

a r c h i t e c t u r e s II

is the continuation by the 4th series of works designed by the artists Willy Oster and SG Koezle. For over 15 years, this artist duo have been creating representations of space and dimensions within the medium of photography. The foundation of their work is the photographic image of interiors with architectural details taken out of their context.

Since the beginning of their collaboration, the artists have played with space, surface and color. Starting with their series ‚rooms‘, the original photographed space was released from the documentary context by being filled, covered or complemented with an overlay of paint, ultimately creating an environment within the pictorial space.

This ‚transgression‘ of classic documentary photography sprung from the collaboration of two artists from different genres. The monochrome color surfaces in their images remind one of Willy Oster’s paintings – the precise images of the architectural conditions mastered by the photographic skills of SG Koezle.

Using digital picture processing the artist duo create their unique visual language by subtle intervening into the documentary images of architectural interiors. With their series ‚a r c h i t e c t u r e s‘ parts of the photographed area are extracted by using monochrome templates challenging the viewer’s usual perception of consistent architectural elements and thus achieving sculptural characteristics. The various transformations of these elements remind one of geometric figures which seem to float in the space of the monochrome ‚background‘.

But these works go a step further and do not allow one to reconstruct the architectural interior. The unique positions of the outstanding elements is no longer understandable. That is a risk the artists take to engage the viewer in the process of an optical illusion. The surface materiality of the figurative elements provide the only clues that lead one back to an existing space. The texture of the woodchip or plaster hint at an interior detail. But once again OSTER+KOEZLE employ the use of visual illusion, intentionally modeled alignments, highlighted reflections and shadows, and deletion of some corners, edges and sides of objects. The wall detail in their work #209, for example, suggests a sculpture’s three-dimensionality.

The body unfolds like a piece of paper. The intended interplay of light and shadow in the wall detail in work #177 shares in a Japanese aesthetic and the supreme art of paper folding. The ingenuity lies in the dissolution of the three-dimensional sculptural body on a two-dimensional surface.

The subtle dissecting of wall corners, edges or angles is disorienting to the viewer who wonders if these architectural, virtual, floating elements belong together. Using simple room arrangements, or sometimes visual blow ups of spacial elements, the artists manage to create a new space of seemingly contradictory yet associated objects.

This playful abstraction is the imagery of OSTER+KOEZLE who ask us to let go out of our normal way of seeing and to open ourselves to new perceptions. This visual transition is enhanced by the large format images of this series, which allow us to quickly immerse into the disassembled, architectural space. We are guided by the artists acting as architects through the spatial depth of the pictorial space with the bold composition of individual components.

Another fascinating artistic element is found in the contrast of the colorful elements with the monochrome ‚background‘. The color palette of the background areas and the partially colored architectural details were carefully chosen to compliment one another.

Just light, shadow and surface materiality indicate to the former photographed space. The series *architecture s II* presenting strikingly composed, ‚utopian-like‘ images encourages a departure from one’s usual way of seeing and an immersion into imaginative perceptions of a visual space.

Jacqueline Friedrich, 2016