

POSTCARD SALON

An experiment in exhibition making

It is isn't an easy time to be running a contemporary art gallery, unless as in many other industries you're one of the few at the top of the pyramid. This was evidenced throughout 2017 with the significant number of gallery closures; not only small to medium sized galleries with a modest clientele, but also established spaces with a reputation that extends beyond the savvy art connoisseur. Often shrouded in mystery the art world and accompanying market is one of the few industries still to embrace the changes brought with the Post Internet age of globalisation and digitisation.

Change now however is inevitable and unavoidable. The mega galleries as they're known are expanding in the same way as other major brands, where for example 10 companies control 90 percent of food sales, the art market is going in a similar direction. According to recent market surveys around 5,000 art dealers worldwide (out of 300k ~1.6%) are responsible for up to 80% of total sales by value. Following the 2008 Global Financial Crisis the segments between \$5,000 & \$250,000 have not recovered from the contraction in the market in 2009, but have continued to decline. With sales and buying interest becoming more centered on high-end galleries the smaller spaces have come under increasing pressure. This in addition to rising overheads, cost of participating in fairs to remain relevant and the fact that auction houses and art advisors are starting to offer many of the services typically provided by galleries, the future for the small to mid-level galleries is looking rather bleak.

With more of these spaces being forced to close, what will become of emerging contemporary artists? Without the smaller galleries to include their work in group shows, give them their first solo exhibition, find buyers & collectors for their work, connect them with curators & institutions and do everything they can to help ensure they reach a level of success - it will become increasingly difficult for emerging artists to leave the studio and find an audience for their work.

Although there is no obvious solution to the problems faced by galleries in this new global art market landscape, one thing that is clear is the need to reexamine the existing business model and investigate ways in which contemporary art galleries can sustain themselves and their artists. Which is why now more than ever it is important for the lower 95% of galleries and artists to work together, develop new models of collaboration to find a sustainable solution that enables artists a platform for exhibiting their work to the public.

Mindful of the aforementioned situation and our own experiences since establishing in 2013, the Postcard Salon was conceived as a way of examining, addressing and potentially overcoming some of the problems that many galleries now find themselves.

Inspired by alternative exhibition formats, the potential of the gallery space and the need to connect with new audiences, the Postcard Salon was above all influenced by our flier table at the entrance to the gallery. It's been interesting over the years observing visitor behaviour within the gallery, how people view the work and interact with the space. More discerning audiences, after considered viewing of the exhibition, reward themselves by browsing the flier table; taking the time to go through each individual postcard, carefully deciding which they'll take with them. As the majority of art enthusiasts are not fortunate enough to be in the position to purchase a work of art for themselves, the postcard is one physical memento of the experience and work from the artist they can in fact take home. Elevating this experience was the focus and conceptual intent behind this group exhibition.

Throughout the month of January 2018 we ran an online open call to artists working with photography, video and any lens based or related media, offering them the opportunity to be part of this experimental exhibition.

Keeping it simple there were only a few conditions required to participate:

- Limited to artists working with photography, video or related media
- Artists must have their own website

Beyond that the entrants were free to select their preferred image, aware that the gallery is focused on contemporary photography, predominately conceptual photo-media. Final selection of images was to the galleries discretion and each participating artist was required to contribute €100 towards the exhibition; assisting with professional printing of the postcards, return postage of any remaining cards, processing each entry, promotion of the exhibition and so on.

At the end of the call out 35 artists from across Europe and beyond were selected to take part, including Austria, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. The variety of subject matter reflects the diversity within the group exhibition, as well as revealing commonalities in thematic approach across this global sample. On the back of each postcard is a brief text provided by each individual artist,

together with links to their website and various social media channels that we hope you will explore.

We have been dedicated to promoting contemporary photography and video art since 2013 - in many cases giving artists their first exhibition in Berlin. We have also maintained a strong gender balance of male and female artists, and through our curated group exhibitions enabled emerging artists to be exhibited alongside their more established peers. For our first exhibition of 2018 we wanted to take on all that we've learnt in the past years and try something different. Experiment with the gallery model, different approaches to curating, and ways that artists not already within the system can gain new opportunities and an audience for their work.

Each and every one of the Postcards is available to take home, starting with the individual stacks presented in the space. We encourage you to take the time to experience the exhibition, discover something new and thank you for taking part in this experiment.

Alex Dabi Zhevi - www.moodwar.com

Anne Wölk - www.annewoelk.de

Axel Hoedt - www.axelhoedt.com

Chris Fortescue - haresbreath.com

David Amberg - www.davidamberg.de

Elisabeth Yoon - www.elisabethyoon.com

Eva Brunner - www.evabrunner.com

Eva von Schirach - itsayorki.de

Levi Wolffe - www.levi-wolffe.com

Judith Weber - www.judith-weber.com

Markus Hermann - markushermann.net

Melanie Haefner - melaniehaefner.com

Pascal Cavin - www.pcavin.ch

Penelope Hunt - www.penelopehunt.net

Sarina Lirosi - sarinalirosi.com

Sophie Dumaresq -

www.sophiedumaresqphotography.com

Thomas Kellner - thomaskellner.com

Alice Connew - www.aliceconnew.com

Ash Kerr - www.david-ashleykerr.com

Chloe Bartram - www.chloebartram.com

David Pereira - www.davidpereirastudio.com

David Holloway - adavidhollowayart.com

Emidio Puglielli - www.emidiopuglielli.com

Eva Gjaltema - www.evagjaltema.org

Francesca Magnani - www.francescamagnani.com

Gerlinde Miesenböck - gerlinde-miesenboeck.com

Lynne Margaret Brown - lynnemargaretbrown.com

Martin Waltz - streetberlin.net

Mirjana Vrbaski - www.mirjanavrbaski.com

Oliver Krumes - streetphotographyberlin.com

Rachel Allan - rachelhopeallan.com

Ruth Hommelsheim - hommelsheim.com

Talia Smith - www.talia-smith.com

Tanya Dyhin - tanyadyhin.com

Torsten Schumann - torstenschumann.de