

PRESS RELEASE

Gerwald Rockenschaub
bass+ (re)modification

March 16 – May 18, 2024

Opening on Friday, March 15, 6 – 8 pm

Maag Areal, Zahnradstr. 21, CH-8005 Zurich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present *bass+ (re)modification*, the gallery's eighth solo exhibition by the Berlin-based Austrian artist Gerwald Rockenschaub.

Rockenschaub has been transforming spaces with minimalist multimedia installations for around forty years. With constantly changing shapes, colours, sizes, materials and technologies – sometimes abstract, sometimes simplified figurative, but always with radical reduction and laconic smoothness – his installations create visual sounds and rhythms that relate to the architecture in question, setting it in tension and vibration like a musical composition. Rockenschaub, who has also worked as a techno DJ, composes his art like musical tracks: empty spaces correspond to pauses, settings create sounds and beats.

For this new exhibition, the artist has produced rectangular, monochrome lacquered MDF panels of varying colour and size, which he positions above and below a continuous horizontal line on the walls of the exhibition space. In this way he organizes the space and creates a pulsating atmosphere that feels like a soundscape – stimulating visually, physically and emotionally. The idea of painting evoked by the coloured MDF panels is completely removed: In their pointed interplay, the objects experience an enormous expansion and completely transform their surroundings. Instead of looking at pictures, we experience the whole space as a picture.

Rockenschaub never thinks in terms of individual works. Each object has a specific function within the overall context of an exhibition. The precise placement of the elements in dialogue with the architecture is crucial to creating dynamism. Although the artist designs his installations precisely on the computer in advance, the final steps are ultimately spontaneous and playful. Despite their edgy coolness, playfulness and subtle humour are the parameters within which Rockenschaub's works unfold their energy. This is precisely what his work, which emerged in the 1980s in the context of the Neo Geo movement, is all about: using radically reduced means to achieve powerful atmospheric effects that appeal to all the senses. In contrast to classical minimal or conceptual art, he creates a mixture of pop and primary structures that recall traditional genres of art history as well as our thoroughly designed everyday life. Rockenschaub nonchalantly disrupts both – and ends up somewhere between fun, funky and frivolous: with an art that defies any art historical categorization.

Gesine Borchardt

Gerwald Rockenschaub was born in 1952 in Linz, Austria. He works and lives in Berlin, Germany. His most recent solo-exhibitions took place in museums such as Belvedere 21, Vienna, AT (2022-2023); Schlossmuseum Linz, Linz, AT (2023), Sammlung Goetz, Munich, DE (2017); Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, CH (2016); Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, DE (2016); and The M Building, Miami, FL, US (2014). In 1993 he represented Austria together with Andrea Fraser and Christian Philipp Müller at the 45th Biennale of Venice. Group-shows in major museums include: *Faking the Real*, Kunsthhaus Graz, AT (2022); *Wände / Walls*, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, DE (2020); *Abstract painting now!*, Kunsthalle Krems, Krems an der Donau, AT (2017); *Painting 2.0. Malerei im Informationszeitalter*, MUMOK Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, AT (2016); *Unlimited*, Art Basel, Basel, CH (2015); *Künstler und Dichter*, Secession, Vienna, AT (2015, curated by Ugo Rondinone); and *Decorum Carpets & tapestries by artists*, Power Station of Art, Shanghai, CN (2014).

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