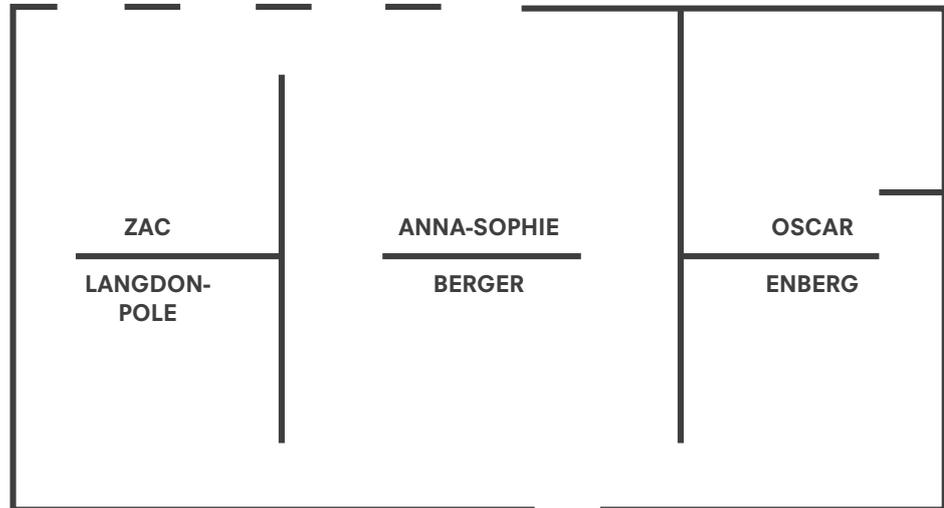


ARS VIVA 2017 / 18

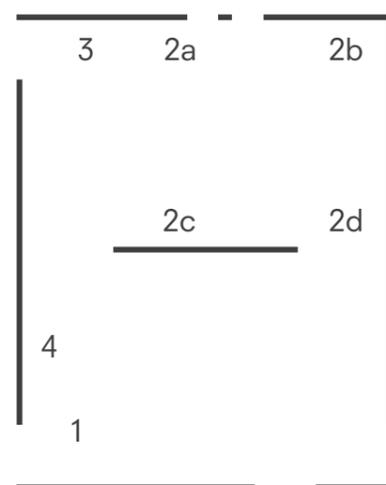
ANNA-SOPHIE BERGER,
OSCAR ENBERG,
ZAC LANGDON-POLE

Since 1953, the Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im BDI e.V. (the Association of Arts and Culture of the German Economy Federation of German Industries) has been awarding the annual ARS VIVA prize to young artists living in Germany whose works are distinguished by their progressive nature. Following an initial exhibition at the Kunstverein in Munich, the three winners are showing their work here in a newly established exhibition. In this way, the museum presents a focused view of the international young art scene.

The winners of the ARS VIVA prize in 2017/18 are Anna-Sophie Berger (1989) from Austria and Oscar Enberg (1988) and Zac Langdon-Pole (1988) from New Zealand. Although their art and the focus of their research are very different, each of the three artists raises exploratory questions about the social, historical and economic aspects of objects and their surroundings. Each visualises and combines contemporary conventions concerning production, distribution and valuation. In this exhibition, various artistic strategies also intersect, such as hybridisation, recontextualisation and semantic analysis.

In Ghent, the three artists concentrate among other things on the specific spatial setting of S.M.A.K. In a sensitive and well-considered manner they embed their individual works and the exhibition as a whole in the museum building and its urban environment. For example, there is the project by Zac Langdon-Pole in association with a florist's shop near the museum; Oscar Enberg incorporates into his show a drawing by Thierry De Cordier from the S.M.A.K. collection; and Anna-Sophie Berger approaches the Citadel Park as the counter-image to the museum's indoor space. In addition, the use of biographical material and ordinary objects – such as furniture (Langdon-Pole) and business documents (Berger) from their own family, and the colonial history of his place region of origin (Enberg) – contributes to the quite domestic character of this exhibition.

