

MATTI BRAUN
BO LAK

Esther Schipper is pleased to announce Matti Braun's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Entitled *Bo Lak*, the show includes 18 individual pieces, in dimensions ranging from 55 x 65 cm to 130 x 180 cm and 2 groups from a new series of abstract works showing seamless color sequences in pale tones. The pieces are made from silk panels in narrow aluminum frames. The dye process used for Braun's silk works has its roots in the artist's investigation and appropriation of traditional techniques of textile production often used for religious or ritualistic purposes but unlike his earlier patola or batik series they no longer show the iconographic traces of their sources. Whereas previous series of silk paintings included brightly colored passages or circular splashes more overtly reminiscent of post-painterly abstraction, the new series uses a reduced palette to show soft color progressions. There is a palpable tension between the new work's restraint and its hypnotic lushness created by the combination of apparently simple means and the complexity of their creation, both the extensive references to the artist's project of investigating historical and cultural phenomena and the more immediate curiosity of how the seamless color modulations are created.

The floor of the gallery is covered with light fine-grained sand, creating an environment for the new silk pieces. The use of sand has some precedent in the artist's oeuvre, notably his 2003 *Untitled*, an ephemeral site-specific work for which several tons of



Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014

Namibian soil was added to the public beach of the small Finnish Island Sandö, and his 2009 show *Pierre at L'appartement 22*, Rabat in Morocco for which Braun spread sand across the floor to function as a kind of anchor for cultural and historical references specific to the site. The current installation deliberately avoids any specific allusions to the sand's significance beyond its presence as subtle disruption. At the same time, since its smooth surface is reminiscent of the finely woven translucent silk fabric with its gradual color transitions the sand also acts as unifying element.

Matti Braun's work investigates the unexpected, often little known, effects of cross-cultural dynamics, making visible patterns of artistic migrations and cultural misrecognitions. The artist's previous solo exhibitions have often been organized around a specific example of such appropriation, taking for instance an elaborate web of interdisciplinary associations spun around the Indian physicist Vikran Sarabhai that include Mahatma Gandhi, Le Corbusier, the development of the Indian space program, the Ulm School of Design and Lynda Benglis as point of departure for displays that included textile works, objects, photographs and large-scale installations. The underlying narrative logic is not intended to explain the significance of the individual pieces but instead to demonstrate their polysemy. Braun's work is about the inability of objects to contain the meaning with which we burden them, drawing attention to the multiplicity of interpretations with which our personal and cultural histories imbue perception. The references are never illustrative or didactic but make visible an object's cultural trajectory and the mechanisms of cultural cross-pollination.

Matti Braun's work is characterized by a constant negotiation between concrete references and general allusions, between poetic ephemerality and an uncanny sense of visceral immediacy.



