

Press Release

Exhibitions

Toni Stegmayer (p. 2–3)
and Andreas Rhomberg (p. 4–5)

Vernissage:

Wednesday, May 29, 2019
7–9 pm

Location:

Grünangergasse 8, 1010 Wien

Opening hours:

Tues – Fri from 13 to 6 pm,
Sat from 11 am to 3 pm

Exhibition duration:

until June 13, 2019

On the exhibitions:

Hartwig Knack

*We are looking forward to your visit and
kindly request an R.S.V.P. or article!*

For more information:

Roswitha Straihammer,
straihammer@galerie-sunds.at

Press photos: available for free use ONLY
in direct connection to reporting on the
exhibitions.

www.galerie-sunds.at/index.php/press.html

TONI STEGMAYER
BEING AND INTERPRETING

SCULPTURES

GALERIE
 STRAIHAMMER UND
 SEIDENSCHWANN

Galerie Straihammer & Seidenschwann presents new pieces by sculptor Toni Stegmayer. Powerful stone arches, aesthetic infinite loops, and perfectly balanced modular systems represent a significant selection of the sculptor's oeuvre, which is decidedly independent and concrete, although the artist sees his origins in Wotruba, Hrdlicka, and Giacometti, among others.

Sculptor Toni Stegmayer takes up the topic of pure, interpretation-free art through his pieces. The result is stone sculptures that are almost concrete, that accept their materiality even while repeatedly putting it to the test. This space between experiment and result, between basic material and sculptural form, leaves only a narrow sliver of room for chance. And yet the works are astonishing, because they elicit the perception and knowledge of the viewer, who is drawn into the process of creation.

What the viewer sees is what exists; what is called for is not interpretation, but consideration of basic sculptural questions. Artist, artwork, and viewer are essential aspects of reception. If a message is to be delivered through art, it must be interpreted as intended. Hermeneutics of all types has a long tradition of exploring approaches to artwork that is meant to be understood — and understood as intended by the author or artist.

Figurative art dictates what one sees. Context and artistic viewpoint convey the meaning. Spiritual art gives form to the unseeable. Non-objective, concrete art showcases materials, drawing the focus to structures, systems, and rhythms. The qualities of what is directly present become the topic: weight and mass, size and proportion, shape and surface, area and body, space and volume, tension and relaxation. All of these make up the existence of the art itself. It has the greatest possible autonomy, is free from speculation and interpretation, hides no secrets, but instead shows itself exactly as it is: open, clear, understandable, and pure.

This creates its beauty.

The presence of pure art is a statement in itself — about information and perception — and is therefore more relevant than ever.

(Written by Hannah Stegmayer)

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Biography

Trained as a stone sculptor, Toni Stegmayer has lived and worked in Kiefersfelden since 1957, and as a freelance sculptor and video artist since 1984. He has worked with George Brecht, Francesco Conz, Ben Patterson, Emmett Williams, and Geoffrey Hendricks, among others, and together with Hannah Stegmayer as the H+T Stegmayer art team. He has been a lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts Kolbermoor since 2016.

Awards and Grants

2014/15 Artist in Residence: Emily Harvey Foundation, Venice

2006 Tirol Science Fund (TWF) Grant (book project)

2005 Artist in Residence, Factory/Kunsthalle Krems (A)

1982 Scholarship for the Highly Talented from the Federal Ministry of Education and Science; 1st Place from the Danner Foundation for Building and Design, Munich



top left Bogen, 2019, Belgisch Granit, 111 x 38 x 14,5 cm

top right CURVE, 2018, Muschelkalk, 27,5 x 35,5 x 10,6 cm

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bottom Bardiglio #2, 2018/19, Stein, 32,5 x 37,5 x 37,5 cm | Bardiglio #3, 2018/19, Stein, zweiteilig, je 25,2 x 30,8 x 10 cm

ANDREAS RHOMBERG
PAST GRANDEUR

PHOTOGRAPHS

GALERIE
 STRAIHAMMER UND
 SEIDENSCHWANN

Images of ruins most often represent the sober reality of conflict, natural disaster, and economic abandonment. But the way we perceive ruins is not as objective and uninfluenced as we might initially think.

The literary and visual representation of ruins has a long tradition. Our lust for ruins — which has informed European painting and literature since the 18th century, peaking in Romanticism — goes from Virilio to Marchand & Meffre and on to cultural reflections on modern ruins that are not as easy to transform into aesthetic or nostalgic niceties.

Most people find themselves moved by ruins and abandoned buildings or structures on a visceral emotional level; it is no accident that the pyramids, the catacombs of Paris, and Angkor Wat are visited by so many. From individual stones and buildings to entire cities, these abandoned legacies are snapshots of the past. These orphaned sites also inspire our imaginations in ways that go beyond a simple representation or sober documentation of history.

The works of Andreas Rhomberg feature vacant buildings and abandoned sites in the European region. There are photographs of factory ruins and palaces in various states of decay, isolated former public institutions such as hospitals and hotels, a disco that burned decades ago, or details from bedrooms that seem to have been recently inhabited. Many photos reveal a delicate sense of intimacy, showing forgotten interiors that retain traces of previous owners or floral elements of a sagging ceiling, while other photos show the cool, futuristic scenarios of industrial ruins. Some works seem carefully composed and have a sense of narrative and dramatic tension; composition, light, and processing transform old factories and dilapidated interiors into staged physical narratives.

Finding and photographing these subjects is not just about traveling, it is an urban archaeological quest for unseen places. The works are about architectural photography and urban exploring and, as such, are not to be seen as a direct attempt at reconquering urban spaces. Nevertheless, finding, exploring, and photographing abandonment can't help but redefine the meaning of public space. Studying, preserving, and staging decay; visualizing former societal landmarks and symbols and the ways they change.

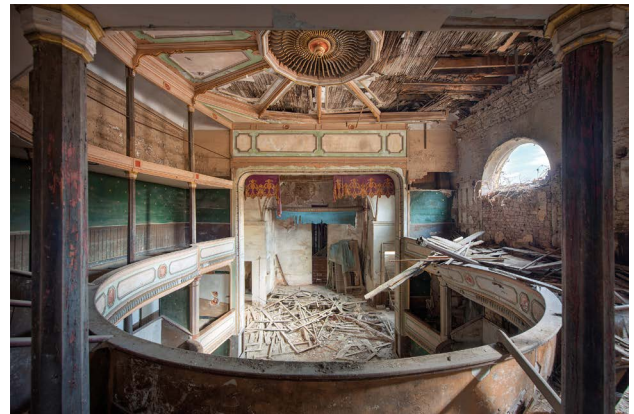
In times when the rapid pace of urban development, and so much else, continues to increase, these images succeed in drawing our attention to social reality in its artistic form. In this sense, Andreas Rhomberg is also a social documentary photographer. His pictures convey a great deal about all or about nothing, about life in the face of capitalism, waste, and neglect — all the immediate principles of our society, with or without crisis. As a result, these images can also be understood as an excellent and artful criticism of capitalism itself. *(Written by Andrea Strasser)*

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Biography

Andreas Rhomberg, born 1977 in Dornbirn, lives and works in Vienna as a graphic designer, photographer, and DJ. He studied at the Höheren Grafischen Bundes-, Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt in Vienna and has worked at several international advertising agencies as a graphic designer and art director.

/ GALERIE
STRAIHAMMER UND
SEIDENSCHWANN



top Botteleria, 2014-2018, HDR Technik, 80 x 120 cm

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bottom left Roundabout, 2014, HDR Technik, 80 x 120 cm

bottom right Legno teatro, 2014-2018, HDR Technik, 80 x 120 cm