

GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER

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Inside Out

August 24 - October 22 2016

A Kassen
Alexander Tovborg
Dan Graham
Elmgreen & Dragset
Jose Dávila

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *Inside Out*, a group show with works by A Kassen, Alexander Tovborg, Dan Graham, Elmgreen & Dragset and Jose Dávila. Playing with the contextual elements of what constitutes “inside” versus “outside”, the exhibition takes on issues of intimacy, the division between public and private, and the aesthetic unbalance created as the outdoors are brought indoors.

Opening the exhibition is Alexander Tovborg’s sculpture *The Communicator (The Temple)*. Wrought in iron, the work creates an open, yet protected, circular space. Operating as something that protects as well as beckons, the title suggests something spiritual or sacred. Falling thus within the intimate, subjective realm of our own beliefs, as well as a greater social movement, it stands on the balance between the metaphysical public and private worlds—it both asks us to open up and invites us in.

In the first room, lampposts run through the walls of the exhibition space—one penetrating the gallery’s office, the other penetrating the showroom. Each divided between two rooms, they become two cohesive, and yet quite distinct sculptures. Jutting into the space, the cement cluster on the end of the poles becomes a kind of abstract form, devoid of any connotation of what it might have previously been. The lamp end — while more recognizable — is transformed in this unexpected situation. Its top exposed, the lichen and moss covered patterns become beautifully abstract, while the ever-present glow of its light reminds us of its more practical, original purpose. Lampposts are fabricated objects made to withstand the elements, yet the end and the top of them are instead transformed by these same forces, becoming something unto themselves. Left otherwise untouched by people—including, in that matter, the artists—the aesthetic intrigue and beauty that comes from the way the dirt groups itself, or how the moss decides which way to grow over time is a product of its unique environment. This individuality reveals itself as you move through the gallery space, observing all four parts of the two works.

Juxtaposing these two works is Elmgreen & Dragset’s *Mind Over Matter*. A balcony in a state of deterioration is hung on the wall. Leaves gather on its top, its surface showing signs of rust and wear, its intrusion into the space blurs the lines of what constitutes something personal, and what falls within the public domain. The balcony is an extension of our private dwellings, and yet its placement—and every exchange or moment that happens on it—is visible to all. Akin to the way our bodies and faces act like a portal for the outside world to see, revealing each of our worries, our joys and sorrows, changing and growing older with each passing year, the balcony lays bare what we try to keep inside. The work’s presence in the gallery space augments these effects, as it becomes even further contextually removed.

In the second room, almost as if it was in a perpetual state of motion or of performance, Jose Dávila’s *Joint Effort (VII)* is composed of two large marble slabs held together by ratchet straps. Leaning away from each other, their weights create a counterbalance, holding them seemingly impossibly in place. The gravity of the work—both literally and metaphysically—creates a tension that is palpable in the space. We are no match for the raw nature of the marble, and as the straps expose the work’s precarious nature, it exposes a fragility within us, revealing how vulnerable we can be to outside forces.

Across from it, one of Dan Graham’s seminal pavilions stands at the room’s entryway. Poetically titled *Let’s Get To Know Each Other*, two curved glass walls, one more circular than the other, run in tandem. At one end, the space between the walls is left open, on the other, an intimate entryway is created with a small, perpendicular glass wall. Deliberately altering our path through the exhibition space, inviting us to explore its insides and outsides, the work’s title evokes how each curved reflection and double-reflection reveals something new. Through the work, our gestures and movements are unveiled, creating a moment of introspection that ultimately manifests itself outwards onto others, as we see their reflections as well, asking us to compare and to contrast, making us closer.

In bringing the outside in, we bring the inside out. Whether or not we are trying to keep something out, or to keep something in, in setting up boundaries between what is public and what is private, we ultimately reveal more about ourselves than we think.