

PRESS RELEASE

galerie burster BERLIN

Hirofumi Fujiwara | Gary Schlingheider

Utopians & Playgrounds 16 March – 14 April 2018

Opening Friday, 16 March 2018, 7 – 9 pm

We are pleased to present *Utopians & Playgrounds*, the very first duo exhibition of Hirofumi Fujiwara and Gary Schlingheider at galerie burster Berlin.

Hirofumi Fujiwara (*1984 in Hiroshima, Japan) graduated in 2015 as a master student of Prof. Stephan Balkenhol at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste Karlsruhe. His human sculptures, modelled from clay and plastic, stand, sit or lie in the exhibition space, reposing, transparent walls are surrounding their fragile bodies. Fujiwara's *Utopians* bear witness to a romantic longing for the unreachable, with a contemplative view towards the indefinite. Oscillating between the two worlds, Fujiwara's sculptures bear references from the Japanese as well as the European Western culture.

They seem youthful and yet ageless, androgynous and detached from all stereotypes – isolated from this world, yet resting in the very moment, anchored in pure *just-being*. In our increasingly fast-moving, ever-changing society, Fujiwara's *Utopians* embody both longing and ideal.

Gary Schlingheider (*1983 in Detmold, Germany) graduated from the Universität der Künste Berlin 2017 as a master student of Prof. Christine Streuli. In the same year he won the *Meisterschülerpreis des Präsidenten* as well as the *Diffring Prize for Sculpture*. In Schlingheider's works, his steel objects of the *30mm*, *Playground* and *3Dplus* series, as well as in his paintings, aesthetic reduction and a powerfully minimalist formal language come together. His works oscillate between installation, sculpture and painting, between space, form and color, between one- and multi-dimensionality. Line and space are in inseparable relationship to each other.

Schlingheider's works bear witness to the ability to liberate a geometric form from any emotions and meanings, isolating it from every unnecessary aspect. Once reduced to its essence and freed from any emotional kitsch, it first opens up its uncompromising aesthetic, then its unlimited possibilities of interpretation: Schlingheider's works are frame and image at the same time, empty space and space for thought, limitation and open space.

Although the two artistic positions of Fujiwara and Schlingheider may seem opposed at first glance, they both have – in their respective definition of presence in space – the quest for subtlety and beauty as common denominator. For both, the aesthetic dimension of their work is primary.

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Utopians & Playgrounds presents a wonderfully refreshing view of both figurative and abstract works of painting, sculpture and installation celebrating an unconditional, an absolute being.

For further information please contact Miriam Schwarz: miriam@galerieburster.com

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Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 12 – 6 pm, Saturday 12 – 4 pm and by appointment.