

FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 23, 2024

Flurin Bisig

No Apocalypse, not now



Installation shot of Flurin Bisig's exhibition No Apocalypse, not now at GNYP Gallery Antwerp in 2024

Flurin Bisig

*Revise, It's Kept Together by
Moving All Around*

2021 - 2023

Carrara marble, oak

4 x 37 x 18 cm

25 3/16 x 14 9/16 x 7 1/16 ins

Plinth: 96 x 5 x 4 cm

Work and plinth:

160.0 x 50.0 x 40.0 cm



Flurin Bisig

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The mountain problem - finding form

An artist's surroundings can inflect their form. Consider, for instance, the effect of Rome on its resident contemporary architects, New York's real estate market on painters, decaying furniture abandoned on the street on post-conceptual Berliners, or the soaring Alps on sculptors who live near them as Swiss artist Flurin Bisig does. But when I brought this up with him in conversation, he retorted: 'Aren't mountains formless?*' I had also been thinking of a mountain as an open-ended metaphor for what artists face when they try to make anything meaningful. Although, I also think he is right, in the sense that the sublime shapes found in nature differ from forms in art, which involve intention and the assertion of autonomy. This artistic autonomy, Bisig quietly claims most days through the humble discipline of making abstract drawings, despite—and because of—the mountains, both real and metaphorical, just outside his studio window in Glarus. In this ongoing series of works, drawing is the art of distilling his whole being in a moment down into a handful of intersecting weighted lines on a page.

In the 20th century, as the sculpture problem continually morphed, finding new materialities, modalities and expanded forms (including formlessness), the actual mountains faded from view, or seemed less looming. And since the 1970s through the rubric of postmodernism, 'the mountain' that an artist like Bisig must somehow navigate is now the unstable, shifting weight of cultural histories. The burden of 'knowingness' on form. Thus deeply postmodern, Bisig's recent series of collaged paper cutouts, *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture* (2024--ongoing) hybridize or a smash-up two extremely disparate sources. On one hand, reproductions of Renaissance and Gothic sculpture, and on the other, templates drawing on vintage Donald Duck comics, thus illustrating the breadth of the challenge represented by art's past with each filigree swoop of a scalpel. Meanwhile, sculpture has been pulled apart and reconstituted many times, while remaining a four-dimensional challenge for maker and viewer alike. I am sympathetic to the destructive impulse that flares up when faced with the

past while you try to be authentic, or allow the new. This is perhaps what Bisig's somewhat dramatic reference to the Apocalypse in the exhibition title in part refers to. Namely, the perverse wish for the freedom of a tabula rasa even in the wake of destruction.

In their shape, mode of presentation, and materials, Bisig's sculptures contain resonances and echoes of sculptural history, in particular the European modernist Avantgarde. Though not strictly referential, his work is also not forgetful. It did not surprise me to learn then that a teenage Bisig was once transfixed by an art book showing Alberto Giacometti's studio. Seeing it, Bisig recalls having an epiphany of sorts whilst recognizing the possibility as an artist of choosing an ascetic way of life. (Trying to work out how to live is one reason for art's existence.) In Bisig's curvy marble manifestations, Constantin Brancusi also lingers in the peripheral vision, as do the visionary and utopian impulses of Jean Arp and his first wife Sophie Taeuber-Arp, considering also the salon-like installation of his works in the gallery. Playing a supporting role, Bisig's see-through plinths for his marble forms were inspired by the wooden cages used for transporting blocks of marble from Carrara, but 'translated for a gallery setting', through fine joinery and expensive solid oak. The plinths convey the lasting value of a connection to materiality and craftsmanship. But they also suggest that sculpture is no longer monumental or stable, but a mobile commodity, and that the trading of art itself has an aesthetic that generates a mineable surplus. As emergent entities, Bisig's anthropomorphic forms move with the perception of each viewer and their imagination. In this way, though hewn in part from a single stone quarried from a distant mountain, they have a life of their own as Pygmalion first experienced sculpture could.

Dominic Eichler



Flurin Bisig

Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture 2
2023

Papercut from bookpage, pencil, filmoplast paper,
on painted archive carton

37 x 30 cm

14 5/8 x 11 3/4 in

Flurin Bisig

Against the Policy of Inevitability

2021 - 2023

Carrara marble, oak

60 x 23 x 17 cm

23 9/16 x 9 1/16 x 6 11/16 ins

Plinth: 106 x 38 x 38 cm

Work and plinth:

166.0 x 38.0 x 38.0 cm



Artist

Flurin Bisig

Solo Exhibitions (selected)

2024

No Apocalypse, not now
GNYP Gallery, Antwerp (Belgium)

2021

The Anarchy of Silence
GNYP Gallery, Berlin (Germany)

2020

Love and Work (2007-today)
TICK TACK, Antwerp (Belgium)

2019

Am Saum des Sinnes/At The Seam Of Meaning
Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur, Chur (Switzerland)

2018

This is how I start another day in kingdom
fourseasonsberlin °8, Berlin (Germany)

2013

The seismographical back
Kunsthalle São Paulo, São Paulo (Brazil)

2011

Aus einem steinleichten Schweigen heraus
Hans-Kock Foundation, Kiel (Germany)

Mit dem Rücken zum Publikum

Wäscherei Kunstverein Zurich (Switzerland)

Group Exhibitions (selected)

2023

GROSSE REGIONALE 2023
Kunst(Zeug)Haus, Rapperswil-Jona (Switzerland)

Die Dinge singen hör' ich so gern

Benzeholz Raum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Luzern
(Switzerland)

2022

Pedestal stories
Grisons Museum of Fine Arts (Switzerland)

What's in an artwork?

HISK Gosset site, Brussels (Belgium)

2021

Jahresausstellung der Bündner Künstlerinnen und Künstler
Bündner Museum, Chur (Switzerland)

2018

Zentralschweizer Kunstschaffen XL
Kunstmuseum Luzern (Switzerland)

Face my boost by your ShotSpotter
Hardstrasse 43, Basel (Switzerland)

2017

Swiss Art Awards 2017
Messe Basel (Switzerland)

2016

There's a gap in between
Coup de Ville @ Nylonfabrik,
Sint-Niklaas (Belgium)

2014

Now. You are here
Zwartwild, Gent (Belgium)

Aktuelle Kunst,
Stadtmühle Willisau,
Willisau (Switzerland)

Residencies and Prizes

2022

International studio and curatorial program (iscp),
New York (USA)

2021

International studio and curatorial program (iscp),
New York (USA)

2014-2016

HISK Residency Programm,
Gent (Belgium)

2013

Rio sem fumaça, Barracão Maravilha,
Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Flurin Bisig

Flurin Bisig (b. 1982) is a Swiss artist based in Glarus. He works mainly with abstract sculptures, conceptually derived from a fundamental drawing basis. Bisig primarily researches the effect of sculpture. By constantly questioning their properties and definitions anew, he finds impulses for his considerations everywhere in everyday life. In these sculptures Bisig dialogues with classic sculpture by working with such a traditional material. Simultaneously the artist also succeeds in skillfully molding his working matter. In addition to his sculptural practice, Bisig's drawings and collages not only complement his sculptures but are part of the same artistic process. After his education at the Hochschule für Kunst in Luzern and the Universität der Künste in Berlin, Bisig lived in Brussels. He has been awarded different scholarships and prizes, while also participating in international artistic residences. Bisig's work has been shown internationally, in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the USA and Brazil.

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