

g thereafter, Mekas also began to promote in word and act all experimental films. Though in no sense forced to become a and person, Gordon felt it necessary to leave Scotland to make it eo artist: He now lives mainly in Berlin. But *I Had Nowhere to about far more than merely self-reflective processes. Ultimately, seems to be a subtle but pointed commentary about the plight specters of the refugees flooding into Germany right now.*

—Pamela Kort

Ilida Barlow

KUNSTHALLE ZÜRICH

a Barlow's 2014 Tate Britain Commission *dock* inevitably the history of the Port of London. With its motley sacks and of cranes, the piece recalled the waterfront as it appeared before val of the shipping container redefined global trade in terms of anonymous, neatly stackable metric boxes that could just as easily contain weapons as toys. A carnival of open sculptural forms, *dock* was a raucous response to the stern Neoclassicism of the Duveen Galleries, and was well received by press and public alike.



Barlow's successor installation, *demo*, 2016, had a slightly more melancholy effect. Wandering into it felt akin to entering a forest after a flood—the floor was scoured clear, but at the high-water mark the branches held aloft what looked like nonsensical, oversize pieces of furniture—stranded rafts, twists of fabric, a grand piano or two. The resemblance between the two exhibitions was not coincidental, because *demo* included repurposed elements from *dock*. But the relocation brought a change in mood—a step back, an increase in reflective distance. All the material suspended above our heads seemed too heavy; the rotund forms in Barlow's

d world made the timber legs on which they were perched look ous and spindly; the most reassuring thing about this frozen e was that the catastrophe seemed already to have happened. er one read the work, these heaped-up things implied a history, y beyond individual control, one experienced as a natural force human scale, akin to a flood or a tide.

ow's sculptural language, as has often been noted, evokes such as Eva Hesse, Louise Bourgeois, Robert Morris's *Untitled (waste)* or Giovanni Anselmo's *Torsion* (both 1968). Her early as defined by a rejection of the movement that had gathered the students of Anthony Caro, with their predilection for weld-clean abstraction. Evolving against the ideological backdrop cherism, her work in the 1980s was already both massive in d anti-monumental in intent, as it is now. She made large, short-ulptures out of industrial leftovers and presented them in public or abandoned industrial sites; for the most part, they disap-with only the occasional photograph as a record. Indeed, until

about a decade ago, Barlow was better known as an influential teacher than for her own work. Her near outsider status, the ambivalent privilege of being an artist's artist, was revoked in 2010, when she was signed by Hauser & Wirth in the wake of a show at London's Serpentine Galleries. She is representing Britain at this year's Venice Biennale. It's not that Barlow's work has changed. Rather, the market has caught up to her. The very fact that her works were previously too big, too transient, and too unwieldy to attract collectors has now become part of her appeal, and the resistance to commodification that defined her work has, paradoxically, drawn institutions to her.

So much for the backstory. Upstairs at the kunsthalle, in a room that was too warm, Barlow had installed a kind of stage that visitors could stand on in order to look through holes drilled into the cinder-block walls. It was possible to glimpse, on the other side, a sculpture improvised, in part, from building materials scavenged from the restoration of the kunsthalle currently in progress. Unlike the works downstairs, these were made of real industrial waste, and the assemblages blended indistinguishably into the genuine building works around the perimeter walls. Some workers, irritated either by the art or by the incidental surveillance imposed on them, occasionally added bits of their own profane trash to the sculptures. Cool air blew in through the holes.

—Adam Jasper

VIENNA

Anna-Sophie Berger

MUSEUM MODERNER KUNST STIFTUNG LUDWIG WIEN

The digital age has caused a peculiar problem: Out of an excess of images, information, and memories, one has to select and preserve what seems valuable. The exhibition "Anna-Sophie Berger: Places to fight and to make up," can be understood as a formal analysis of the specific subjectivity that is confronted with this task. Indeed, while any set of subjective choices, and, hence, the subjectivity applied in the sorting-through of digital content, remains necessarily invisible and cannot be exhibited, Berger shows that it can be traced through various differences of semantic connotations. Thus the viewer is confronted with *Parabolic Reflector*, 2016, for example—a work that consists of two pieces of borrowed playground equipment meant to amplify users' voices. Covered with graffiti, however, they evoke the sad and decentered, asocial emptiness that they were supposed to symbolically remedy when originally installed in a desolate public square. A group of broken alebenches signal a similar kind of vandalism and the empirical collapse of a bureaucratic ideal of public space, underlined by stickers of a photograph of a fallen sculpture (*Atlas*, 2016).



Anna-Sophie Berger, *Drunk or Dead?*, 2016, paper, pencil, wine bottle, olive oil, whiskey, balsamic vinegar, canned beans, apricot jam, marzipan figurine, concrete hand, iron weights, salt, 13 × 90½ × 47½". Photo: Klaus Pichler.