ANNA-SOPHIE BERGER



1. **COMPLICIT 1**, 2018
acrylic paint on 'Heritage Release' red wine bottle, chocolate bananas, mayonnaise, chocolate Krampus, Coca-Cola Zero, Manner Fredi Biskuits, Tabasco, pvc, aluminium and polyester
COMPLICIT 2, 2018
acrylic paint on egg liquor, canned lentils, fair trade ground coffee, herbal tea, marzipan figurine, sugar, pvc, aluminium and polyester
2. **4 SOFAS**, 2018
print on cotton velvet, polyester fleece, wood, metal
3. **BERLA 1 (BESTELLSCHEIN)**, 2018
inkjet on paper, edition of 3
BERLA 2 (VERKAUFS- U. LIEFERBEDINGUNGEN), 2018
inkjet on paper, edition of 3
4. **NORTH WEST**, 2018
laser-print on paper
ROCK GATE, 2018
laser-print on paper

1 | **Complicit 1**, 2018 **Complicit 2**, 2018

The title of these 'bouquets' of foodstuffs plays on the idea of the consumer's responsibility. Berger sees these works as portraits of the buyer in a broad, sociological sense and as documentation of the specific design of products from her home country, Austria. The finger and hand prints stand for the joint responsibility borne by the consumer of these products. For Berger this is more about a gauging of the capacity to act than about an idea of anti-consumption, which is a significant nuance in the European context and the sometimes heated debates between the European Union and its member states.

2 | **4 Sofas**, 2018

Four sofas are arranged in the four corners of this room. In this way each corner automatically refers to the other three. If you put them together, they would form a square. In this work, Berger suggests the movement involved in putting them together. The shape of the sofas was inspired by those of old-fashioned seating modules. The artist, who among other things studied fashion design, bought the fabrics they are covered with in a sale. Some of their patterns are more reminiscent of car seats than household furniture. The white fabrics with words printed on them in black are based on an alphabet that Berger designed. On each sofa one can read a word that is just about to fall apart: exhume, hunch, tethered and cumbersome.

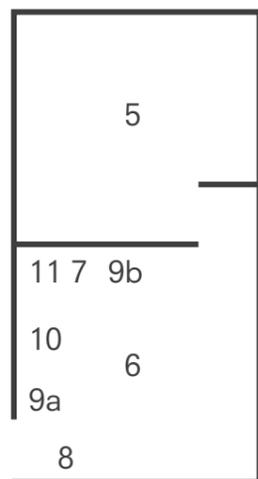
3 | **Berla 1 (Bestellschein)**, 2018 **Berla 2 (Verkaufs- u. Lieferbedingungen)**, 2018

These are reproductions of items from the archives of a factory making fashion accessories that was run by Berger's family for three generations until it finally had to close down in 2005. In post-industrial Western Europe, this sort of family company became superfluous after the expansion of the European Union to the east, partly because of the possibility of cheaper production in low-wage countries. Berger does not see these blown-up scans of the original documents only as something nostalgic, but also as a metaphor for the distribution of goods. The order form and the accompanying conditions of sale are an analogue counterpart to the online sale conditions that we accept with a single digital click. Details such as three-figure telephone numbers and original letterheads reinforce the historical character of the work. By showing this work in Ghent, not far from Brussels, Berger embeds her family history in European economic history.

4 | **North West**, 2018 **Rock Gate**, 2018

The popular German toy manufacturer Playmobil has offered miniature versions of real world and historical phenomena to children for generations. With these plastic figures, children can create their own little worlds and stage human and non-human interactions. Berger shows a pair of images from the illustrated Playmobil building instructions. In both, a god-like human hand looms over artificial settings, which are marked by the inventory numbers of their respective components. Arrows indicate the order in which these realistic abstractions of the natural world can be faithfully created.

