropriate to take seriously what our soul feels looking at these useless machines that seem to be designed by a celestial goldsmith, slowly polished by the firm sensations of agile gestures... it is known the artist has eyes to touch, hands to see.

And in the same way that in front of everything that seems vague and undefined in a landscape we know a joy, these sculptures end up showing and celebrating what we don't see, at the moment when our attention defines it. All certainty is lacking and the expectation grows.

What happens when an image becomes the point of contact between the eye and the world? It happens that the whole body opens itself to the many possibilities that pass through it - the impulses, those gods and goddesses that invent and transport us, through which we receive novelty and grace.

Attentive, however, to the grip of error, proceeding to take stock of the immediate and what is distant in the imagination and memory, the photographer claims to be in an almost primitive alternation: between gathering and hunting, on the one hand (when she was younger she filmed herself perched on a tree in a dazzling self-portrait or built bait sculptures to get in touch with animal dynamics), and, on the other hand, the accumulation, conservation and treatment of everything she happens to find in her experiments and explorations.

Maintaining a close relationship with flora, passionate about the idea of reconsidering the scales and dimensions of reality with the help of trees, to let them impose themselves with their share of necessity, each time something takes shape before her eyes, Anouk seeks to offer and share through photography a form of measurement or agreement to sensations.

Something nevertheless sends her back, unceasingly, since she is free, to the systems of reading of reality which are established almost since childhood, as soon as watching for the light, on the one hand means to put itself in search of surprise but on the other hand to let mature the desire to hide.

A slow work of choice is inaugurated, the pure intelligence of the form alternates with the admitted risk of invention. The taste is refined and changes over time, evolves.

It is first of all, very simply, an intelligence of evolution that the photographer exerts, when what rises sublime from the fear of disappearance is displayed in an electric red depth and withdraws little by little from its invisibility, in the darkroom. In this way, an image in time is fixed both in the shooting and in its development. This image, of which we, as spectators, will be the motive and the revealer, has not yet appeared until Anouk practices and cherishes it, even when she hardly shows it at all.

With memory as her compass and fantasy as her orient, she anticipates its emergence and allows it to appear in subjugated fluids. Making basins where the world is reformed into dreamlike spaces of navigation, she thus proceeds to the fragile foundation of a vision in each of her prints.

What gushes out in expansion, as an extension of the photographic capture, Anouk captures. And she exposes it: without fear of transforming its visual resonance into brilliance or of letting tremble in the subtle membrane she works on the print what now palpitates inside the image. The photographer accepts everything that activates or limits the material but chooses it. Moving from a state of exact concentration to the limitless exercise of imagination, does Anouk seek to entrust perception with the task of intervening to offer itself and bequeath to us, sometimes swirling like a leaf, sometimes pure as a line, the fragile shock of reality?