

Press Release

Exhibition: *Avalanche*

New works by Sophie Bouvier-Ausländer

Exhibition dates: 18th May 2017 to 24th June 2017

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is delighted to announce *Avalanche*, the first solo exhibition of Swiss artist Sophie Bouvier-Ausländer in in the gallery.

For the title-giving *Avalanche* series Bouvier-Ausländer works with old and new maps of different scale, which the artist first covers with wax and then with paint. The surfaces of the roadmaps disappear and get transformed into the supporting ground. Precise coordinates are rendered insignificant, various areas, land, sea, international cities, are concealed. *Avalanche* is neither anecdotic nor does it contain personal stories; rather it questions the map as our vehicle of understanding, as a true representation of the world. The “avalanche”, the process of covering the maps in colour, erases this understanding. The detachment of the maps from its intended function and from the reality of the world brings it closer to painting, even if its original nature is to think as a space in relief.

After the process of concealing the maps, Sophie Bouvier-Ausländer, like a first aid respondent after a landslide, scratches and delves into the covered surface with repeated gestures of removing paint in tight, straight and systematic lines or by scribbling circles, digging out signs from under the cover. With this technique she retakes control of the lost ground, exposing the map's fragments in an attempt to not only reconstruct an extinguished world, but also create something new and fresh.

Cartography, and more generally Geography have been a reoccurring component in the themes addressed by the artist in her works, albeit engaging with them in different forms and shapes. The topics of territory, border and representation of the world, in conjunction with her last name *Ausländer (Foreigner)*, have inspired numerous artworks in the 2000's entitled *Ausland* and correlate directly to Cartography.

In the here presented new series of works Bouvier-Ausländer takes her principal theme and artistic endeavour, exploring low-relief sculpture and its different ways of interpretation on canvas even further. Her quest to take a sculpture from its three-dimensional being and reimagine it on a surface, transforming it into a flattened piece of art has been an ongoing theme. Consequently, in addition to the works on waxed maps an installation of sculptures will complement the exhibition at the gallery. *Plastein* refers as much to plasticine, the material used for their making, as to the plasticity of these ductile volumes, carrying the imprint of the artist's hands as she kneaded them. These boulders gathered in groups or scattered over the ground also represent a conciliation effort, between drawing on a flat space, and sculpting in the physical one.

Sophie Bouvier-Ausländer has widely exhibited in Switzerland, France and the UK. Recent exhibitions include institutional solo shows at the Musée d'art in Pully and the Foundation Louis Moret in Martigny. Her work is part of private and public collections across Europe.