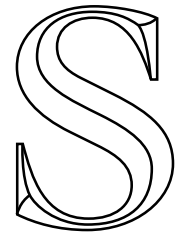


Resilience
 Anna Diehl
 Curated by Samuel Leuenberger and Elise Lammer
 30 November–19 January 2018
 Opening Reception: Thursday 29 November, 6pm



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The work of Anna Diehl is about exploring the capacity of painting, as a medium, but also as a conceptual space, to challenge the transition from the familiar to the undefinable. In other words, her paintings very often navigate and blur the passage from figuration to non-figuration. Both terms, when thinking about art history, are difficult to define, and considering the many definitions they entail, their slipperiness should only serve as the starting point of a deeper reflexion. Looking at painting is always a very personal exercise, one that's closely linked to one's knowledge, be it innate or acquired. In such conditions, analysing or preempting a painter's intention in relation to the viewer's reception seems vain. On the other hand this openness provides a great freedom of interpretation to the viewer. Likewise, once liberated from the obligation to 'represent' in strict terms what is visible, the painter benefits from an even greater freedom. Considering this, Diehl's paintings are often reduced to few essential elements: a familiar object painted over a largely monochromatic background. If simple at first glance, with this composition only, the artist offers a rich play on perspective, whose depth can only be fixed by the viewer's imagination. What's more, the motives depicted form part of a typology which expresses the artist's ongoing interest in human resilience. As the title of the exhibition suggests, the capacity of the body and the mind to adapt to, and recover from a traumatic experience, is connected to biological cycles, and hence time. Circles and chains are indeed very symbolic motives, as they can simultaneously refer to tension and openness, confinement and freedom, etc.

What's more, the surfaces of *Potential (rose)* (2018) and *Valium* (2018) are richly textured, with a layering of brush strokes which translates, quite simply, the passing of time. While material is being patiently added, we see how the artist's energy is transferred onto the stretched canvas. As such, each painting, and especially when it entails a mix of pigment and oil, bears its own analogical timeline. The realism of the donut-shaped motives adds to the mystery of the compositions, bringing to mind narratives of space travel and alien architecture. The two paintings are hung across each other, on each side of the space, which is divided by a wall adorned with a glass structure installed by the artist on the occasion of this exhibition. The transparent device adds to a kaleidoscopic play on symmetry and reflection, which is performed throughout the entire space. Resting on the glass sheet, the two bird heads *We Fight* (2015) are the only sculptural elements in the show. Initially cast with black wax, each presents a different patina, letting appear underlying shades of purple. Here again, time, (as expressed by material entropy) provides a measurement which inscribes the works within a specific biological and cyclic chronology. Finally all three *Untitled* paintings represent a portion of a metal chain depicted from various angles. Symbolising the structural as well as symbolic ties between two foreign elements, the repetition of the same motive resonates once more with the exhibition titles, showing the artist's commitment to link her artistic practice to her long interest in sociology.

Anna Diehl (*1986 Teufen, Switzerland) is a Basel-based painter, whose interest revolves around the distinction between abstraction and figuration. Her work often develops out of essential aspects of painting such as colour, material and surface, in parallel to sociological questions about human relations. She studied sociology at the Universities of Basel and Vienna and Fine Arts at the Institut Kunst in Basel and the Athens School of Fine Arts. Her work has been shown at the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, the Glasgow International Festival, Kunstraum Riehen, WallRiss (Fribourg) and Atelier Mondial (Basel).

SALTS Cubes:

Potential (rose), 2018
 200 x 180 cm
 oil on linen

Valium, 2018
 200 x 180 cm
 oil on linen

We Fight, 2015
 2x approx. 23 x 30 x 15 cm
 black wax

Untitled, 2018
 40 x 150 cm
 oil on linen

Untitled, 2018
 40 x 80 cm
 oil on linen

Untitled, 2018
 40 x 50 cm
 oil on linen

In the garden:

Fire, 2018
 Dimension variable