

Andreas Maria Fohr
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aus dem keller loch from underground

Aus/from... from the depth, out of the ground, a hole..., somewhere from... this thing appears, something becomes visible or disappears, it all depends: a light, a bird, plants, hair, doors, echoes of silent voices, etc. ... The state they're in and their qualities are and remain uncertain, in transition, in transit.

Screening... is first and foremost detecting, tracing, after which comes the probing of the surface and letting it emerge. The entire oeuvre of Andreas Maria Fohr is composed of strata, layers and reverberations. His work always finds itself in this space between, on a treshold which prepares for some depths but which creates space at the same time.

Underground... there's a man drawing a spiral on a blackboard. This gesture is a reaction to the photo of a basement corridor, two images taken from *Der Gang aufs Land - Les mamelles de la vérité*¹ (2010), a video that was shot at the mythical site of Monte Verita, in the Villa Anatta, where the eponymous exposition of Harald Szeemann took place and his archives lie.

Window... In a strange looking encased window, sometimes serving as a display and other times as an antechamber, of which the status is as uncertain as its space, Fohr places images, objects and words, like for instance a plasterboard leaning against the wall – and picks apart. A spiral movement catches the eye of the observer and is taken over by other 'visions': eyes in test tubes on a terrifying, hairy mask² scanning the confined space of a greenhouse³ and, in the centre, a cavelike tunnel pierced in its right flank by a beam of light⁴. The test tubes, greenhouse and cellar are the theatre for experiments and the final place (display, exhibition room) is a laboratory.

Der Keller... The alchemy of art stems from the force of the look. « We must, without making abstraction of its concrete research aspect and practical objectives, consider alchemy to be in essence a method of spiritual awareness » (M. Caron, S. Hutin, *Les Alchimistes*, 1959, p. 179.)

Travelling E (Exile) is a centrifugal or centripetal voyage in Berlin's U5⁵ underground (2016), echoes, resonances that in turn dig new tunnels. The entire oeuvre of Fohr starts from a spacial constellation. All these objects and images are places: they have their own fields of reference. Furthermore, all these places are unique with their own space-time. They belong to other stories, to different bodies of work. They were born somewhere else and have undergone numerous transformations to arrive, right there, at that constellation that seems to make sense at that very moment. Brought together in the cast of the present, they have something in common, while rising from the depths comes flinging back a community that is open to new constellations through a play of looks and cross-perspectives.

Maïté Vissault

¹ "Der Gang aufs Land - les mamelles de la vérité" [la marche vers la campagne - les mamelles de la vérité], 27'30", vidéo, son, 2010

² "Gläsern", [en verre], masque, cheveux naturels, peinture, verre, 2016

³ "Untitled", photographie couleur, fine art print, 60 cm x 40 cm, extrait de la série "Der Garten meiner Kinder" [Le jardin de mes enfants], 2015

⁴ "Untitled"(screening), impression jet d'encre, contrecollé sur plaque de plâtre, 120 cm x 200 cm

⁵ "Travelling E (exile)", 36', vidéo HD, son, 2014/2016

Andreas Maria Fohr lives in Paris.

He studied at *ESAD Strasbourg*, *Kunstakademie Düsseldorf* and the *Institut des Hautes Etudes en Arts Plastiques* in Paris. Since 2011 he is appointed Professor for film at the art academy *ENSA Bourges*. His work experiments with the shortcut of related but not necessarily connected forms or significations.

Maïté Vissault is the director of ISELP (Higher Institute for the Research of Plastic Language) in Brussels. She graduated in political sciences and has a Ph.D. in Art History. Vissault teaches at the University of Lille 3 and from 2013 to 2015 she was head of ikob (the Museum for Contemporary Art of the German-speaking Community). As an historian, critic and curator of exhibitions showing contemporary art, she regularly publishes in books, catalogues and magazines on contemporary art. Her latest book was released in 2010 by Les presses du réel under the title *Der Beuys Komplex – L'identité allemande à travers la réception de l'œuvre de Joseph Beuys (1945-1986)*. As conservator of the Landesmuseum of Münster (from 2002 to 2004), she was appointed in 2005 to lead the science project of the Archives of art criticism. She also curates many important thematical and monographic exhibitions.