



Runo Lagomarsino,
No Remi, 2023,
melted metal chess
set, marble plinth,
26% × 23% × 23%".
Photo: Andrea
Rossetti.

ironic representation of an unresolved historical conflict. In the same room, two other works instead focused on exile, which the Swedish artist's family experienced firsthand after they fled the fascist coup in Argentina in 1976. The video *Yo tambien soy humo* (I Am Also Smoke), 2020, is explicit, with the image fixed on a postcard of Port Vell in Barcelona, where the family disembarked. We hear the father speak about how he feels like a man with neither past nor future, as transient as the smoke of the cigarette he is smoking. The second work is more metaphorical. It is an orange monochrome that, if observed at length, reveals the outline of South America, a continent whose very cultures have been colonized, as the title implies: *If you open your eyes wide, you can see the shadow of the Louvre*, 2023.

Another room held more language-based works. *AmericAmnesia*, 2017, is a neon piece where the two words of the title—*America* and *amnesia*—alternately light up in white, suggesting that America itself is only possible through a certain trained forgetting. *El hambre no es subversivo* (Hunger Is Not Subversive), 2020, is created from twenty-two sheets of parchment paper, partially covered before being reheated in a common electric oven in order to imprint the letters spelling out the title. The process and the material itself refer directly to our primary need, the necessity to eat, which is denied to so many. Finally, in *We are here because you were there*, 2019, the handwritten title accompanies a small black-and-white photo of an old brick wall. Here, we again encountered the theme of the boundary, the wall that excludes. Migration and conflict are very current but also very ancient problems. The age of exile has always been now.

—Giorgio Verzotti

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

BERLIN

Tina Braegger SOCIÉTÉ

A good painter, opined Dürer in the early sixteenth century, is “inwardly full of figure”: He can find his creations in himself. To date, Tina Braegger's repertory consists of a single figure, but that figure is not so much drawn from her inner self as it is a pirated copy the artist has made her own. For years, Braegger has incessantly painted the five variants of the Grateful Dead's dancing bear emblem. She is not a Deadhead, or even particularly interested in the band's music. That's the difference between her and, say, Michel Majerus, who was an ardent enthusiast

of the cast of characters—Donkey Kong, Stretch Armstrong, Tron—he filched for his work.

The bear Braegger has bootlegged graced the back cover of the live album “History of the Grateful Dead Vol. 1 (Bear's Choice)” (1973). Ageless and of indeterminate gender, the animal looks pretty contemporary even today. Braegger, who was born in 1985, discovered the unofficial band logo for herself a little more than ten years ago. At first she made prints of the motif, but in 2016 started painting it in oil on canvas. Through years of repetition, she has surreptitiously transformed the pop-cultural token into her own brand, a formula for her painting, which incidentally also has something to say about merchandise, fan culture, and psychedelia. Indeed, though Braegger is a painter at heart, her gallery Soci t  labels her a Conceptual artist. She has made a name for herself as a novelist as well. Be that as it may, she raises questions of “originality, reproduction, authenticity, repetition, and difference”—which explains why, in 2021, the exhibition space De 11 Lijnen in Oudenburg, Belgium, mounted a double exhibition of Braegger's and Sturtevant's work curated by Udo Kittelmann.

Braegger's pictures cleverly suggest an unexpected linkage between the heraldic animal with its impertinent jollity and a painterly practice that reprises the past century's offerings, from dripping to Color Field and hard-edge painting, from the color chord to the monochrome, plus the dualities of linear and/or painterly, flat/deep, translucent-wash/thick-opaque paint—interspersed here and there with recognizable quotations (Picasso, Warhol, George Condo) and sprinkled with a helping of glitter. On other occasions, Braegger has cut up the iconically banal bear and recomposed the pieces. But these dissections have been nowhere near as unsettling as those that Georg Baselitz inflicted on his subjects in the 1960s.



Tina Braegger,
*The most wonderful
year of the time*,
2023, oil on canvas,
82 ½ × 107 ½".

Meanwhile, it's hard to shake the impression that the linkage between *peinture* and pop figure is utterly arbitrary or actually nonexistent—though the bear time and again breathes fresh life into painting, and painting conversely into the bear—resulting, invariably, in a celebration of the medium's *jouissance*. In the final analysis, Braegger's creative practice for years has amounted to a play for time. When would it outlive its usefulness, and when would the author find herself compelled to expand her figural repertory?

In her most recent exhibition, “*Ich bin hier raus, holt mich ein Star*” (I'm out of here, a star gets me), Braegger subjects the bear to a variety of metamorphoses, not only grafting an incongruent head on it—a quote from Picasso or Philip Guston—but also having it strut by holding brush and palette, like a stand-in for the artist in her studio. In smaller

works, she continues to evoke Guston, deploying his signature palette of warm pink and light blue. In the larger ones, she weaves the bears into a conventional interior and enhances them with symbolic still-life attributes such as an apple—a less-than-promising innovation. Or she goes for broke by turning the volume up to the max on the ferocious expressive turbulence. Is that meant to be technical brilliance, or upmarket Bad Painting? Makes no difference to the bear, which imperturbably acts the guardian of painting’s sanctity. Not even the roughest tumble can wipe that insolent smirk off its face. What does it care about Dürer?

