

BARBARA GROSS GALERIE

NINA CANELL | IAN KIAER

September 15–October 20, 2018

As part of the gallery share initiative *Various Others* and in cooperation with the Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin, we are delighted to present an exhibition of works by Nina Canell and Ian Kiaer in our premises.

Both artists are pioneers of a movement in contemporary art that, in responding to a world that increasingly appears dematerialized as a result of digitalization, turns attention to the material phenomena of reality. Intangible facts such as communication, ideas, or emotions, are given concrete physical presence in the often artistically atypical materials of Canell's and Kiaer's sculptural installation works. In their artistic practice, Kiaer and Canell share a conscious openness that, despite great precision, also allows for chance and favors the fragility of intermediate states, indecisiveness, and doubt over definitive truths.

In Ian Kiaer's work, the model plays a central role both conceptually and formally. Models allow thoughts to be given material form and function as a mediator between an idea and its concrete realization. Built architectural models emerge quite concretely in Kiaer's installations made from used everyday objects, waste materials, and pictures. In turn, the installations themselves can be seen as open, model-like experimental setups.

In the installation *Endnote tooth (grey)*, of 2017, the artist combines different scales of proportion. Together, his watercolor of a jade plant and picture of a floor, along with a table frame and fluorescent lamps set in the space, suggest a living area and are oriented on the scale of the viewer. By contrast, a small architectural model made of cardboard sitting on the floor of the gallery invites the viewer to shift their perspective.

The title of Kiaer's installation featured here, refers to Frederick Kiesler's (1890–1965) residential designs for his *Tooth House*, which encompasses spaces for living, working, and leisure and is completely integrated into its natural surroundings. Kiesler's architectural designs serve as examples of the influence that concepts and models can have on reality: although only one of his architectural designs was ever built, his visionary ideas nevertheless had a decisive impact on art, design, and architecture in the postwar period. Ian Kiaer intensively explored Kiesler's visionary concepts and rather than illustrating these visionary concepts, he pursues them further associatively, in the manner of a footnote.

Nina Canell is interested in different processes of transmitting energy that connect things with one another, and she researches these processes in her art in a very concrete manner. Her work hosts processes that either take place in them or testify to their occurrence.

For some years she has been working with electrical and telecommunications cables, the "nervous system of our current day", as the artist calls them. *Brief Syllable (Quiet)* displays a short piece of a subterranean communication cable on a concrete pedestal: a fragment of interpersonal communication, cut out from the endless flow of information exchange, cast in acrylic like a scientific object and thus kept in permanent suspension.

Shedding Sheaths is the title of a group of works comprising bizarrely shaped, organically intertwined objects distributed across the floor of the gallery. They are discarded, half-melted sheaths of underground fiber-optic cable. Canell found them at a recycling plant in South Korea, where, sorted by color and pressed into loose bundles, they were waiting to be recycled. Whereas the sheaths once served boundless, worldwide communication, which was transmitted through their now missing inner cables,

THERESIENSTRASSE 56 · D-80333 MÜNCHEN
TEL +49/89/296272 · FAX +49/89/295510
CONTACT@BARBARAGROSS.DE

B A R B A R A G R O S S G A L E R I E

Canell shows them in a transit state. Limp and fatigued, they speak of the Internet's material basis, something of which we are scarcely even aware.

The impression of weakness continues in the palely glowing neon lights and their loosely dangling cables in Canell's work *Satin Ions (Weak)*. For this piece hanging in the gallery's skylight space, she engages the basic functioning of the neon tubes. By changing individual components, such as such as the opacity of the luminescence and mixing of powder coats, or the voltage that passes through the neon gas within the tubes, she generates chance-based tonalities and textures that forms a carpet of light with a painterly quality.

Nina Canell, born 1979 in Växjö, Sweden, studied in Dublin, Ireland. She lives and works in Berlin. Selected solo exhibitions: S.M.A.K, Ghent; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (2018); Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; Le Crédac, Centre d'art contemporain, Ivry-sur-Seine, France (2017); Arko Art Center, Seoul (2015); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2014). In 2017 she co-represented Sweden at the Venice Biennale.

Ian Kiaer, born 1971 in London, lives and works in London and Oxford. Selected solo exhibitions: Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2017); Neubauer Collegium, Chicago (2016); Henry Moore Institute, Leeds; Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea (2014); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2012); Kunstverein München, Munich (2010).