

LAURA BARTLETT GALLERY

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Marie Lund, Badischer Kunstverein, Review by Jurriaan Benschop

ARTFORUM

KARLSRUHE, GERMANY

Marie Lund

BADISCHER KUNSTVEREIN

Marie Lund's exhibition "Flush" brought to mind a remark by Mark Rothko: "I don't express myself in my paintings. I express my not-self." Whom do we actually see in an artwork, if anyone at all? In Lund's case, there seem to be some traces of the artist in her sculptures, such as those in her "Hand Full" series, 2014–, which are bronze casts of the interiors of her jeans pockets. But even though the source of these forms implies a physical proximity to the artist, they reveal nothing about her identity, only the spaces available in her pockets. The sculp-



View of "Marie Lund," 2015.

tural quality of the material and the patina that shimmers with a rainbow of colors feed the suggestion that we are looking at some aged imprint containing information about a life.

“Loads,” 2014, is a series of concrete casts of the space inside a backpack, taken while someone was wearing it. Here, seven of these works were playfully spread over the floor and against the walls. Yet still visible is the shape the weight of each one took as it hung down someone’s back, causing folds and curves. Between the bags there are small differences in gray tones and porosity. Also there are bits of colored fabric, notably in the seams, that were left behind when the backpack was removed from the hardened concrete. The variety in colors points to different styles—maybe adventurous, classic, elegant, or some other “individual” look. Yet the people who carried these forms are explicitly absent: We see their not-selves.

A similar procedure continues in Lund’s “Torso” series, 2014–. Each concrete block carries the imprint of a sweater, and again the color of the original garment has been left in the concrete in traces of cotton. Two of these pieces were standing upright and, functioning as supports for other small objects; they are at once artworks and pedestals. Three others lay flat on the floor like memorial plaques.

Around the sculptures, on the walls, there were ten door-high “paintings”—actually sun-faded curtains found in a house in Arizona—from the series “Stills,” 2012– (the ones on view here were dated 2014). Depending on how often and how far the curtains were opened and closed in the harsh southwestern sunlight, their color varies from near white to dark brown, showing traces of dried condensation. Lund herself sees these works as closely related to photography, since they were made the way film makes a picture: by being exposed to light. Her only further intervention was to unstitch their hems and then stretch and show them in a format that recalls painting.

Lund’s materials share the quality of being receptive to an external influence—they have been formed by light, matter, and gravity. In some instances, the process looks rough or violent—the sweaters are first squeezed, then torn off—while other moments are delicate, as when purple thread is discovered in curved concrete. The objects have an archaeological appearance, but in a staged way. And that is where the artist comes in, as an abstract hand, making imprints visible. The works are extensions of, but not to be confused with, the artist’s self.

—Jurriaan Benschop