

André Butzer / Hans Josephsohn

Bleibtreustraße 15/16, 10623

8 June – 3 August 2024

Opening: Saturday, 8 June, from 3 pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present a duo exhibition of **André Butzer** and **Hans Josephsohn** at Bleibtreustraße 15/16, in Berlin.

Flight, desolation and displacement are deeply inscribed in the work of Hans Josephsohn (1920–2012). Not in terms of motifs or themes, but as a fundamental life experience. Unlike the smooth, gracefully fluid agility of Lehmbbruck or Maillol, who inspired him in his youth, and unlike Giacometti's fraying dissolution of the figure in the glistening backlight of an atomic flash, for instance, Josephsohn clings firmly to the figure. Every grasp of the shapeless plaster solidifies the human form. Whether in the case of a tiny figurine or a monumental body, he always strives to achieve the appropriate composure, as if trying to reassure himself again and again of the enduring presence of his sitters. A presence that is brought abruptly and inevitably into the space. Josephsohn works towards a space, into a space. He takes nothing away, but rather brings something new into the world. Positive placements, solid and massive, fragile and delicate. With their jagged and agitated surfaces, with their restrained but decisive colouring, his sculptures become a defiant counterpart to their beholders. The torsos, busts and steles of standing or reclining women are firmly contained in themselves, rounded, clenched. In its archaic simplicity, the individual body asserts itself in its own place. Josephsohn rediscovers this pictorial trait from antiquity, the freestanding individual among the entirety of the cosmos – vulnerable, beset and tackled from all sides, but free despite everything – and therefore open to the possibility of an encounter, of human recognition.

André Butzer (*1973) insists on mere human dignity, on the consistency of being. His work has always been 'right in the middle' of the 'destructive and redemptive contradictions' of the world – expression and ready-made, repetition and individuality, insurrection, life and death – acting them out by means of colour and thus surpassing them. Despite their ostensible variety, his paintings are of substantial unity. Perhaps, Butzer surmises, it is precisely in the face of the relentless en-framing of the present that 'the so-called world must be concealed so that one can see anything at all', so that the absent may appear anew in the present. Like the composite figure in *Frau Dr Schlaf heilt mit Sternenkräften*, 2024. With such 'Synthetic Paintings', Butzer has challenged our image of man since 1999: is the body destroyed by the technology that permeates it, or does painting succeed in turning the tortured body once more into a figure and allowing it to enter into a more wholesome, 'cosmic' contiguity? Both the enormous *Frau Dr. Schlaf* and the modest woman in *Untitled*, 2024, merge with their surrounding colours and forms into a planar ornament that spans the entire painting. Butzer incorporates them into



Above: Hans Josephsohn, *Untitled*, 1985 © Kesselhaus Josephsohn, St. Gallen.

Below: André Butzer, *Untitled*, 2024 © André Butzer, photo: def image

the decorative whole and thereby realises the unity of their opposites. The round yellow spots on *Frau Dr. Schlaf's* face may be contaminated and poisoned like pustules. Or might they be suns upon a face? The circular ornaments on *Untitled* are reminiscent of flowers or fruit. Oranges and roses, in all their simplicity and grace, no one like the other, individual and freely evolving.

In their impaired humanity, Josephsohn's sculptures and Butzer's paintings draw a visionary arc from antiquity to post-apocalyptic space junk. No becoming, just being. Imprinting being *onto* becoming. The exhibition as a place both within and outside of time, where, for a brief glimpse, the contradictory disruption of the world appears to be resolved and whole again, where experience and memory, the past and the future are preserved.

André Butzer (*1973, Stuttgart) lives in Berlin. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held in international institutions including Gesellschaft für Gegenwartskunst, Augsburg; Museo Novecento, Florence; Museo Stefano Bardini, Florence; St Nikolaus, Innsbruck (all 2024); Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Keibel Villa | Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, Schwandorf; Miittinen Collection, Berlin; Kunstverein Friedrichshafen (all 2023); Friedrichs Foundation, Weidingen (2022); Yuz Museum, Shanghai; Museum of the Light, Hokuto (both 2020); IKOB Musée d'Art Contemporain, Eupen (2018); Växjö Konsthall (2017); Bayerisches Armeemuseum, Ingolstadt; Neue Galerie Gladbeck (both 2016); Kunstverein Reutlingen (2015); Halle für Kunst, Graz (2014); Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover; Kunsthistorisches Museum / Theseustempel, Vienna (2011); Kunsthalle Nuremberg (2009); Kunstverein Ulm (2005); and Kunstverein Heilbronn (2004).

Works by André Butzer are in the collections of Aishti Foundation, Beirut; Art Institute of Chicago; Aurora Museum, Shanghai; Carré d'Art, Nîmes; Children's Museum of the Arts, New York; CICA Center of International Contemporary Art, Vancouver; Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn; Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; Friedrichs Foundation, Weidingen / Bonn; Galerie moderního umění, Hradci Králové; Galerie Stadt Sindelfingen; Hall Art Foundation, Reading / VT | Derneburg; Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Berlin; Hölderlinturm, Tübingen; IKOB Musée d'Art Contemporain, Eupen; Kupferstichkabinett / Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin; LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Marciano Art Collection, Los Angeles; MARE Museum, Bucharest; MOCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Museo Novecento, Florence; Museum Reinhard Ernst, Wiesbaden; Paula Modersohn-Becker Museum, Bremen; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Rubell Museum, Miami; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; Space K, Seoul; Ståhl Collection, Norrköping; Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus / Gabriele Münter- und Johannes Eichner-Stiftung, Munich; Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck; University of Washington, Seattle; Wooyang

Museum of Contemporary Art, Gyeongju-si; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, among others.

Hans Josephsohn (1920–2012) lived and worked in Zurich. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held in international institutions including MASI – Museo d'arte della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (2020–2021); Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen (2020); ICA Milano (2019); Museum Folkwang, Essen (2018); Kunstparterre, Munich (2015); Modern Art Oxford (2013); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (2013); Lismore Castle Arts (2012); MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (2008); Kolumba – Art Museum of the Archdiocese of Cologne (2005); and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2002), among other major museums. Works by Josephsohn were prominently featured in the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). Two permanent installations of Josephsohn's work are open to the public, including: Kesselhaus Josephsohn, an exhibition and gallery space in St.Gallen, Switzerland and home of the estate of the artist; and La Congiunta, a small museum in Giornico, Switzerland, designed by the artist's long-time friend and architect, Peter Märkli.

Works by Hans Josephsohn are in the collections of Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau; Kolumba – Art Museum of the Archdiocese of Cologne; Kunsthau Zurich; Kunstmuseum St.Gallen; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Kunstmuseum Appenzell; Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen; MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, among others.

Further exhibitions and events

Berlin:

7 June – 3 August 2024

Jeremy Demester

Teratology of Love

Bleibtreustraße 45, 10623

7 June – 3 August 2024

Eddie Martinez

You think that you know but you know that you don't

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

14 June – 10 August 2024

Edmund de Waal

letters home

Potsdamer Straße 77-87, 10785

Paris:

7 June – 25 July 2024

Matthew Barney

SECONDARY: object impact

46 & 57, rue du Temple, 75004

London:

30 May – 3 August 2024

Giulia Andreani

L'improduttiva

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Marfa:

9 May – 8 December 2024

Katharina Grosse

The Super Eight

1976 Antelope Hills Road

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