

Fabian Knecht

GRUNDRISS

8 August – 10 October 2021

Opening: 8 August 2021, 2 – 5 pm

With the exhibition *Grundriss* by Fabian Knecht, Spaced Out launches the Uckermark Festival 2021 UMWEGE on August 8, 2021.

The exhibition title *Grundriss* (floor plan, which in German could also mean floor crack) literally describes what the exhibited works refer to: cracks in the floor and in the ground that were not planned by architects and yet can be traced back to humans.

In the desert of Arizona, for example, fissures in the earth, stretching several kilometers in length and several meters in depth, have opened up as a result of extreme drought. For the benefit of agriculture, the groundwater has been consumed to such an extent that not only the water table, but also – as a direct consequence – the level of the soil has dropped. The resulting enormous tension on the earth's surface eventually caused it to crack. In 2019, Knecht heads to the desert to look at this geological phenomenon. He begins to tackle the irreversible consequences of human actions. In his series of works *Grundriss* (2019), the artist covers parts of these small canyons, 'repairing' the rugged landscape. He hides the ground plates under soil and under the bright orange desert mallows that litter the surrounding area. His photographic works, which can now be seen at Gut Kerkow, ultimately depict an apparently intact nature. Knecht's intervention imitates an idealized landscape untouched by man and thus joins the tradition of Romanticism. The intimate relationship between man and nature is furthermore taken up by the act of 'wound care', for if one understands the cracks in the ground as injuries inflicted on this planet by man, the artist treats the scarred earth at least superficially and sticks a plaster on it.

Grundriss would not be Knecht's intervention, however, if it did not also harbor potential for conflict. As in the photographs, the artistic intervention in the natural environment reveals itself only upon close inspection and therefore becomes not only a bridge but also a trap for animals and humans.

In the back of the exhibition space, the artist has taken the opposite approach: *Kontinuitätsunterbrechung* (*Interruption of continuity*) from 2021 marks a gap, a crack in the ground. The existing architecture has been broken up and one of the wooden planks in the center of the room has been removed. The gap here becomes, in the original sense of the German word, a floor drawing (*Grund-Riss*) that defines and, in this case, splits the volume of the room in two. However, how the work came into being – whether the plank can simply be removed and reinserted as a whole, and whether half the floor had to be removed first to do so – is not disclosed in this case.

The exhibition focuses on the motif of rupture, showing excerpts from the artist's body of work, whose interventions repeatedly blur the boundaries between staging and reality. In Knecht's work, fractures repeatedly become metaphors – scratches in the seemingly shiny surface of things that reveal what is hidden behind them.

Text: Lydia Korndörfer

Translation: Birthe Mühlhoff

Fabian Knecht, born 1980 in Magdeburg, studied at the Universität der Künste Berlin and at the California Institute of the Arts. In 2014 he completed his master's degree with Olafur Eliasson, at whose Institut für Raumexperimente he studied from 2009 to 2014. With his works, which often appear unexpectedly in public space, Fabian Knecht breaks out of the exhibition context and into everyday life. He changes patterns of perception and action, transgresses art concepts and power structures, and questions social relations and norms by countering them with strong and provocative images.