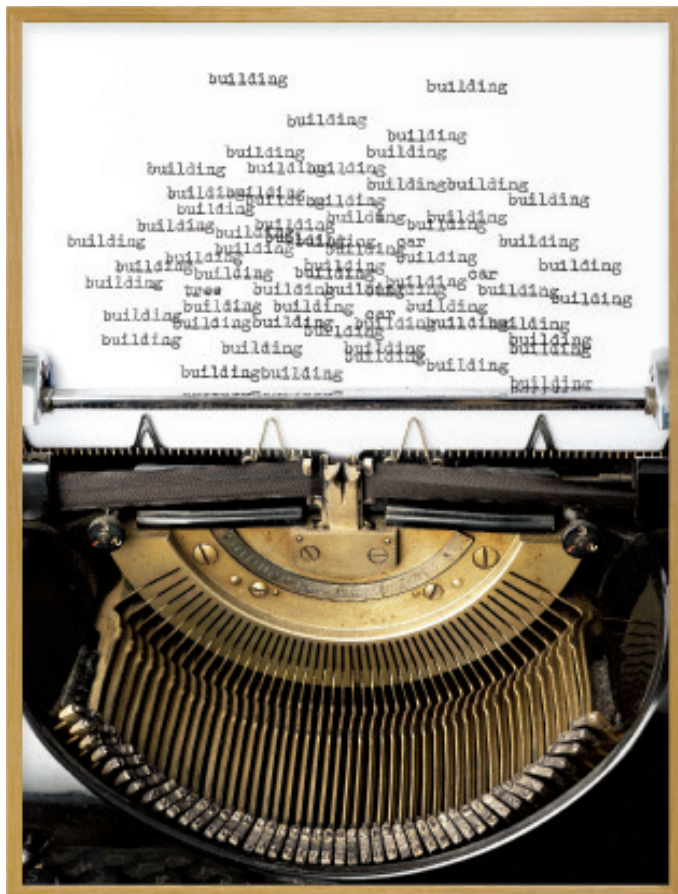
—Georg Imdahl

Translated from German by Gerrit Jackson.

Viktoria Binschtok

KLEMM’S

Words are irregularly scattered over each of the fifteen photographs in Viktoria Binschtok’s series “Typewriter Photographs,” 2022–23, which made its public debut in her exhibition “43% happy.” Concrete poetry was spread out from line into plane: accumulations, reiterations (BUILDING BUILDING BUILDING), or terse phrases in airy arrangements (PERSON BED PERSON LAPTOP), all produced on a typewriter—an implement that was omnipresent well into the 1990s but has since become thoroughly historic. In each tightly framed image, we saw the typed sheet above, the apparatus below, with the paper bail separating them like a horizon. That equal division is important to Binschtok, and not just in compositional terms; neither realm is given more space than the other or made to appear more important.



Viktoria Binschtok,
NYC Skyview, 2022,
digital C-print,
31½ × 23¾".

The bottom half of each picture shows the same typewriter, endowed with an almost Klapheckian archaic beauty by the impersonal precision of the depiction: typebars, each bearing two metal letters, forming a semicircle; the black-varnished hood; the ink ribbon; and other details of the complex mechanical apparatus. The keyboard, however, is conspicuously absent. The recurring bipartition forcefully directs our attention to the asyntactic texts or word images, unconstrained by any sentence structure. What establishes context is their placement on the surface. In *NYC Skyview*, 2022, for example, approximately sixty iterations of BUILDING form a veritable cloud of words, making it easy to overlook the few instances of CAR and the lone TREE interpolated between them. The abovementioned PERSON BED PERSON LAPTOP figures in *Couple in Bed*, 2023, its two halves defined by very different geometries: on the left, in staggered lines and separated by a sizable gap, BED and PERSON; on the right, PERSON right above LAPTOP. In *Sunset Boulevard*, 2023, the repetitions of CAR gather near the bottom of the sheet in a loosely stratified composition, whereas the seven occurrences of PALM trace diverging lines, suggesting perspective. The titles point to what some beholders will already have intuited: The visual poems shown in the photographs refer to images in yet another register. As it turns out, they are based on AI analyses of photographs, with the typed arrangements on the paper reproducing the organization of the source images. Binschtok worked with computer-vision technologies that we encounter, for example, when using facial recognition to unlock our phones; they are also operative in drones, apps for visually impaired people, surveillance systems, autonomous vehicles, and so on. Rather than focus on specific subjects or genres, she collected “images and themes of our time,” which, she explains, she “rendered through the machine’s vision in order to illustrate how technology ‘sees’ our contemporary world.”

The words and short phrases we read in most of those works represent fairly directly what the titles name—like heavy traffic on the palm-lined LA thoroughfare—but have been resolved into the units of machine vision. Binschtok has translated AI-powered image readings of a kind that have long permeated our everyday lives back into the analog medium of the typewriter. The gesture sparks friction between different media speeds, opening up novel perspectives on machine vision—while also lending it a poetic quality. In the photographic white space of the sheet, AI’s linguistic abstractions expand into a conceptual sphere of their own. Typographically materialized verbal images that now exist apart from surfaces of the material, they lend themselves to imaginative interpretation. One tool Binschtok used was an “emotion detection software” that proposes to analyze states of mind. Fed a painting known all over the world, the AI output the succinct summary: 28 YEAR OLD WOMAN / BROWN HAIR / 43% HAPPY. The sequence is reproduced in Binschtok’s *Mona L.*, 28, 2023, and one may wonder, indeed, whether 43 percent can pass for a smile.

—Jens Asthoff

Translated from German by Gerrit Jackson.

BRUSSELS

Mariana Castillo Deball

MENDES WOOD DM

According to the book of Genesis, God punished the monolingual builders of the heavenward tower of Babel, in the ancient city of Babylon, by messing with their ability to communicate. The ensuing diversification of languages and cultures, dispersed across the world, was their curse. Mariana Castillo Deball’s “*Cada cosa es Babel*” (Everything Is Babel), composed of linocuts, hanging paper sculptures, and wall paintings