

# SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

## Press Release - April 2019

### HENRIK EIBEN - *spellbound*

We are pleased to be able to announce the solo show *spellbound* by Hamburg-based artist HENRIK EIBEN.

In his third solo show at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY, Henrik Eiben, who was born in 1975 in Tokyo, presents eleven new works: six sculptural wall works and five framed works on paper.

Henrik Eiben moves playfully between sculpture, spatial installation, and drawing. What sets Eiben apart is the exceptionally broad range of materials he uses and masters: he produces his sculptures from elements like hand-blown glass, metal, pear wood, fabric, leather, Plexiglas, car paint, and concrete, and in the 2019 wall sculpture *cisma (what if I don't)* he used a geometric shape made of ceramic for the first time. Seen in contrast to the glass work displayed on the opposite wall, which is seductively beautiful, this work may seem almost a little brash. It is a continuation of earlier works and is conceptually linked to the wall work made of copper and pear wood that was shown last year in Henrik Eiben's solo show at Kunstraum Potsdam. Two elongated, bevelled shapes cuddle up together, soft and hard, fragile and resistant – the verso side of the wood has been painted, resulting in a light bluish play of colour on the wall.

In the glass sculpture *boo'd up* (2019), which when the light shines in during the day projects a beautiful, delicately colourful drawing of reflected light onto the wall, pieces of broken glass are anchored in rails – Eiben often attaches his pieces of coloured glass in metal rails, but in this work, the four rails are built with different kinds of wood, and the glass pieces are set in silicone. The glass is fascinating in its fragility and beauty, but because of the sharply jagged broken pieces of glass, the work also exudes a certain brutality.

Henrik Eiben says: “Previously, I wanted to achieve a certain degree of perfection, but nowadays I find it more interesting to give the materials space. I don't produce my work to display craftsmanship – that also doesn't really impress me with other artists, either. The technique must simply be so good that the idea is brought across

- it is a means to an end, but it must not become an end in itself." (The quotation is from the catalogue *fab lab*, published in 2016 by Kerber.)

However, we don't always believe the nonchalance the artist claims as far as his materials are concerned: consider the two works *Cheka 25* and *Cheka 27* (both 2019) in the exhibition that offer in addition to the smooth Plexiglas in bold colours, interesting surfaces of wood and concrete. Three rather similar geometric shapes are put together. One might associate with it a bird's eye view of a modernist building or might imagine to walk through light-filled industrial spaces *en miniature*.

Henrik Eiben was born in 1975 in Tokyo and lives with his family in Hamburg. From 1997 to 2002 he studied at the Academy of Visual Arts and Design in Enschede, the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore (2001), and at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe with Silvia Bächli (2002 to 2004).

We take pleasure in inviting you to the show's opening reception on 25 April 2019 from 6 to 8 pm at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY, Sanderstraße 28 in Berlin-Neukölln.

The exhibition will be on view until 8 June 2019, Wednesday to Saturday from noon to 6 pm, and at other times by appointment.