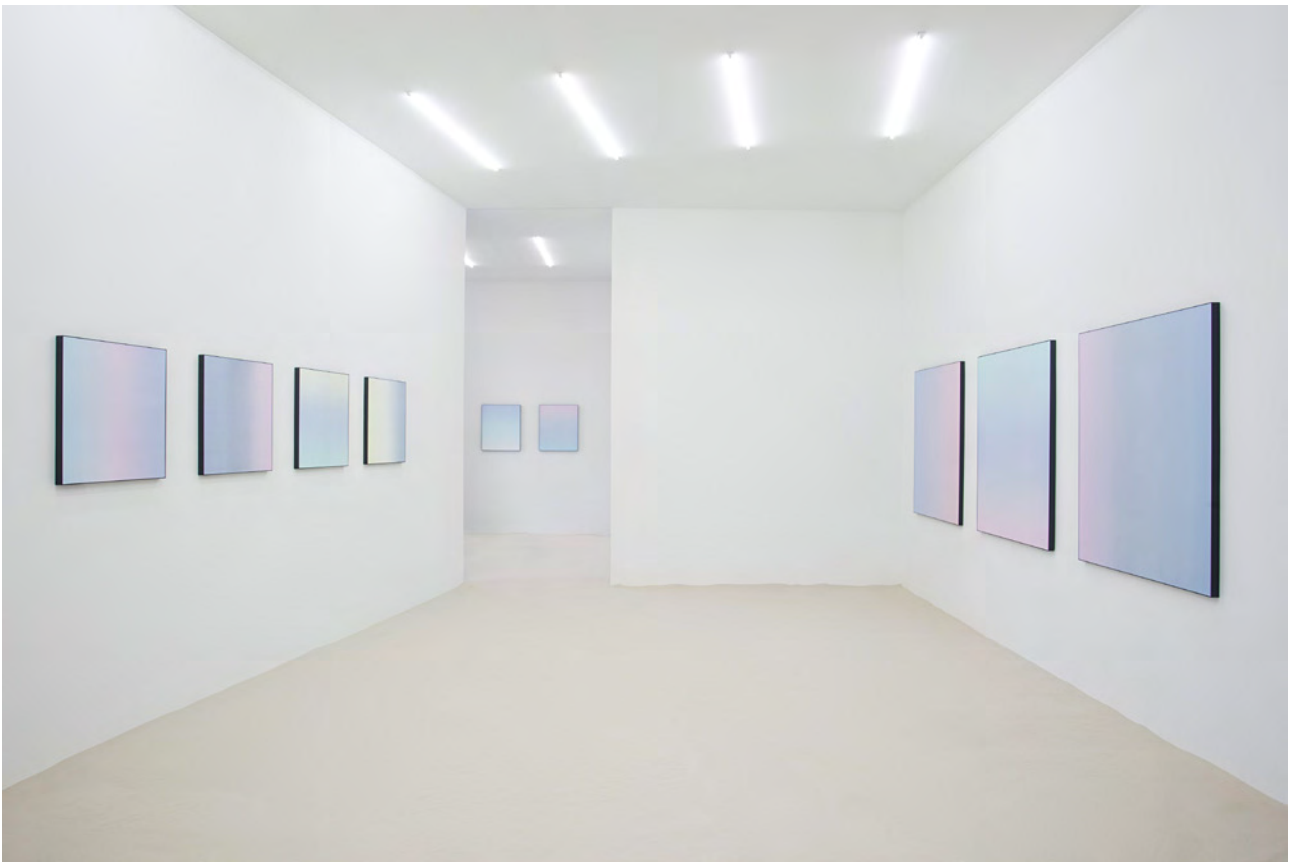
Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014



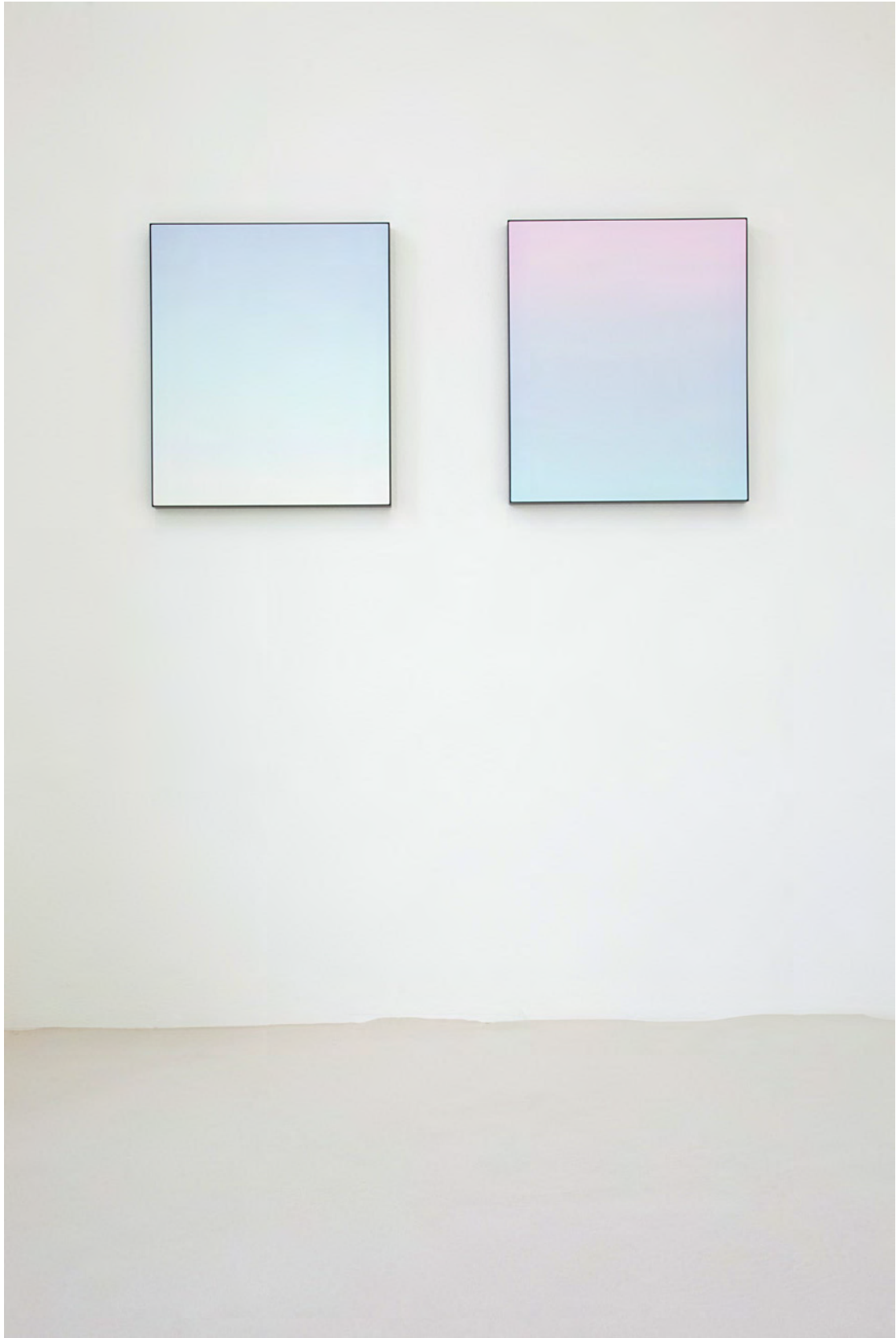
Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014



