

MARGHERITA SPILUTTINI | Täuschung und Leere
3rd Room: THOMAS DRASCHAN

exhibition duration: 14. 03. – 03. 05. 2014

The world is everything that is the case, says the philosopher. And yet what is the case? That which we believe we recognize when we behold the image of an object, a scene, an architectural configuration? That which exploits our credence in our senses and our presumed certainty about what we are perceiving. *Strategies Against Architectures* (i.e. its German equivalent) was the title given by the band *Einstürzende Neubauten* to one of its albums. The exhibition *Illusion and Emptiness* does not work against architectures, rather it attempts to penetrate through architectures into existential depths. In the juxtaposition of works by Margherita Spiluttini and Thomas Draschan various modalities of breaking open the space-time continuum are implemented aesthetically.

In the front area of the gallery Margherita Spiluttini, one of the most significant international architecture photographers, shows spaces that no longer exist in the form documented, in which, as it were, the fury of disappearance has made itself at home: the workroom of the long-deceased architect Margarethe Schütte-Lihotzky, the bar designed by Hermann Czech for the Schwarzenberg Palace, or the bank on Mariahilferstrasse planned by Adolf Loos, which has long since been occupied by a discount clothing chain and in the future will also house the Vienna Generali Foundation. The precisely composed photos – devoid of human presence and nonetheless filled with life lived – tell in their cold splendor of the abyss into which time plunges as it transforms into eternity. One can watch Nothing at work as it nothings. In the second room Margherita Spiluttini presents illusionistic spacial conceptions, such as the painted dome of the Jesuit Church or the exoticisms of the Bergl Room in Melk Abbey. Trompe l'oeils effects and phantasmagorical alternate worlds, ornamental cornucopia and precise structural analysis: a dialectic of the all-too-human.

Using the film medium, Thomas Draschan attempts an approximation of the Church of the Holy Trinity by Fritz Wotruba, a structure composed of stacked blocks, standing like a forbidding bulwark in the landscape. The film is composed of individual photographic images, which were produced over an extended period of time, taking into account both the changing seasons and varying routes inside and outside the building. While time appears to be frozen in Spiluttini's work, having long since crept out of the picture, it begins to race in Draschan's, drawing in the beholder in its cyclomotoric furor. The visual aesthetic is designed to trip up the gaze, and it unfolds into a perforated narrative: that which is seen for only a fraction of a second, or not at all, seems to be more important than the recognizable. Draschan succeeds in producing a psychogeographic survey of an architectural masterpiece, which in divulging a mystery instantaneously creates a new enigma. Illusion and emptiness, truth and abundance. What is, in fact, the case?