OSCAR ENBERG



5. **RED BERYL AND CROCODILE, OPAL (IRRATIONAL EXUBERANCE IN THE WHITE MAN'S HOLE)**, 2016–'17
video, 23'07"

6. **TABLE D'HÔTE OR SOLDIER WITH WHORE AND A CONTENTED CUCKOLD IN THE NEW FASHION (LAID BARE)**, 2018
prepared lithographic limestone from Solnhofen,

hand woven willow, cast pigmented epoxy, clock, mirror, polished stainless steel, horn mouthpieces, stained and oiled oak and ash, upholstery springs, horse hair, wool felt, walking cane (maple, ebony, bocote, sterling silver and goat horn), clock parts, accordion bellows, knitted Dundaga wool socks, upholstered linen, cotton, card

7. **DIE PHANTASIE**, 2017
patinated and polished cast bronze, handmade three cup Bruges lace bra, wenge, zebra stone, brass

8. **MEPHISTOPHELES SCANNING SCANDALS**, 2017
salt-water croco-dile tooth, ebony, opals, antique ivory, sterling silver and stainless steel

9a. **MILLI JANNIDES, THE MOST COMMON THING IN THE WORLD**, 2017–'18
oil on canvas

9b. **THIERRY DE CORDIER, PAINCATCHER ON A STICK (SOUVENIR)**, 1989
charcoal and pencil on paper
collectie S.M.A.K.

10. **COOPER PEDY CUCKOLD CLOCK**, 2017
cast pigmented polyester resin, enamel, polished cast bronze, rusted horn mouthpiece and nails, waxed cotton thread

11. **IMPERIAL BRIC-A-BRAC (RUSHTON MIMIC AND ANRI MIMIC)**, 2018
acrylic and enamel on cast epoxy resin, assorted fabrics, sheep wool and horsehair filling, printed satin sash, quilted cotton waistcoat, ribbon, safety pin, printed card, painted and stained carved linden, brass

5 | Red Beryl and Crocodile, Opal (Irrational Exuberance in the White Man's Hole), 2016–17, video, 23'07"

This film is set in the Australian opal mining settlement of Coober Pedy – an English translation of the Aboriginal name for the area, Kupa Piti, meaning 'white man in hole'. It is a place, which has been shaped by prospectors, colonizers, and the Hollywood machine, who all saw the land as a place from which to extract value. Today, it's an anachronism of sorts. It relies on its history to subsist, ironically, by selling imported opals. At the centre of the film is its narrator, Red Beryl, who tracks traces of the film's mytho-poetic antagonist, Crocodile Harry – a Latvian baron and Nazi sympathizer turned opal digger turned sex-tourist host, who is said to have inspired the character Mick Dundee in the 1986 film 'Crocodile Dundee'. Enberg draws a parallel between Crocodile Harry's grotto – a 'hole' filled with mementos suggesting desire, abuse, exploitation – and Nero's infamous palace, Domus Aurea.

6 | table d'hôte or Soldier with Whore and a contented cuckold in the new fashion (laid bare), 2018

On the occasion of this exhibition, Oscar Enberg is for the first time presenting two existing works – *table d'hôte or Soldier with Whore* (2017) and *A contented cuckold in the new fashion* (2017) – which he displayed at Kunstverein in Munich as two separate works, as a single installation.

A sombre bed is accompanied by an array of practical, yet perverse, objects: a bottle opener cum shoehorn (a tool for the foot and the mouth), a cane, a series of horn mouthpieces, and a pair of dirty socks from Dundaga, Latvia. This town was the birthplace of Arvid von Blumenthal, also known as Crocodile Harry. Each of these items are utility objects, and together they imply the presence of a lone male. The handle of his walking stick alludes to this absent character's possible state of mind – a certain shame regarding the solitary existence. The host here not only accepts a degree of humiliation, but also encourages it.

A cast of a hat worn by Red Beryl, the protagonist in Enberg's film, has been turned into a clock that is set to the time in Coober Pedy, the Australian town where the film is set. The installation symbolises debauched desire, self-deprecation and avarice. On a footstool upholstered in fabric sourced in Coober Pedy lies a green felt hat in rabbit fur, a form synonymous with the cuckolded male.

