

ALL IN ONE

STEPHAN WITTMER (LUCERNE/CH)



APRIL 14 – JUNE 11, 2022

CONVERSATION WITH STEPHAN WITTMER

SF: On closer inspection, the simultaneously cryptic and lurid *All in One* of your exhibition title turns out not to be a new artistic movement, but rather a slogan from advertising. – The invitation card and individual objects from the exhibition reveal what kind of advertising. The big gesture, the programmatic slogan that has its home in the normal, everyday. – How typical is this for your exhibition and your approach?

STW: Indeed, *All in One* is a highly speculative and seductive exhibition title. It serves me as a hook, as a first field of association for my pictorial work, which moves between

photography and sculpture. The gestures of doing (e.g. pressing buttons or putting things on top of each other) interlock these work zones. *All in One* is a dishwasher tab, which dissolves during the wash cycle and, according to the instructions on the packaging, cleans a lot more than just the dishes...

Exhibition view, back room, *Grosse Wand (Version Bonn)*, 2022 (engl.: Big wall), *Vitrine (Version Bonn)*, 2022 (engl.: Showcase), *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer





Detailed view front room, *House, Clouds and ...* (series II, *The Diner*), 2022, digital printing on plush, various materials and objects, approx. 160 x 200 cm, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

So I put weight on this hanger and see how good it is...yes: I'm then interested in the transfers to the pictorial work and I try to encourage the visitors to create individual narratives, to call up their own experiences in order to create shifts and irritations. To create new images in your head. Everyday life is rich in the unusual. It's just that we easily overlook what I suddenly notice in other landscapes or in new places. So I found these little liquor bottles (*Flimm* and *Kleiner Feigling*) or an empty milk tube (*Milchmädchen*) at the next bus stop Bergstrasse, which inspired me to do new work. So: very typical of my approach. I try to get through these everyday objects with a new gesture. Scanned, a dishwasher tab also looks completely different: like a delicate, excitingly structured image with beautifully rounded corners. Dots of color can be seen in the small area...

SF: ...I get stuck on the words *field of association* and think that in your exhibition in the ESSZIMMER you have created a huge field of association that, like a perpetual motion machine, is constantly being recharged, allowing new connections to emerge without getting exhausted.

STW: Association fields are uncertain terrains and full of surprises! It is also challenging to define or outline these fields. As an artist, I then rely on image content that can be named and that leaves a first trace... but perception keeps getting in the way. In addition, with the large photographs on plush, there is the irritation caused by the material of the picture carrier; which absorbs all the light and brings the picture very clearly into the foreground. Linked to a high emotion and the (intuitive) knowledge that this is the size of a duvet, the association fields begin to vibrate! This is also intended, since - as noted in the title of the exhibition - it is about ALL IN ONE. The whole world is placed on the tip of a pencil...sketchy, provisionally, in balance or collapsing...to start again from the very beginning! The question (for me) is: where do the pictures come from and where do they go...(and what do the pictures do when they are here). From an artistic point of view, the question is: how do I bring all the saved (image) files into the exhibition! I hide

Detailed view of the back room, *Boonekamp* (220 volts, 44% VOL), 2022, glass, plastic and metal, *All in one* by Stephan Wittmer



Detailed view front room, *Fireplace*, 2020, pigment printing on photo paper, on aluminum, car tire, D 50 x H 40 cm, *All in one* by Stephan Wittmer





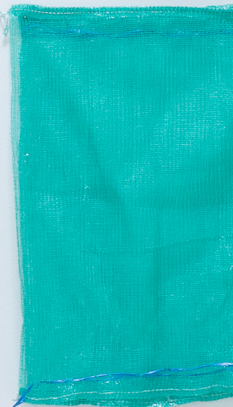
Detailed view of the back room, *Vitrine (Version Bonn)*, 2022 (engl.: *Showcase*), 3 camping tables with crushed aluminum cans, photocopies (*Editing Tin Can*), stirring sticks and plastic spoons, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

how the images get into the (external) (data) memory at all. In the dishwasher, for example, the container for the tabs is a desired (safe) place that opens during the washing program and releases the *All in One* tab for dissolving...

SF: ...the question is also, where do the pictures go after I've seen them? Do they even go anywhere, or do they dissolve like dishwashing tablets once they've served their purpose? What remains, what connects with other things?

STW:... yes, that's a good hint! Pictures work like homeopathy...a minimal potency with a big effect! That's exactly what interests me a lot. ..Maybe it's just a hunch, a guess, an impulse, or an intrinsic knowledge that *something* is happening. Which is difficult to measure. Or: maybe it's the flapping of a butterfly's wing in the Amazon region that triggers a thunderstorm in our country. Chaos theory. Speculation versus intuition? I can't really judge that... but I see the exhibition medium as "my" tool. I don't just want to show, I also want to discover something new for myself. This is how these small "instant pictures" or mini-sculptures came about.

SF: ... and you'd love to wrap yourself up in the pictures of abandoned, half-ruined houses under a sky reminiscent of the Marlboro advertisements printed on plush blankets... the materiality creates a closeness and emotional warmth that the more desolate pictures don't have. The familiar, comfortably warm suddenly mixes with the economic abyss, the unsteady, temporary *All in One*.







