

**Press Release \*ALTEFABRIK and Kunst(Zeug)Haus  
Rapperswil-Jona, in March**

**Curator: Josiane Imhasly**

## **Conceal, Deceive, Imitate**

24 March to 6 May 2018, Opening: Friday, 23 March, 7pm

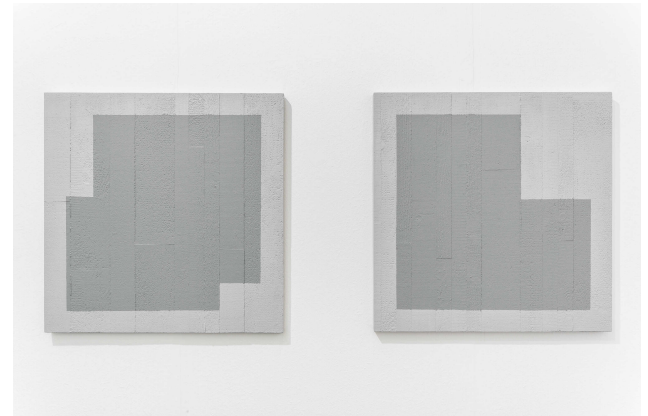
Graffiti in Zurich's public space is painted within a week by a specially designated department. Meanwhile, residents of terraced houses are free to customise the outside of their home. These two poles mark out the territory explored by the exhibition *Conceal, Deceive, Imitate*. Uniformity vs. individuality, invisibility vs. visibility, order vs. chaos, adaptation vs. difference. Animals are masters of camouflage, deception and imitation, and human beings have copied them in many of these aspects. The exhibition, which will be held at \*ALTEFABRIK and Kunst(Zeug)Haus, is devoted to gestures of hiding and concealing, but also revealing and accentuating – as two sides of the same coin.

With works by Peter Baracchi, Denise Bertschi, Florian Bühler, Lotte Meret Effinger, Leo Fabrizio, Nicole Hassler, Carol May, Simon Menner, Nils Nova, Eva O'Leary, Gianluca Trifilo and wiedemann/mettler.

For information on the accompanying programme, see: [www.kurator.ch](http://www.kurator.ch) and the attached flyer.



**EVA O'LEARY, SPITTING IMAGE, 2017**



**PETER BARACCHI, THIS NEVER HAPPENED, 2014–2015**

Efforts to hide or render things invisible are omnipresent. One could almost speak of a “camouflage culture” that manifests itself in all areas of life. The best-known camouflage strategies are from the animal and plant world, as well as from the military. Soldiers hiding inside of dead horses during World War I might not immediately come to mind when we think about this topic, but the camouflage patterns used during World War II – and designed by modernist artists – have since become part of the collective memory, also as a result of their appropriation by fashion and pop culture.

The exhibition *Conceal, Deceive, Imitate* brings together works by 12 contemporary Swiss and international artists who address the notion of camouflage as an aesthetic strategy in various ways. Makeshift, amateurish approaches to concealment are investigated along with sophisticated strategies of deception.

## **CAMOUFLAGE ON THE BODY...**

One focus of the exhibition is how mechanisms of camouflage are used by advertising and the consumer industry, for propaganda and the mediation of the self in mass media. How is the body (especially the female body) disguised or used for deception?

**Lotte Meret Effinger** and **Carol May** dissect the one-dimensional representation of the feminine by skilfully imitating techniques of deception used in advertising, leading them into the absurd. **Nicole Hassler** creates monochrome paintings using cosmetics (nail varnish, blush, eye shadow pigments) and questions this dictate (or deception?) of beauty.

**Simon Menner** combines in his series *Role Models* (undated) various poses found in terrorist propaganda videos with similar images he finds on the Internet. These juxtapositions confront the viewer with an uneasy uncertainty about who is whose role model.

With her installation *Spitting Image* (2017), **Eva O’Leary** reveals an astonishingly intimate moment of camouflage in her portrayal of young girls in front of a two-way mirror. In her work, the viewer’s gaze alternates between utmost intimacy and the intended official image.

## **... CAMOUFLAGE ALL AROUND US**

The curtain in *I won’t let the sun go down on me* (2017) by **wiedemann/mettler** creates a theatrical setting while protecting the interior from outside views. This leads to a second aspect of camouflage addressed in the exhibition: concealing, deception and imitation in spaces and architecture.

In her installation *Neutrality as an Agent* (2016), **Denise Bertschi** uses the camouflage paintings of a bunker to craft tent-like structures. This is not the only work that makes reference to the military origins of camouflage. **Leo Fabrizio’s** photographs examine the Swiss fetish of building in rock and below ground, and also address completely different moments of camouflage in architecture, such as glass buildings or terraced houses in Thailand.

In *This Never Happened* (2014-2015), **Peter Baracchi** reveals the painterly potential of the Zurich Graffiti Office, whose task it is to paint over graffiti tags and pieces on publicly owned buildings quickly and accurately. In the exhibition space, Baracchi designs paintings inspired by these involuntary “works of art”.

Donning the virtual reality glasses installed by **Gianluca Trifilo**, viewers can immerse themselves in his work *Blind Spots* (2017). Trifilo exposes society’s blind spots by virtually bringing to life spaces and places frequented by heroin or methadone addicts. In doing so, he lends a voice to those at the fringes of society who have been forced into invisibility.

The paintings of **Florian Bühler**, for example of interiors of apartments inhabited by violent criminals, make it clear that the moment of camouflage is often impossible to capture, and so remains a mystery. Who could tell that these rooms contained anything suspicious?

From **Nils Nova** comes a special site-specific intervention. Combining the architecture of Kunst(Zeug)Haus with that of the \*ALTEFABRIK, he creates in both places a compelling photographic architectural illusion.

### Contact

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Media preview on request

### Hours

\*ALTEFABRIK: Wed 12–6pm, Sat + Sun 11am–5pm and on request

Kunst(Zeug)Haus: Wed to Fri 2–6pm, Sat + Sun 11am–6pm

### Images

Available for download at [www.kurator.ch/medienmitteilung](http://www.kurator.ch/medienmitteilung)