7 | Die Phantasie, 2017

The supports for this site of combustion are carved in zebra stone – a by-product of mining activity with no real economic value, but which locals in Coober Pedy now carve into crude biomorphic sculptures for tourists. On top of it is a similarly biomorphic bronze – a 'translation' of a mural that was painted by a German tourist in Crocodile Harry's dugout. The figure depicts a three-breasted woman, and draped over it is an appropriately triple-cupped Bruges lace bra – a reference to the hundreds of quasi-spiritual sex tourists who travel to Coober Pedy in a rather grotesque colonial migration. All of these materials and references are combined to accentuate the endless transactions, fabrications, mistranslations, and perversions that have shaped this specific community or, for that matter, any community.

8 | Mephistopheles scanning scandals, 2017

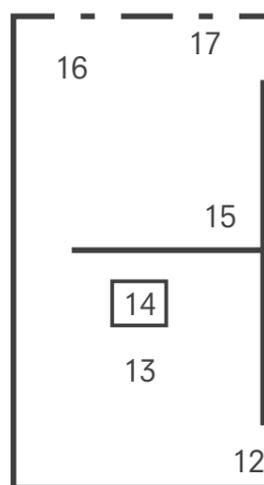
The corkscrew is a symbol for physical compression, and for drinking and conviviality, and also refers to a downward spiral. The crocodile tooth, as well as the likeness of a crocodile carved in ebony, the ivory and the opal are references to Crocodile Harry – the antagonist in Enberg's film *Red Beryl and Crocodile, Opal (Irrational Exuberance in the White Man's Hole)*. The decadence of the corkscrew's penetration or violation of the wall is a metaphor for the extraction of value from the Coober Pedy community in the film – a place that is, for Enberg, an almost perfect manifestation of entropy.

9a | Milli Jannides, The most common thing in the world, 2017-'18

9b | Thierry De Cordier, Paincatcher on a stick (souvenir), 1989

Oscar Enberg's presentation also includes the work of two other artists. These are a drawing by Thierry De Cordier (1954, Belgium) from the S.M.A.K. collection and a painting by Milli Jannides (1986, New Zealand). This is a consequence of Enberg's view of Coober Pedy, the town in his film, which he sees as a dual place that over the centuries has been able to develop by exploiting a great many guests, often undesirable. In a certain sense the film outlines the penetration of a community and attempts to gauge the relations between the guests and their hosts. In so doing, Enberg links it to the 1980 book *The Parasite* by the French philosopher Michel Serres (1930) which explores the possible parallels between human relationships and the relation between parasites and their host bodies. The fact that Enberg integrates the work of a young female painter into his display is in his view linked to the damaging sexual politics of the town of Coober Pedy. Enberg sees Thierry De Cordier's drawing, related to his mythic bird sculpture from the S.M.A.K. collection, as a symbolic bridge between Belgium and Australia, Ghent, Ostend and Coober Pedy, and their colonial history.

ZAC LANGDON-POLE



front desk where an attendant can provide further information.

Opening hours location:

Tuesday – Saturday:
9.00 am – 6.30 pm
Sunday: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
closed on Monday

12. AND SOON THE LANDSCAPE LOST ALL VARIETY, 2018

To view this piece takes approximately 25 minutes. The work involves a 10 min walk from the museum to a designated location. Please refer to the leaflet for instructions detailing how to get there. If you require any further assistance please ask a member of staff or visit the

13. PARADISE BLUEPRINT, 2018
non-woven wallpaper based on a cyanotype photograph of the removed legs of a bird of paradise

14. EMIC ETIC, 2018
aluminum tool travel case, cast iron calf weaner, Buckingham Palace Pearl Tiara

15. ASSIMILATION STUDY, 2017
right wing Mallard Duck, left human scapula model, left wing Ringneck Parrot, right human scapula model, right wing Pigeon, left human scapula model, left wing Mallard Duck, right human scapula model, right wing Ringneck Parrot, left human scapula model, left wing Pigeon, right human scapula model

16. PUNCTATUM (LONGCASE CLOCK), 2017

Anobium Punctatum (woodworm) ridden longcase clock from New Zealand, restored with 24ct. gold

PUNCTATUM (MUSIC SHELF), 2017

Anobium Punctatum (woodworm) ridden music shelf from New Zealand, restored with 24ct. gold

PUNCTATUM (LETTER DESK), 2017

Anobium Punctatum (woodworm) ridden letter desk from New Zealand, restored with 24ct. gold

