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**Maureen Kaegi - Ludwig Kittinger**  
*Song of Increase #2*

Opening : 18.01.2024, 18:00-21:00  
Exhibition: 19.01. - 17.02.2024

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We are pleased to announce *Song of Increase #2*. In this second part of Maureen Kaegi's *Song of Increase* at Galerie Mezzanin, artist Ludwig Kittinger joins the exhibition.

The intersection of Kaegi's and Kittinger's works reflects the exhibition title derived from a textbook guide for beekeepers. A focal point of the beekeeper's guidebook is the interconnection of bee colonies with human society and the bee's significant role in the planet's biosphere. Cogent passages describe the complex and fragile bond between humans and bees for millennia. Stemming from their shared research, the artists identify the honey bee as a symbol for embodying the dualities of today's conditions: mortality and regeneration, hope and despair, industry and contemplation.

Furthermore, Kaegi and Kittinger share the influence of their surroundings, which affects each artist's choice of subjects. They are both working in a remote alpine setting, where small events and phenomena from the natural world are combined with the banalities of everyday life to inform each's motivation for their work. The area also has the historical distinction of being where Josef Hoffmann and other renowned architects realized their first projects. In addition to the beekeeper's guide, these early and, for their time, experimental art nouveau structures are shared influences on their works.

Maureen Kaegi works on the themes of the culture of acceleration and constraints, visual myopia in society, the optical and physical processes of perception and the reciprocal formation of the body and materials. The artist has more recently taken up subjects such as symbiotic or cooperative relationships between organisms with a visual language favouring a profound reconnection between earth, nature and biodiversity, exploring her relationship with the environment. Kägi's observations and sketches on the growth and withering of plants and her experiences as an organic beekeeper render myriad traces and metaphors of what the insect makes real — futures slumbering in the past.

Ludwig Kittinger focuses on sculptural concerns. His main workmaterial wood originates from trees that have to be felled and that he then shapes into form. The artist produces his raw material of wood and the detail of the bee's wax is produced in parts by his bee colony. In his choice to do so, Kittinger manifests many themes: Expressing a tradition of farmers' aesthetics and techniques; The economic and, at times, improvised solutions in architectural forms; The interrelations of animals and humans; A reflection on the Art Nouveau movement. These contemplations find form in wood and wax and mixed materials, resulting in forms referring to the versatility of movement and sometimes generating animistic characteristics. Personifying his work tools, Kittinger speaks of "...the disquieting experience that the tools and materials exert their own reality and possess a vitality far beyond the subject-object correlation. If things come in the mode of being at hand instead of being present, one can only use them by connecting with their autonomous tendency."

*Born in 1984 in New Plymouth, New Zealand, Maureen Kaegi studied at the Zurich University of the Arts and graduated in 2010 in Painting at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. She had solo exhibitions at MUSA - Wien Museum Startgalerie, Kunsthalle Winterthur, Christine König Galerie 2 Vienna, Galerie Mark Müller Zürich, ABA Salon Berlin, ArtBox Museumsquartier Vienna and Ve.Sch Kunstverein Vienna. Recent group exhibitions include MIP Museum in Progress Vienna, Traklhaus Salzburg, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Belvedere 21 Vienna, Bowerbank Ninow Auckland and many others. Her work is part of collections, such as the Republic of Austria, Land Niederösterreich, Strabag Vienna, The Chartwell Collection, Auckland, Kunstzeughaus Rapperswil, Julius Bär Kunstsammlung, Kunstsammlung der Schweizerischen Nationalbank and Kunstsammlung Kanton Zürich amongst others.*

*Born in 1977 in Graz, Austria, Ludwig Kittinger works as a visual artist in Vienna and studied at Central Saint Martins College in London. From 2010 to 2020 he was a board member of Kunstverein Ve.Sch Wien. He currently teaches at the University of Applied Arts Vienna in the department of Sculpture and Space. Works/projects/lectures have been shown/held at following venues, amongst others: Galerija Flora Dubrovnik, Intsitute of contemporary Art Yerevan, Skulpturinstitut Vienna, Efes 42 Linz, Artist Lecture Series Vienna, EXPO Chicago, Belvedere 21 Vienna, Galerie Ferdinanda Baumanna Prague, Press To Exit Skopje, Art Review Live London, NTK Gallery Prague, Freie Sammlung Wien, European Cultural Capital Wroclaw 2016, Belgium Centre d'art Contemporain Charleroi, Revue Noire Paris, Chambre de Commerce Antananarivo, Fotohof Salzburg, International Sinop Biennale.*