

SCHLOSSGASSE 5  
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PHILIPP@PHILIPPZOLLINGER.COM  
WWW.PHILIPPZOLLINGER.COM**CASSIDY TONER**  
**Unstable 4<sup>th</sup> Wall**ZÜRICH  
Nov 2 – Dec 14, 2019

We are proud to announce a solo show by Baltimore-born, Basel-based artist Cassidy Toner. The exhibition *Unstable 4th Wall* introduces a setting with a series of recent sculptures and kinetic objects. The title refers to the imaginary wall on stage, separating the actors from the audience. Whilst, the audience can see through this invisible wall, the actors cannot. However, as the title suggests, this fourth wall is not stable and allows refraction. The fictitious world, thereby invites the audience to break through and step closer.

Toner's objects encourage a dialogue. Via a complex network of contradictory signals, the viewer's curiosity is aroused. At first glance, her practice appears humorous, yet equally bizarre. The seeming playfulness quickly turns out to be sharp-tongued and critical. Nevertheless, Toner is not attempting to act as a moralizing agent and constantly evades every confrontation. As soon as something is illustrated, it escapes the scene and becomes elusive. The dialogue is the experience and transcends the boundary between fiction and reality. Toner questions artistic principles; aesthetic values and academic traditions, as well as existential matters; behavioral patterns anent desire and prejudice.

The kinetic wall-objects refer back to Ad Reinhardt's cartoon *How to Look at a Cubist Painting* (1946) where one viewer's query; 'What does this represent?' is met with the anthropomorphized painting loudly responding: 'What do you represent?'. Rather than shouting, the pieces in the exhibition laugh out loud at the viewer. In addition, the clay sculptures depict Wile E. Coyote, who was inspired by Mark Twain in 1872. The coyote acts as an allegory for constant desire, never quenched and forever blinded by his own ambition. The recurring motif of the coyote not only acts as a tragicomic narrator, pulling the viewer behind the scene, but also as a metaphor for insatiable greed, which in turn, leads to self-destruction.

Toner's works are visual challenges, punctuated by question marks. In breaking the fourth wall, she forces participation and as such, all the questions posed are thrown back at the viewer. Therefore, this collaborative field of action allows for a hermeneutical experience, rather than mere aesthetic consumption. By means of confrontation, Toner succeeds in catalyzing emancipatory insight and in evoking self-criticism.

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Cassidy Toner, born 1992, graduated in 2018, from FHNW Institute Kunst. Toner recently had her first solo-exhibition at Saint-Luke (Zurich, 2019). In addition, she has participated in numerous two-person and group shows, such as at Kunsthalle Basel (2019); KunstRaumRiehen (2019); C.Rockefeller (Dresden, 2019); Yverdon Art Center (2019); Kai Matsumiya (New York, 2019); Kunsthalle Freiburg (2018); Wallriss (Freiburg 2018) and Kunsthau Baselland (2018). In 2018, Toner was the recipient of the Kunstkredit Award in Basel.