17. ARGONAUT (ARRESTED STAR), 2017

iron barbwire fence stretching tool, part replaced with Seymchan meteorite (iron pallasite, found: Seymchan, Russia)

12 | and soon the landscape lost all variety, 2018

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13 | Paradise Blueprint, 2018

When Europeans first brought back stuffed specimens of Birds of Paradise from Papua New Guinea, these creatures no longer had any feet or wings, leading to the misconception that the birds were like flying serpents that never touched the earth until they died. *Paradise Blueprint* stems from a previous project in which Langdon-Pole removed the legs of a taxidermied Bird of Paradise to re-prepare it in accordance with the initial forms of encounter and trade between the two cultures. Here Langdon-Pole has used the cut-off legs themselves as the basis for wallpaper. After making cyanotype photographs of these avian legs, Langdon-Pole then multiplied them to form a wallpaper pattern. Historically, cyano-types were used by the 19th-century botanist Anna Atkins in her classification studies, and more widely in the 20th century as 'blueprints' to reproduce architectural plans. Having wallpapered the entire first room in this repeating pattern, these bird legs become like negative shapes in a blue sky, somewhere between falling and flight, whereby the presence of the cut-off legs is at once documented and rendered absent.

14 | emic etic, 2018

During the 19th century, the industrialisation of farming practices coincided with the expansion of colonial territories across the globe. Calf weaners were a tool developed during this period to stop young cows feeding from their mother's milk so that the calf could be sold on faster and more milk could be harvested from the mother. The tool would be affixed to the calf's nose, causing it to prick the mother whenever it tried to feed, generating a violent separation both physically and psychologically. Variations of these tools are still used in farming today. *emic etic* combines a used antique cast-iron calf weaner with a crystal- and pearl-encrusted tiara handcrafted by the jewellers at Buckingham Palace in London, UK.

15 | Assimilation Study, 2017

The severed wings of a Mallard duck, a Ring-necked Parrot and a pigeon are placed in proximity to casts of the human scapula (shoulder blade bone) – an exercise in anatomical comparison and contrast. The display evokes a sort of interspecies interchange, or impure

amalgamation. The work also points to issues related to locality, by selecting specific native and non-native species to Europe, and mobility, whereby the transcontinental flight patterns of birds are compared to the migrations of people across the world.

16 | Punctatum (longcase clock), 2017

Punctatum (music shelf), 2017

Punctatum (letter desk), 2017

Three pieces of wooden furniture have been shipped from Langdon-Pole's parental home in New Zealand. For decades the items have been infested by the larvae of wood-boring beetles. *Anobium Punctatum* or 'borer beetles' as they are commonly known in New Zealand, were originally introduced to the islands by having stowed away in the furniture and wooden objects taken there by European colonists. Fumigating the objects, then filling the numerous tunnels left by the bugs with gold, the artist treats the damage and presence of the invasive species as part of the history of the objects, rather than something to disguise. Their restoration emphasises the complex interstices left by ecological, ideological and personal diasporas.

17 | Argonaut (Arrested Star), 2017

If an object has had all of its parts progressively replaced one by one, could it still be regarded as fundamentally the same object? This is the paradoxical thought experiment referred to as *Theseus' Ship*, or the *Argos*, a ship on which the Argonauts sailed in Greek mythology. For *Argonaut (Arrested Star)*, Langdon-Pole has hand-carved a meteorite to replace an integral part of a tool for stretching a barbed-wire fence. Previously the fence stretcher was commonly used in rural areas to divide territories, animals and, during the colonisation of America, to demarcate property. The meteorite, a fragment of a dying star, has travelled across unfathomable distances and boundaries and predates the Earth as we know it. With both parts made mostly of iron, yet emerging from vastly different backgrounds, this hybrid object questions the certainty of originality and origin.

The exhibition is a joint project by S.M.A.K. and Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im BDI e.V., with the support of the Allianz Kulturstiftung.



The works by Anna-Sophie Berger were produced in association with Phileas – A Fund for Contemporary Art and the Bundeskanzleramt in Austria.

