

Do with me

Emma Bernhard

'If you stare at anything for long enough, you begin to see things that aren't there.'

- Julie Otsuka, *The Swimmers*

The exhibition *Do with me* is an invitation to reflect on the fleeting, albeit repeated continuously, which is just out of reach. For her first solo exhibition in Germany, Swedish artist Emma Bernhard presents new paintings and sculptures. With degrees in sculpture and philosophy, the artist deliberates questions of being in her practice. The title of the exhibition 'Do with me' alludes to the teacherly repetition of movement, as opposed to a simple 'do as I do'. Instead of merely reproducing a gesture or sign, Bernhard effectuates the artworks in the exhibition in which brushstrokes and sculptural forms are guided by the body's memory, a Deleuzian sensory-motivity, in an ongoing process. The artist made these works in reflection of the text *Difference and Repetition* by Gilles Deleuze.

The broad strokes of paint in Bernhard's artworks linger like motion blur from choreographed movements. Paint is drawn across the wool surface in intense sweeping gestures that form defined shapes like faces or dancers. Her new group of works *Swimmers* emerge from the same core but here the paint follows precise imposed structures, embodied in the conformity of homogenous movement like that of synchronised swimming. Each artwork exists individually, but as part of a synchronised group, co-existing with each other, moving as one. Throughout her practice the artist has been striving to find a moment in between the dynamic and stillness, that seems so apparent in dancing or swimming and evolves out of a bodily memory. Her works are grounded in being made from found material, predominantly wool, paint and steel, initially disregarded due to a stain, rip, or scratch. Transformed into new contexts as parts of a bigger whole, Bernhard opens a space for the materials to tell their own story. Instead of mending the material into something entirely new, she tries to impose only minimal touches. They find their form and reach abstraction through continuous repetition practised by the artist. For 'they [the signs] testify to the spiritual and natural powers which act beneath the words, gestures, characters, and objects represented. They signify repetition as real movement, in opposition to representation which is a false movement of the abstract.'

- Gilles Deleuze

Emma Bernhard was born in Stockholm 1981. She lives and works in Stockholm and Båstad, SE. She received a BA in philosophy at the St. Louis University, Madrid, and a BA in Sculpture at the University of Arts, London. Bernhard participated in institutional exhibitions at Artipelag, Gustavsberg, SE (2020), Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, DK (2010) and the Dover Art Center, UK (2010). She presented solo exhibitions at Galerie Nordenhake Stockholm and Mexico City (both 2021), Jacob Bjorn Gallery, Aarhus, DK (2020), Galerie Erik Nordenhake, Stockholm (2017), and Belenius/Nordenhake, Stockholm (2015). In 2015 she completed an artist residency at the NARS Foundation, New York.

Exhibition: March 16–April 13, 2024

Opening hours: Tue–Fri 10am–6pm, Sat 12pm–6pm

Please contact the gallery for press images and further information.