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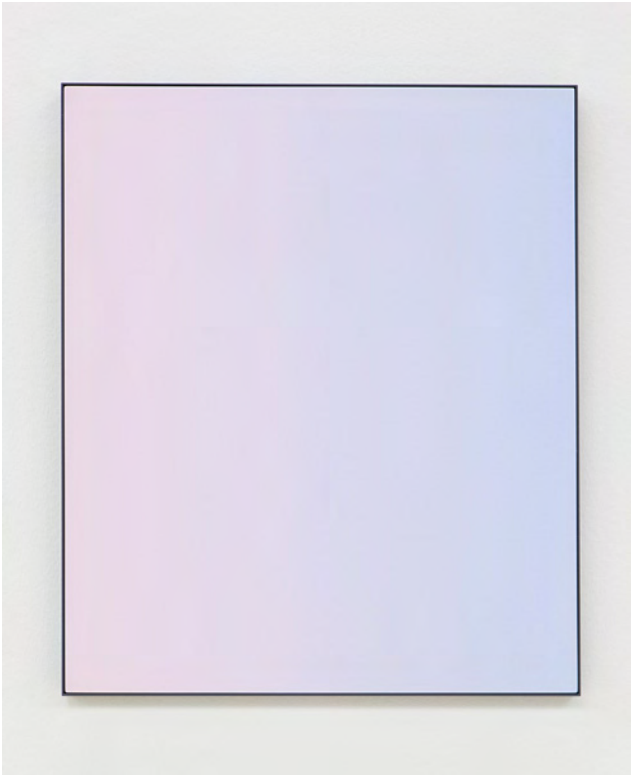
Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated aluminium
180 x 130 x 3,5 cm
(MB 305)



Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated aluminium
65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 288)



Installation view *Bo Lak*, Esther Schipper, 2014



Matti Braun

Untitled

Color offset print, digital print on paper.

Edition consisting of 17 posters:

- 1) Lota, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 2) Salo (Noisy-le-sec), 42 x 59,4 cm
- 3) Özurfa, 59,4 x 84,1 cm
- 4) Sammlung Smend bei BQ, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 5) Ava Vala (BQ - Digitaldruck), 42 x 59,4 cm
- 6) Salo (Braunschweiger KV), 59,4 x 84,1 cm
- 7) the Alien, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 8) S.R., 42 x 59,4 cm
- 9) Pierre Pierre, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 10) Atol, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 11) Kola (KM Liechtenstein) 84,1 x 118,9 cm
- 12) Gost Log (Arnolfini Bristol), 59,4 x 84,1 cm
- 13) Gira (SALES), 42 x 59,4 cm
- 14) V.S., 42 x 59,4 cm
- 15) Pierre, 42 x 59,4 cm
- 16) Sola (SALES), 42 x 59,4 cm
- 17) R.T., 42 x 59,4 cm

Edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs
(MB 306)

CONTEMPLATING MATTI'S ART BY SUDHIR KAKAR

A hundred and fifty years ago, Rudyard Kipling, the pre-eminent poet of the British Empire, penned the lines 'East is East and West is West, Never the twain shall meet.' Today, in a globalized world, such meetings are commonplace in the boardrooms of commerce and the laboratories of science, in the conferences of the academia and the tables of diplomacy, in the contents of television shows and the plots of novels and movies. Such encounters are still mostly superficial, almost never engaging the psychic depths of the participants. A genuine meeting between East and West is even rarer in the visual and performing arts where, leaving some exceptions aside, the flow of ideas and figurations has generally been one way, from West to East. It is a rare Western artist whose work is as animated by the spirit of the East as that of Matti while, at the same time, remaining distinctively European in its sensibility.

I am not advancing any simplified dichotomy between such overarching concepts as European and Asian sensibilities, none of which exists in a purified form. All visions of human experience, all registers of human sensibility, are present in all the major civilizations though a particular civilization may, over a length of time, highlight and emphasize one at the expense of the other which then sinks into temporary forgetfulness. Elsewhere, I have said that India is the unconscious of Europe and what Matti's work does is to afford viewers access to some aspects of this unconscious, not in images but in states of being that drift up from some of his installations like warm, clinging air.

The 'spirit of the East' is not a cliché in Matti's work. One would look in vain for images of exotic India or Japan that give the viewer a comfortable feeling of familiarity from having seen them in travel brochures or in television documentaries. What I sense in many of his works which I have had the privilege to view is more subtle: the virtue of contemplation, for instance. These art works ask the viewer to pause, to question the dominant paradigm of movement, achievement, doing and getting things done, and thus repair the damages this emphasis has done to the modern European or, for that matter, what it may be doing to modern Asians who have embraced the contemporary Western view of man's relationship to the world.

Matti's art asks the European viewer not to be afraid of absences and silences that the viewer normally associates with contemplation. Like Kierkegaard, he too is asking them to pause and not do 'everything possible by way of diversions and the Janizary music of loud-voiced enterprises to keep lonely thoughts away.' Solitude is not seclusion, Matti seems to say, its absence of other people in no way a reflection of an inner emptiness but of a fullness, of an overflowing, its silence resounding with a myriad voices.

Matti's invitation to contemplation is not one to join in an ascetic's privation. His art invites us to go inwards while being immersed, joyously, sensually, in the river of life. As does Matti's art.

Sudhir Kakar, born 1938, is a psychoanalyst and writer who lives in Goa, India. A leading figure in the fields of cultural psychology and the psychology of religion, as well as a novelist, Sudhir Kakar was one of the first Western-trained psychoanalysts to practice in India. His work emphasises the cultural specificity of psychic dynamics. Sudhir Kakar's has written seventeen books of non-fiction and four of fiction, among them *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* (1982), *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors* (1982), a new translation of the *Kamasutra* for Oxford World Classics (2002) and *Mad and Divine: Spirit and Psyche in the Modern World* (2008). Among his most recent books are the memoir *A Book of Memory* (2011), and *Young Tagore: The Makings of a Genius* (2013).

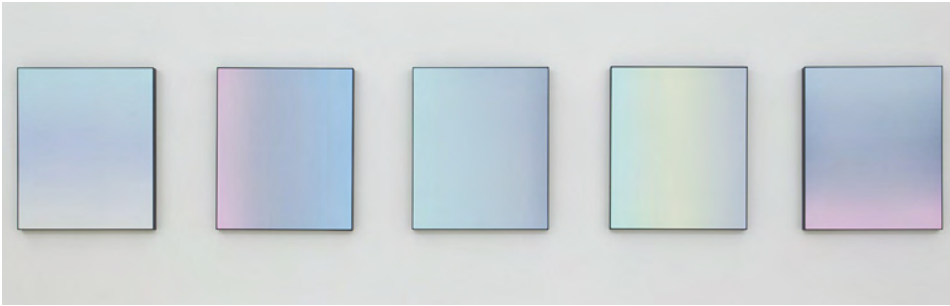
SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF MATTI BRAUN

