

**Nick Dawes & Susa Templin**  
**LAYERS UPON LAYERS**

**Opening: 25.01.2023, 7 – 9 PM**

**Duration: 26.01. – 11.03.2023**

Layers tell stories. A tree that grows a new ring every year. A city that gains several meters in height over centuries. Our earth, which preserves life over time in its many sedimentary layers. The principle of stratigraphy not only occupies scientists, but also artists like Susa Templin and Nick Dawes. In the new exhibition **Layers Upon Layers. Susa Templin and Nick Dawes**, Galerie Anita Beckers presents a juxtaposition of the photographic work by the Frankfurt-based artist Susa Templin and paintings by the London-based artist Nick Dawes. Both are testing our visual habits by different means. Their artistic work is based on manifestations of our environment, urban space, and nature, from which they extract singular layers, ultimately assembling them in juxtaposed and superimposed surfaces to create new spatial organizations.

Nick Dawes works with unprimed canvases and drenches them with highly diluted oil paint. By repeating this process over and over again, the artist creates layers of color on the canvas. While the colors are deliberately chosen by the artist, the forms emerge spontaneously from a controlled coincidence. The method of superimposing color fields used for his paintings is strongly linked to the insights of color theory. Johann Wolfgang Goethe was the first to draw attention to the "sensual and moral effect" of colors and thus to their subjective-psychological understanding in his theory of colors, which is largely outdated today. At the beginning of the 1920s, the painter Johannes Itten used his own color circle to investigate the coincidence of different colors and color gradations, thus creating the basis for the theory of the seven color contrasts.<sup>1</sup> His color circle, which not only consists of an outer circle of tertiary colors, but also contains the secondary and primary colors within it, became widespread and has endured to this day. These theoretical and empirical considerations were further developed by various artists in direct and indirect contexts, most notably by the painter Joseph Albers in his homages to the square.

Nick Dawes leaves the schematic framework of Albers by giving organic, unforeseen forms to the color surfaces, reflecting the emotional state of the artist within the process. Resulting in large areas of color overlaying many more layers, like an outer, thick bark that lays protectively over the inner, finer layers.

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<sup>1</sup> Johannes Itten: Kunst der Farbe. Otto Maier Verlag, Ravensburg 1961.

Unlike the art historical predecessors of Abstract Expressionism and Action Painting, Nick Dawes' pouring and overlaying of paint serve less as a means for spontaneous emotional release than they do to articulate an analytical yet highly sensual abstraction that explores the relationship between surface and space.

" space {is} a reality of our sensory experiences {...}. a human experience like others, a means of expression like others. like other realities, other materials." <sup>2</sup>

Susa Templin first poses the question of form, which she then constructs from several layers. The artistic process ranges from double exposures, to hand printing in the lab, to the construction of spatial structures from photographically generated fragments. For Susa Templin, photography does not mean documenting. Rather, her works are to be understood as self-reflexive studies that explore the conditions and possibilities of photography. Like a painter, she mixes colors and forms from fragments that exist in our world and have been preserved photographically and assembles them into new pictorial realities. The artist always stages her handprints like the set of a theater. Space is both stage and protagonist, with the moods that change in the course of the picture series condensing into a narrative storyline. Susa Templin's photographed spaces elude precise localization and function especially through their fragmentary reproduction. In her installations and sculptural works, the images expand into space, eluding a mono-perspectival approach through a sequence of superimposition and transparency. The form and grace of the works change as one moves through space. Temporal and spatial shifts create spaces for the viewer to immerse himself in what he sees, to wander through it himself, and to trace the various moods of light - in this way Susa Templin's spatial compositions become projection surfaces, places of personal memory.

In terms of motifs, the artist plays with the principles of insights and prospects and encourages us to discover what may be hidden behind the next layer. In her latest work, the local reference to Frankfurt's Palmengarten is inscribed in the photo prints but can no longer be reconstructed at a glance due to the superimposition and rotation of various layers of material, some of which are printed, transparent, and reflective. Like a trace painted in the air, the sculpture hangs seemingly weightlessly from the ceiling. We have to walk around it and look at it from all angles in order to penetrate it layer by layer.

**Nick Dawes**, born 1969 in Johannesburg, South Africa, lives and works in London, England. He studied at Gloucestershire College of Art and Technology and graduated with a BA in Fine Arts from Brighton Polytechnic. Nick Dawes was nominated for the Celeste Art Prize in 2006 and his work has been shown in numerous exhibitions including Kornfeld Gallery and 68projects in Berlin, Cell Project Space in London, Lucy Mackintosh Gallery in Lausanne, John Hansard Gallery in Southampton and international art fairs such as Art021 Shanghai,

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<sup>2</sup> Lazlo Moholy Nagy: Von Material zu Architektur, 1929, S.195.

Expo Chicago and Untitled Miami. His works are in public and private collections in Germany, Europe and worldwide, including the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk.

**Susa Templin**, born 1965 in Hamburg, studied experimental film and painting at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main and at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin (now UdK, Universität der Künste) from 1987 to 1993. Her photographic, partly walkable room installations have been shown in renowned national and international institutions, such as Kunsthalle Mannheim; Berlinische Galerie - Museum für Moderne Kunst, Berlin; Fotogalleriet Format, Malmö (Sweden); Kunsthalle Nürnberg; MAM, Museo de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (Brazil); Museum Folkwang Essen; Goethe-Institut Washington D.C. (USA); the Museum für Konkrete Kunst Ingolstadt and the Biennale des Images in Paris (France). The artist's works can be found in numerous public collections, including the Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main; the Berlinische Galerie - Museum für Moderne Kunst, Berlin; the Kunsthalle Mannheim; the art collection of the DZ BANK and the photography collection of the Historisches Museum, both in Frankfurt am Main; as well as the Museum für Konkrete Kunst, Ingolstadt and the Sammlung Zeitgenössische Kunst des Bundes, Bonn.

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