

VEIT LAURENT KURZ

Chiraptophobia

Opening: March 26th, 5-8 pm

Exhibition period ends: May 2nd

Gallery opening hours:

Wednesday – Friday 12-5.30 pm, Saturday 12-4 pm

Chiraptophobia

The Teufelsgrille (Grilled Devils) are invertebrate, bulbous, comical; like a cross between an arthropod and a fraggle. Ugly and dumb-looking, they possess the fatheaded features of a clown. Large, sorrowfully human eyes together with a shock of blond curly hair and bright tufts of purple hair that sprout from their exoskeleton frame in matted chunks betray their barbarity. Goofy teeth protrude from thin, blood-smeared mouthparts. They are anthropomorphically abject.

They inhabit Veit Laurent Kurz's large, tabletop ecosystem – an environment that, until now, appears to have remained untouched by any kind of animal or human life. Yet the terrain is fertile – overgrown with plants and tall brightly coloured flowers around glistening rock pools. Pieces of electronic hardware such as transistors, machine parts and piping protrude from the overgrowth moss-covered and rusted, suggesting some kind of industry or manufacture took place a long time ago and which has since been abandoned. This fantastic, post-technological idyll has become infested and now suddenly plays host to violence in nature. Without prey to consume or predators to consume them, the Teufelsgrille cannibalize one another out of mistrust. Decomposing carcasses rot down into the vegetation.

A rendering of a Teufelsgrille, painted by Kurz in a mock-pointillist style biologically classifies them as a species. The creature's profile appears as if it is being analyzed on a screen, implying the presence of an observer: human, possibly artificial, scientifically studying these bugs from afar. Are they a zoological experiment contained in a vivarium or is this a distant future terra ravaged by fallout, giving rise to mutation and surveyed by purposeless optical instruments.

A bug denotes infection, physical and virtual.

The Teufelsgrille upset the habitat like an error in a computer program, contaminating it. They don't reproduce like a virus would, desolating a population or destroying data. Instead they fight with their own kind. Once they are detritus, wasted into the ground, what happens then to this fragile ecosystem?

To bug.

Eavesdrop, to listen in covertly.

- *Saim Demircan*