

Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle

Harm van den Dorpel / Raphael Weilguni

Screens and Skin

Mar 18 – May 7, 2022

Opening: Thursday, Mar 17, 2022, 6–8 pm

The artists are present.



Invitation card, Screens and Skin. Design: Thomas Mayfried, 2022

This marks the first time Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle presents an exhibition in which digital art enters into a dialogue with ceramic sculptures. The NFTs of Harm van den Dorpel are juxtaposed with the fragile sculptures of Raphael Weilguni, creating a confrontation between the vivid and the frozen, a synthesis of the physical, tangible and the abstract, two-dimensional. It is up to the viewer to decide which of the works to call alive and physical, and which digital and frozen.

“Markov’s Dream” is the title of Harm van den Dorpel’s new series, which consists of thirty-two generative animations. The works allude to an invention by the mathematician Andrey Markov (1856–1922), which contributed greatly to the theory of probability and stochastic analysis. To calculate a prognosis, he focused exclusively on the current situation while ignoring past events.

Harm’s generative art is determined by random numbers: The animation’s color scheme and arrangement on screen are never reiterated but always elicit new, unpredictable compositions. The rounded square is a recurrent visual ingredient in the artist’s aesthetic vocabulary. It refers to the specific elements in user interface design, which the viewers encounter in their daily lives. These design features are often used in the optimization-focused discipline of user experience design to give various software a more “human” or organic note. Harm goes even further by letting the rounded square look like a living, breathing cell, thus blurring the line between determined programming and an autonomous, “living” organism. Poetically speaking, the artist invigorates what was once frozen.

Raphael Weilguni counterbalances this by letting his ceramic sculptures unfold to a certain degree in a seemingly uncontrolled way, only to freeze them at the apex of their autonomy. The works are fired in a special Japanese technique called “raku”, first used around 1580. A clay object is removed from the kiln at the peak of the firing process and cooled very quickly until it enters its final state.

The abstract, wild sculptures seem suddenly frozen in their flowing movement, and it is up to each viewer to guess in which direction the movement would have continued. Control over the firing process in the raku method is limited, so that each item is unique and inimitable.

(Sofia Sominsky)