Detail view back room, from left: *Milchmädchen* 2022, plastic and paper; *All in One*, 2022, dishwasher tabs, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

STW: We all like to be deceived and even better to be seduced. It's very natural and enjoyable... But camouflage and fake news are becoming more and more sophisticated and therefore more dangerous. It is therefore crucial to be able to move dreamily through the world and across all abysses... in order to outwit one's own fears, which is only nearly as successful with sober reflection. Here in Europe and especially in Switzerland, the social and economic safety nets are tightly knit and we are among the most privileged citizens on this planet... so that I can deal with this *All in One* triviality...

SF: In fact, your exhibition conveys something light, dance-like... although the fragile, temporary character runs through both rooms. Your exhibition leaves a lot open, which also brings with it uncertainties... - but luckily there are plush blankets for that...
In the back exhibition room, where the first thing a visitor had to think of was a construction site, the openness that was created seems to be even stronger. The references between what has been found and what has been collec-

ted are mixed with the formal use of color and material, pictures that you keep showing up, such as the bottle cap (on a poster and as objects), the crushed aluminium cans, collected bags, sacks and tarpaulins that have been used for other purposes are partly presented in a showcase, partly as a large wall panel and partly as small sculptures, ready-mades of everyday life laid out on the floor.

STW: The construction site is my studio, my workplace. For this project, I also included the exhibition medium. So the project and the presentation only crystallized at the very end. The dishwasher can now be opened and hot steam will escape from the machine...

Detailed view of the back room, *Seen in Dakar (Made in Bonn)*, 2022, composite stone and bread, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer



Stephan Wittmer | www.stephanwittmer.ch

*1957, lives and works in Lucerne/CH

Relevant activities

- ab 2021 the magazin _957 gets a redaction in Lucerne/CH, which is used for art projects and the magazine itself
- ab 2021 Lead of the Galerie Kriens, Kriens/CH
- 2017/21 Member of Raum B74 Raum für Kunst, Lucerne/CH
- ab 2013 Initiating and leading the Museum I, art gallery on a derelict at the periphery of Lucerne/CH
- ab 2013 Lecturer at Hochschule Luzern/CH, in design and art in the course of studies art & mediation. research work RiK - Regie in Komplizenschaft- Experiences and perspectives of artistic mediation
- ab 2012 Publisher of _957, an independent art magazine which is published monthly
- 2009 Founding member of the Alpeum producer gallery
- 2001/07 Leader of Kunstpanorama Luzern/CH, today Kunsthalle Luzern
- 1999 Founding partner and management of the PZK Plat form for contemporary art GmbH (today SPAMAM GmbH).
Founding of the documentation center diebasis, which is now housed in the Kunsthalle Luzern/CH
- 1990 Founding member (with Stefan Banz, Bruno Müller-Meyer und Erwin Hofsetter) of Kunsthalle Luzern/CH
- 1982 School for design in Luzern/CH, Diplomabschluss
- 1981/83 Founding OFF-Space Galerie auf Zeit, Luzern/CH

Awards, Scholarships (selection)

- 1991 Residency, Cite internationale des Arts in Paris/FR
Eidgenössisches Kunststipendium

Exhibitions (selection since 2018)

- 2021 Poison Ivy, B74 Raum für Kunst, Luzern/CH
Looking Forward, BelleVue- Ort für Fotografie, Basel/CH
BYOD, Kunst im Eck, Aarau/CH
DDMMYYY, redaktion, Luzern/CH
Warm Up, CA149_NF49, Seetalplatz, Emmenbrücke/CH
- 2020 Salty, Loud and Very Very, Ausstellungsraum 745, /CH
Palacestine, Peterskapelle, Luzern/CH
Skizzen aus dem Lockdown, Kornschütte/CH
a5@Mokka-Rubin, Olten/CH
TOWN-HO ON TOUR, La rada, Locarno/CH
RIVAPIANA. The Motel, Rathaus für Kultur Lichtensteig/CH
WIR-PUBLIZIEREN, Kunsthalle Bern/CH
Päng, Puff, Tat-Ort, Littau Luzern/CH
TOWN-HO, B74 Raum für Kunst, Luzern/CH
LLPPPP, (ort) Raum für Performance, Emmenbrücke
Jahresausstellung Solothurn, Kunstmuseum Olten/CH
- 2019 Isla A Isla, Galerie Fischer Luzern/CH
Der letzte Giacometti, B74 Raum für Kunst Luzern/CH
FINALEMINIMALE, Alpeum Produzentengalerie Luzern
Neue Editionen, Steindruckerei Wolfensberger Zürich/CH
Isla A Isla, Fabrica del Arte & Revolution Art Space, Havana Cuba/CU
Der verwaschene Ort, Zentralwäscherei Zürich/CH
Swissoil in Kosovo, Peterskirche Luzern/CH
Utopie II: Personal Fit, Kornschütte Luzern/CH
ROSEBUD, B74 Raum für Kunst Luzern/CH
- 2018 Pièce de Résistance, Neubad Luzern/CH
XL_Jahresausstellung Kunstmuseum Luzern/CH
HOME OF BEAUTY, B74 Luzern/CH
I3 N gel, K25 Luzern/CH
Bruchstrasse_53, Luzern/CH
GOOD YEAR, Neubad Luzern/CH
TON OHNETON, Alpeum Produzentengalerie/C



Exhibition view front room, in the foreground *bupgame (Reissdorf Kölsch)*, 2022, beer bottle, 6 crown corks, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

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This publication of the exhibition was enabled by:



Front:

Exhibition view front room, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

Back:

Detailed view of the back room, *Russisches Orakel*, 2022 (engl.: Russian oracle), glass, metal and plastics, *All in One* by Stephan Wittmer