Matti Braun, born 1968 in Berlin, studied at the Städelschule, Frankfurt/Main and at the Braunschweig University of Art (HBK). Recent solo exhibitions include: Gost Log, Arnolfini, Bristol (2012); Salo, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig and La Galerie, Contemporary Art Center, Noisy-le-Sec (2010); Kola, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz (2009); Özurfa, Museum Ludwig, Cologne and Museion, Museum for Contemporary Art, Bolzano (2008). Selected group exhibitions include: Black Sun—Alchemy, Diaspora And Heterotopia, Devi Art Foundation, Gurgaon (until 27 April 2014); Made in Germany Zwei, Sprengel Museum Hannover (2012); 20 Jahre Ludwig Forum, Ludwig Forum Aachen (2011); Until It Makes Sense, Kadist Art Foundation, Paris (2011); Mental Archeology, Crédac, Ivry-sur Seine and Kunstverein Nürnberg (2010); Zeichen Setzen: Anschein, Präsenz und Auftreten, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2009). Matti Braun lives and works in Cologne.

To accompany the exhibition, the Indian psychoanalyst and author Sudhir Kakar has written a text on the work of Matti Braun.

The artist has produced a poster for Bo Lak.

LIST OF WORKS



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 5 works: 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm (each)
 Unique
 (MB 278)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 4 parts: 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm (each)
 Unique
 (MB 279)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 283)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 284)



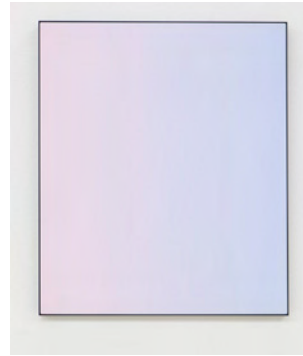
Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 285)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 286)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 287)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
65 x 55 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 288)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 294)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 295)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 296)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 297)



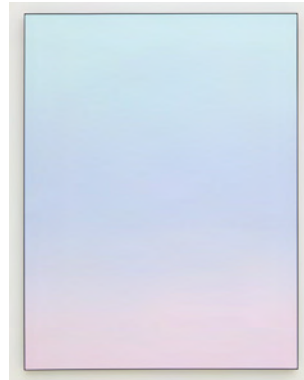
Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 298)



Matti Braun
Untitled, 2014
Silk, dye, powder coated
aluminium
130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
Unique
(MB 299)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 300)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 301)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 130 x 100 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 302)



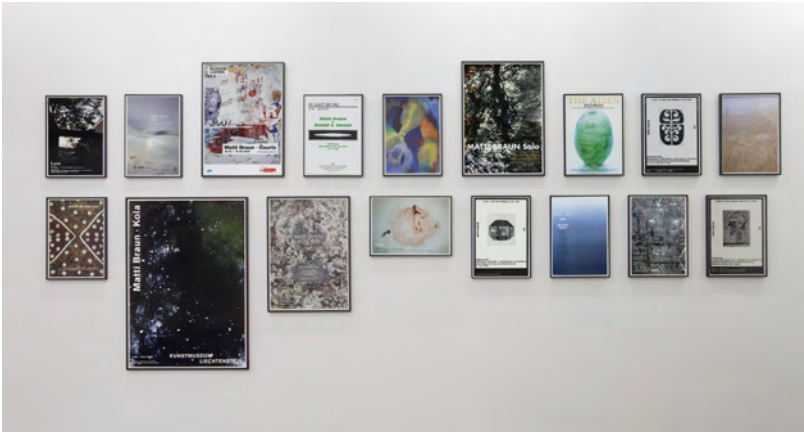
Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 180 x 130 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 303)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 180 x 130 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 304)



Matti Braun
 Untitled, 2014
 Silk, dye, powder coated
 aluminium
 180 x 130 x 3,5 cm
 Unique
 (MB 305)



Matti Braun

Untitled

Color offset print, digital print on paper.

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Edition of 4 plus 2 artist's proofs

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ESTHER SCHIPPER
SCHÖNEBERGER UFER 65
D-10785 BERLIN
TEL: +49 (0)30 374433133
FAX: +49 (0)30 374433134
WWW.ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM
OFFICE@ESTHERSCHIPPER.COM