

**Philippe Decrauzat*****bright phase, dark phase***

April 29 – June 11, 2016

Opening reception April 29, 6 – 9 pm

Gallery Weekend Berlin

Friday, April 29, 11 am – 9 pm

Saturday, April 30, 11 am – 7 pm

Sunday, May 1, 11 am – 7 pm

On the occasion of Gallery Weekend Berlin, Mehdi Chouakri is pleased to present its second exhibition of Philippe Decrauzat. The artist has envisioned a large-scale installation consisting of a new architecture, a wall work spanning the entire gallery space, a film, and paintings. He continues his exploration of the mechanisms of vision by camouflaging the entirety of the walls with a black-and-white checkerboard. Applied on partitions that shape new paths in the gallery, the repeated pattern is either blown up or minimized through changes of scale, immersing the beholder in an environment of visual distraction.

The exhibition opens with the film *20 Figures*, a two-channel projection on screens mirroring each other in the first room. Decrauzat observes a cup of coffee in close up, recording the hot liquid spiraling, bubbling, foaming, and, indeed, building hypnotic abstract landscapes projected onto grey monochrome canvases. In the process, perception is slowly enveloped by the black void, switching back and forth between different scales – microscopic and macroscopic – reflected by the synchronized double projection of the same film. Like the checkerboard, Decrauzat uses the surface of the coffee as a sort of déjà vu mental space, taking this close-up as the ultimate subjective view.

In the second room, the artist's paintings of the same checkerboard in different gradations are hung as such that the works are interwoven into the architecture. The paintings gently fade from black to white or vice versa, mixing in subtle shades of grey that dim the stark contrast. These shifts in black on black and white on white evoke states of transition, sources of light, or even the act of erasure. The checkerboard is not only a timeless pattern (used widely from antiquity to the avant-gardes), but also a physiological image that belongs to subjective visual phenomena generated by the eye under certain stimulations, as revealed by the scientist J.E. Purkinje in the 19th century. That is, it is the starting point of possible images, both real and virtual, as it is potentially present in our retina and as the neutral background in imaging softwares.

Transformed into an oversized chessboard, the gallery then becomes a hybrid, neither white cube nor dark cinema: Decrauzat's installation merges both concepts into a room for projection. Like a screen that continuously shifts from one backdrop to another, the artist invites the beholder into an unexpected field of vision beyond abstraction and reality that flattens the film, the paintings, and the architecture onto the same plane.

Philippe Decrauzat (b. 1974, Lausanne, Switzerland) lives and works in Paris. His works have been recently exhibited at Le Plateau FRAC Île-de-France, Paris (2015), Le Magasin – Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble (2014), Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris (2014), Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013) and MUAC – Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City (2013), among others. Parallel to Gallery Weekend Berlin, they are also on view at the Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, in the group show "The Promise of Total Automation" (March 11 – May 29, 2016).