

Galerie der Stadt Schwaz

## **Fears and Hopes**

April 28–June 16, 2018

Malene List Thomsen, Robert Müller, Beatrix Sunkovsky, Stefan Thater  
Curated by Cosima Rainer in collaboration with Robert Müller

Fear and hope are essential motivations for human actions and unfold powerful emotional driving forces. Revelations concerning the data company Cambridge Analytics have only recently shown how potential voters let themselves be manipulated when these two basic motivations are addressed in a literally mathematical manner. The millionfold misuse of data and the application of insights gained in the field of social psychology have facilitated a hitherto unknown form of “psychographic targeting.” Rational considerations are suppressed in favor of emotional motivations. Apart from the political arena, this “emotional interconnecting” has already infiltrated many other social spheres.

Initially, to fear and to hope something, like wanting and believing, is non-partisan, however. Yet it is anything but difficult to vectorially instrumentalize them so that they work on behalf of reactionary and radically modernist forces.

In focusing on fears and hopes, the exhibition also deals with two models that are contradictory in themselves. On the one hand, they help to affectively categorize a potential or coming future and to describe a place of helplessness where one’s reification comes to light; on the other hand, they act as forces compelling us to do things or motivate quite everyday productions in which an anticipating self may give free rein to its imagination.

The exhibition in the Galerie der Stadt Schwaz starts from this crossroads that addresses both vectors. Though the works by Malene List Thomsen (b. 1981, Brørup, Denmark), Robert Müller (b. 1979, Berlin), Beatrix Sunkovsky (b. 1951, Innsbruck), and Stefan Thater (b. 1968, Hamburg) included in the selection do not literally relate to these concepts, they share a broad understanding of “seriality” and performative repetition.

This approach is not only pursued explicitly—like in **Stefan Thater’s** overpaintings of catalogs that feature phones as motifs, transferring variations of forms and objects to alternating circumstances by regrouping, repeating or reproducing them. We will also find it implied in cases where the respective artistic practice is geared toward recurring motifs, events, or actions as well as in progressive movements and developments in time or the inclusion or exclusion of possibilities.

Using a stop-motion animation, **Beatrix Sunkovsky**, for example, explores the invention and realization of pictures and the reversal of these processes and thus conveys the temporal dimension of her own production of pictures as a concatenation of pictures as events.

**Malene List Thomsen** organizes pictorial inventions within a personal context; relying on biographical insignia by incorporating photographic material or her clothes, she addresses her own physicality and shifting identity.

**Robert Müller** translates references to the adaption of a foreign hand and to the transfer of a performative gesture into a schematic, teetering model of identity. This results in the serial appropriation of a foreign practice of drawing and the illustration of alternative fictitious life stories as a kind of graphic love letter.