At first glance, these objects represent a common discourse and poetry of space, but, as their titles suggest, they also carry something else; the artist's subjective memories and associations. This invisible subjectivity appears to be more explicitly addressed in another set of works that seem to offer only their plain surfaces. *Drunk or Dead?*, 2016, consists of a paper cutout silhouette of a jester on the floor, with banal objects such as a bottle of olive oil, a container of salt, and a can of beans placed on it as weights. Two works on opposite walls are related: *Trivial Pursuit*, 2013, a hat whose patterning refers at the same time to geometrical abstraction and a jester's motley; and *Spider's Drawings (necklace)*, 2016, a rendering of a necklace with four handwritten lines creating permutations of meaning from just four words: THE RAVING JOKER / THE JOKING RAVER / THE RAVING CHOKER / THE CHOKING RAVER. The drawing is carelessly wrapped in a cheap plastic sheet protector, signaling on another semantic level that this barrier is, compared to the expensive frames that enclose other works, really just an insignificant gesture and, hence, significant precisely because of its insignificance. This is emphasized by an enigmatic contrast: In *Pea Earring*, 2016, a pea surrounded by sterling silver is mounted to the large exhibition wall. In contrast to the joker and the massive reflectors, it evokes a distinct preciousness. Similarly, the wood-framed water imprints of *Choicest Relic (1)* and *(2)*, both 2016, that remind one of archaic fossils telegraph significant value.

It is impossible for the viewer to comprehend the subjective logic of such associations through immediate contemplation. Usually she may gain such an understanding only after consulting press releases and catalogues, or even engaging in discussions with the artist. Berger acknowledges this by presenting the viewer with her accompanying publication *MANUAL*, which presents something like the results of a Google images search: a selection of yielding personal screenshots, sketches, images of various artworks by Berger and others, events, archaic relics, and seemingly meaningless situations of everyday life. All of these images appear to be disposable, random, and at the same time somehow valuable and almost excessively meaning-laden. It's as if they were carefully selected according to a hidden algorithm. The book also features texts by Berger, which collect very personal reflections in which she searches out her conscious *and* unconscious desires and motivations, as well as essays by the show's curator, Marianne Dobner, and Canadian writer Tess Edmonson. In this way, the reader begins to discern the underlying logic of these subjective motivations—and yet one should not mistake these expressions for an image of the artist's own authentic self. The logic and formal arrangement, the careful composition of the exhibition's central theme inside and outside the *MANUAL*, suggest instead that Berger may be tracing something very objective: the common form of subjectivity in the digital age that, wherever it looks, finds only its own spleen.

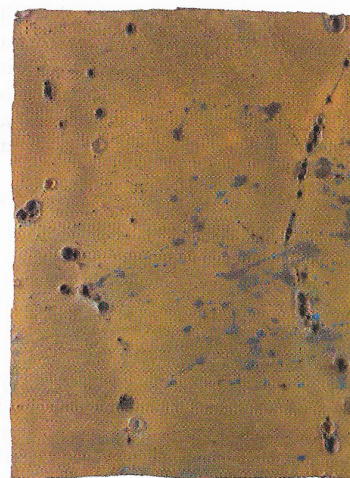
—Philipp Kleinmichel

MILAN

Giulio Turcato

GALLERIA MILANO

This exhibition presented two of Giulio Turcato's key series from the 1960s: the "*Tranquillanti*" (Tranquillizers), which he created for Galleria il Canale in Venice (where the works were first exhibited in 1961), and the "*Superfici lunari*" (Moon Surfaces), which he started in 1964 and showed two years later at the Venice Biennale. Both expressed a new material-oriented direction for Turcato characterized by vibrant two-toned or monochrome surfaces and punctuated by insertions or material swellings that further developed ideas about



color as an animate space for psychic in his earlier abstractions.

Immediately following World War II figure in the Italian art world, as well as earliest avant-garde circles of the time, Fronte Nuovo delle Arti, and Gruppo d'arte. During the early years of his career, his painting was based on color; starting in the 1950s, this emphasis on color gave way to a granular pictorial surface in which dense, dark, and light tones merged into raw canvas. While Turcato's fascination with color was evident from the start, Matisse, his favorite painter, the former's expressive element that begets the painting's form went even further, experimenting with color and delving even deeper into his investigation of space.

The title of the "*Tranquillanti*" series refers to tranquilizer pills that the artist incorporated into his work as object-insertions used as compositional elements. Other art strategies of the period, such as the *Réalisme*, Turcato does not use the pill as a decorative element. Instead, he focuses on the face with the eruption of fragments of attention on the creation of a continuous space, delicately assimilating the objects' presence into a fluid and undulating space. In this sense, the pills become an element that vibrates with the textural and chromatic insertions, the pills become an element that allude to an imagined galaxy, intentionally creating a space, somewhere between the oneiric and the real.

The "*Superfici lunari*," 1964–73, created with foam rubber, continue to develop this series. Turcato was directly inspired by the fixation on space during the 1960s. These allusions to celestial space, not as descriptive—create a mental image of space that conjure a sense of wonder at the possibilities of the years of the space race—the pills became tangible and reachable for the first time. This astonishment into a geology of the future, or reproductions of lunar images, then became a metamorphosis, a germination of unknown space. It is once again essential to the invention of space through the use of an unorthodox material such as foam rubber. Turcato's research into unusual color tones, and his use of foam rubber, directly made a connection between the "*Tranquillanti*" and "*Superfici lunari*": "I use rubber because its scabrous surface is like the surface of the moon."