

Press Release

Thomas Scheibitz

WÜSTE—DSCHUNGEL/Omega UND Tunnel

November 22, 2024 – January 11, 2025

Public Reception: November 21, 6–8pm

Sprüth Magers, Berlin

Sprüth Magers

Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are delighted to present Thomas Scheibitz's solo exhibition *WÜSTE—DSCHUNGEL/Omega UND Tunnel* at their Berlin gallery. Thomas Scheibitz's paintings and sculptures represent a continuous exploration of the visual translation of complex thoughts and social models, which are transformed into multilayered, often fragmented pictorial structures – structures that are simultaneously open and in a perpetual state of flux. From his earliest to his most recent works, Scheibitz simultaneously solves and dissolves everything. These works symbolize the act of encoding and decoding and allude to one of the artist's main themes: mapping, measuring, penetrating, and exploring a pictorial inventory. This is a difficult territory to explore, a journey between contradictions and extremely varied regions.

In *WÜSTE—DSCHUNGEL/Omega UND Tunnel*, the process of thinking and visual exploration take center stage. As we follow these artistic thought processes, the exhibition leads us to models and stations that refer to words, letters, sketches, drawings, paintings, and sculptures by the Dresden-born artist A.R. Penck (1939–2017). The title of the exhibition itself is a quote from a letter written by Penck. What is especially fascinating here is the peculiar balance or polarity between capturing and letting go, learning and forgetting. For Scheibitz, it is Penck's artistic attitude in particular that he seeks to approximate. This approximation becomes a way of acting out various potential attitudes, not as a mere accumulation of knowledge or skills, but as an ongoing, open exploration. Penck's artistic attitude becomes signs and figures that are influenced by a superstructure and substructure of thoughts and forms. Scheibitz's works are like models – not definitive solutions, but rather expressions of a way of thinking that is never fully complete. This attitude refers directly to Penck's own methodical practice, in which the process of painting and thinking was just as important as the result.

The return to the dark zones of the old and new Federal Republic of Germany, the distance, the attitude toward the material, and the attentiveness to linguistic, semantic, pictorial, and cultural models – which, historically, have often been implemented incorrectly – all ultimately offer new relationships without homogenizing or devaluing them. The hidden, frictional difference outlined in the exhibition title reflects the paradoxes of world, self, and history. Scheibitz's *Groteskkopf* (2024) brings together all these modified approximations and deviations as well as the consequences of the

past. The threefold eye of thinking, seeing, and understanding continues to gaze intently, even when others have long since turned away – whether due to a hastily cemented abstraction or a withdrawal into repression. Scheibitz works to counter a misery that disguises itself as myth; in his paintings, he contemplates the world, its connections and structures in a deeper and more precise way. It is not Penck's style but his artistic attitude that Scheibitz approximates here. Scheibitz's precise gaze is focused on the consequences of the past, which are seemingly no longer visible, in order to confront them in the image itself in the present.

Special thanks go to Galerie Michael Werner for their kind support in realizing this exhibition.

Thomas Scheibitz (*1968, Radeberg, Germany) lives and works in Berlin. Selected solo exhibitions include: Sprüth Magers London (2021), Museum Berggruen, Nationalgalerie - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2019), KINDL - Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Berlin (2018), Kunstmuseum Bonn (2018), Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle (2013), Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2014), Museum für Moderne Kunst MMK, Frankfurt (2012), Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2011), Museo de Arte de São Paulo (2010), Camden Arts Centre, London (2008), MUDAM, Luxembourg (2008), Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2008), IMMA, Dublin (2007), Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2004), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2001) and Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2001). Thomas Scheibitz represented Germany at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005. Since 2003, he has also been active as a curator and has held a professorship in painting and sculpture at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf since 2018.

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For further information and press inquiries, please contact Silvia Baltschun (sb@spruethmagers.com)