

BG

Sebastian Stumpf

6.2.– 4.3.2019

Performances by Sebastian Stumpf test connections between architecture, natural or urban surroundings and the human body. He observes the relationship between his actions and the recording medium – photography or video – and how the particular situation affects and plays out in the image.

His work falls more or less into two categories. There is one dominant group, in which he focuses on interiors, most of them in art institutions, and surveys them with his body. Little structural details that deviate from the norm inspire often unexpected sequences of movement. Stumpf questions the established principles and conventions that we apply to impose order on our environment and explores how architecture influences our spatial behaviour. Works in this group are then projected within their original setting and appear to invite the viewer to resist behaviour patterns based on functional purpose and pre-ordained standards.

There is a second category too, interventions where Stumpf tests the outdoor world, climbing city trees that look far too fragile, jumping casually off bridges or like Sisyphus hauling himself up rugged cliff faces again and again, only to vanish into the sea. The Berlinische Galerie has selected three examples of this type. In the early video *Tiefgaragen* (2008, 12:50 min.) Stumpf keeps squeezing into underground garages in the nick of time as the automatic gates close. *Puddles* (2013, 10:10 min.) reveals the artist lying motionless and face down in city puddles. In *River* (2017, 16:09 min.) we watch from different angles as he works his way down the paved bed of the L.A. River towards the Pacific. What all these works have in common is that an extremely simple act is laconically transformed into a performance with a subversive feel.

Sebastian Stumpf was born in Würzburg in 1980. He studied at the Akademie der Bildende Künste in Nuremberg, the École Nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Lyon and the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig. His works have recently been shown at the Kindl – Zentrum für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Berlin, at the Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie in Mannheim, Ludwigshafen and Heidelberg, at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Taichung (Taiwan) and at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati (USA). Stumpf lives in Berlin and Leipzig.