

Artists Talk

Thurs 14.03.2024

at 18:30 (eng)

Paolo Baggi in conversation  
with Debbie Alagen  
and Sveta MordovskayaArt at noonshort visit followed by  
a collation– Fri 19.04.2024, at 12:15  
(de/fr)– Fri 17.05.2024, at 12:15  
(de/fr)

CHF 15.–

booking up to the day  
before: info@kbc cb.ch**DEBBIE ALAGEN  
COMPLEX**

Prix New HEADS

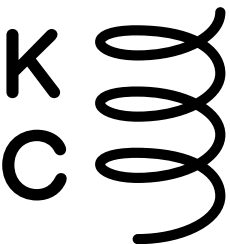
01.03.–19.05.2024

cur.: Paolo Baggi

*Complex* is presented in the old part of the Kunsthaus where the rooms all open off a straight corridor. Usually, this solid layout determines one's experience of the variably sized rooms. At the moment, there is a partition in the last room which divides it length-wise. The door is closed but you can look in through a peephole. In the room beside it, the narrow passage between the two walls forms another corridor. Similar in staging but more isolated from real space, this corridor feels more theatrical. Abstracted from its surroundings it loses its solidity and takes on an eerie character.

Debbie Alagen's (\*1997) installations are two cracks in the space and distract us from the taken-for-granted familiarity of the surroundings as if they were piecing together a dream. The artist's work takes place in those fundamentally unfilled places where overly precise forms of communication are absent. Here there is no direct line from A to B and back, there are choices to be made instead. Shall I hang around in the corridor or in front of the door, maybe peep into the room and satisfy my curiosity? The real and the symbolic cut across each other and give rise to a feeling of disorientation which is both trivial and sublime, an upsetting wavering like a curtain which both hides and reveals. Here there is as much an echo of the never-ending corridors in *Shining* as of those in poor, faded, run-down hotels (note the warm and unfashionable yellow of the walls).

Debbie Alagen's art operates in the disturbance caused by re-ordering, reorganising the everyday. The repeated experiences are also those of a fragmented subjectivity composed of countless disparate elements, a sort of imaginary construction rather like a dream. And they are to be approached with the same wariness; describing the «I» might mean resorting to the idea of an imaginary substance, a fantasized stability or of a code for something cryptic. The open, public nature of the exhibition can then mirror and play out, to a heightened degree, the private and subjective. Debbie Alagen interferes with the occurrence of our common perceptions; the collective experience is manipulated by a fake window or the memory of an image of a pasture. So *Complex* organises a staging of patterns with sequences of trickery and oppression in surroundings which have become unmoored like in a dream. Rationality slips out under the doorsteps while the sensory experience of the symbolism is decoded collectively to a faint murmur from the other side, and this in all the apparitions of the corridor.

Kunsthaus Centre d'art  
Biel Bienne

Opening hours

Wed 12:00–18:00

Thurs 12:00–20:00

Fri 12:00–18:00

Sat&amp;Sun 11:00–18:00

— HEAD  
Genève

## ROOM 1

*I THINK I HAVE SEEN  
THIS BEFORE.  
YOU WILL PROBABLY  
SEE IT AGAIN, 2024*  
MDF panels, acrylic paint,  
wood, lamps, mixed media

Clockwise:

*And then one day your body  
starts to hurt and everything  
(- once was big start to look  
so little), 2024*  
OSB panels, lacquer,  
mixed media

*The man in me, 2024*  
panneaux OSB, lacquer,  
mixed media

*I love the way you love me.  
The first time you said  
«I love you», I said «Thank you»,  
2024*  
OSB panels, lacquer,  
mixed media

*Hard pillow makes it easy  
to swallow, 2024*  
OSB panels, lacquer, tiling,  
mixed media

*I wish I could leave and start over  
again but I have leftovers waiting  
for me up there in the fridge, 2024*  
OSB panels, lacquer,  
tiling, fabric, mixed media

*Matter of the heart, 2024*  
panneaux OSB, lacquer,  
mixed media

## ROOM 2

*GRASS IS GREENER  
ON MY SIDE,  
2024*  
OSB panels, wood, lacquer,  
mixed media

*Untitled, 2024*  
mixed media

## STAIRCASE

*Untitled, 2024*  
mixed media