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Press release

THROUGH A GLASS, CLEARLY

Sebastian Burger / Stefan Guggisberg

Special Exhibition
September 9, 2016 – January 15, 2017

Through a Glass, Clearly is the title of the first institutional exhibition by Sebastian Burger (born 1980 in Magdeburg) and Stefan Guggisberg (born 1980 in Thun). The focus of the exhibition lies on new works on paper by both artists. The exhibition aims at establishing a dialogue between two positions, that have parallels in their artistic development: Burger and Guggisberg both graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig and were “Meisterschüler” (postgraduate students) in the class of Neo Rauch. The works presented in the exhibition give visitors an opportunity to understand and perceive the artistic and technical differentiation of their approach.

Common to both artists is a fundamental interest in the visual and haptic treatment of materials and surfaces, while in conceptual terms they take different directions: the centre of interest of Guggisberg’s works is the exploration of primal forces and cosmological ideas. In a laborious process Guggisberg creates artificial visions of inner landscapes, where natural elements and primordial forces such as water, stone, air, and light play key roles. His distinctive images often have an archaic character and bear witness to an inner truth of things, that seems to adhere to a universal logic of time and space.

Burger focuses on the artificial nature of the physical qualities of materials such as glass, metal, plastic, leather, and other fabrics. His visual language is influenced by media and pop culture. Besides autobiographical references, Burger uses motifs from music, litera-

ture and film – e.g. the utopian elements of science-fiction – for his compositions and arranges them into new meanings and images, that oscillate between still-lives, landscapes and comics.

The title of the two person show *Through a Glass, Clearly* can be understood quite literally. Both artists play with the dichotomy of visibility and invisibility and the optical clarity of forms and materials. Burger and Guggisberg create new glassy worlds composed of real, seemingly tangible objects and things, which are shaped from the paper ground and glazed oil with high precision in the execution and thus highlight the contrast between the fragility and persistence of structures.

This raises questions about the perception of images in our time, which is marked by filters on tablet and smartphone displays. The seemingly incessant flood of images spawns perpetual reproductions on luminous flat screens. In this context the slow process of creation applied by both artist appears almost anachronistic. The art works of Burger and Guggisberg feature crystal-clear as well as distorted or unfocused elements that enable the visitors of the exhibition to pierce through the glassy foil, to clear their gaze, and thus expand their own experience of seeing.

(text by Anka Ziefer)

Sebastian Burger, born 1980 in Magdeburg, 2001–2003 Vienna Art School, 2003–2009 studied painting at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig, 2010–2012 "Meisterschüler" (postgraduate) at the class of Neo Rauch. Burger lives and works in Leipzig. Solo exhibitions include Leipzig (2016), Frankfurt/Main (2014) and Berlin (2013). He participated in numerous group shows in Leipzig, Berlin and other cities including London (2016, 2014), Frankfurt/Main (2016), Naples (2016), New York (2016) and Hamburg (2012).

Stefan Guggisberg, born 1980 in Thun (Switzerland), 1999–2003 School of Design Biel, 2005–2009 studied photography and painting at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, 2010–2012 "Meisterschüler" (postgraduate) at the class of Neo Rauch, 2013 project fellowship Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen, 2015 Art Award City of Thun. Guggisberg lives and works in Leipzig. Solo exhibitions include Zurich (2015), Stuttgart (2013), Lugano (2011), Lucerne (2010) and Bern (2009). He participated in numerous group shows in Leipzig, Bern and other cities including Thun (2015), Biel (2014), Oslo (2014) and Aschaffenburg (2013).

Book launch/artist talk: An exhibition catalog will be published to accompany this exhibition. The catalog will be presented on occasion of an artist talk with both artists organized by the G2 Kunsthalle and scheduled for November 17, 2016, 6.30pm: *Sebastian Burger / Stefan Guggisberg – Through a Glass, Clearly* with texts by Domenico de Chirico & Anka Ziefer, edited by G2 Kunsthalle, published by MMKoeHN Berlin/Leipzig, graphic design: Kay Bachmann, ISBN 978-3-944903-36-1.