

Gregor Hildebrandt

Ich möchte weiterhin verwundbar bleiben

(I wish to remain vulnerable)

June 11 – September 16, 2016

Opening hours: Wed – Fri, 11 - 6 pm

Sat, 11 am - 5 pm

and by prior arrangement

Private view:

Fri, June 10, 2016 5 - 7 pm

Opening Zurich Art Weekend:

Sat, June 11, 2016, 5 - 8 pm

Special opening hours:

during Zurich Art Weekend and Art Basel:

Sun/Mon/Tue, June 12/13/14, 11 am - 5 pm

Sun, June, 19, 11 am - 5 pm

Gregor Hildebrandt's works embody an elegant blend of the light and the heavy, the transient and the permanent. As an aficionado of films and music of his era, he treats them with such respect as to almost preclude the use of the prefix "pop-". Gregor Hildebrandt's concept of culture is shaped by personal passions, thus making his explorations an exercise in both selectivity and intensity. He has spent many years working with storage media such as audio cassettes and VHS tapes. Before commencing his interventions, he records on them music or films that are important to him. Employing a technique that is characteristic for him – a special abrasion process – he transfers the coating of the magnetic tapes to a canvas. This results in a positive and a negative version of the motif – black on white, white on black.

This show finds him again deploying his technique to create new works focused, this time, entirely on chess. This can be explained partly by his affinity for the game, but also by the visit Hildebrandt paid to the cemetery of *Morne-à-l'eau* on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, a representation of which may be found on the invitation card. This is a surreal place featuring a wealth of chequerboard patterns. With complete purpose of mind in terms of design, almost every grave and cross is adorned with rigorously alternating black and white squares. A large portion of the motifs of Hildebrandt's new works have been inspired by this cemetery.

Death and chess – two systems that frequently coincide in cultural history, notably in novels and films. The artist's new pictures are instilled with this synthesis.

At the same time, the significant columns fashioned out of vinyl and laser discs which subdivide the room take their cue from the chequerboard interplay between black and white. A plinth in the middle of the room, seemingly laid as if for a meal, proves to be a scene of battle: cutlery is used to mark out its boundaries, the tableware is at war, the salt and pepper are the Queen and King. This is how the writers of the television detective series *Columbo* saw it: in one episode, a former Russian Grandmaster and his American challenger engage in a deadly match that begins in a French restaurant with a Queen's Gambit Declined – nothing less than the Cold War on 64 squares.

Amongst all the earnestness, it should not be forgotten that Hildebrandt's work also exudes lightness and hidden humour: a chequerboard floor composed of more than 1000 chessboards carries the principle of square motifs to excess. *Boden mit Schachbrettmuster (Floor with chequerboard pattern, 2016)* is both an installation and a convoluted hyperbole, for the figures on this playing surface – we ourselves – remain without coordinates or plan. We are left allowing ourselves to be led by the compelling visuality of Gregor Hildebrandt's works.

Text: Silke Hohmann

Gregor Hildebrandt (*1974 Bad Homburg) lives and works in Berlin. He studied at the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz and the University of the Arts Berlin. Gregor Hildebrandt was appointed Professor of Painting and Graphics at the Academy of Fine Arts Munich in 2015. He is in receipt of numerous awards and bursaries, including the 2016 Falkenrot Prize, the 2015 Kunst+Ethos Culture Prize and the 2009 Vattenfall Art Prize. His most recent solo exhibitions have been at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2016), Saarland Museum, Saarbrücken (2015-16), Niche, Berlin (2014, with Alicja Kwade), and the Museum van Bommel van Dam, Venlo (2012, with Jorinde Voigt). In terms of group exhibitions, his works have been shown at venues including the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (2015), Belvedere Vienna (2014), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012), Miami Art Museum (2012) and Prague Biennial 5 (2011).