



Patrick Rohner  
«Entanglement»

August 25 - October, 13, 2018

When travelling to Patrick Rohner's studio spaces in the rural areas of the Swiss region called "Glarnerland", it is impossible to miss the overpowering presence of the Glarner mountains: The rough materials, the steep cliffs, dark rocks, the green marking the woodland - these unique surroundings make you feel close and connected to the artworks created by Rohner. The described geology constitutes the visual raw material underlying Rohner's artistic practice. His profound understanding of the natural processes is based on a carefully detailed and long-standing examination and documentation of structure, composition and alteration of the vegetation that surrounds him. Rohner uses this to create an imagery that allows the dynamics of nature to become highly perceptible. He strives neither for a technical depiction of nature, nor for a romantic form of landscape art. Instead, he found an artistic expression, which allows him to question the internal legitimacy of the material, and to recognise and visualise its underlying processes.

For his exhibition "entanglement" at the Galerie Mark Müller, Patrick Rohner presents a selection of four large-scale works (oil on plywood panel), which are supplemented by a water-colour piece in the second room as well as a stone-painting located in the entry hall. The large plywood panels do not mainly represent an initial, formal decision of artistic activity. Instead, they function as a work place, as a surface for the applied colour, a study area and place of origin for his artistic practice. Rohner's works develop out of a long-term, precisely documented processes, which can extend over months and years. His artistic interest is driven more strongly by the materials' physical composition, their internal dynamics and laws of structure, rather than the visual effects caused by the application of colour or the final product itself. Accordingly, his works are preceded by a number of steps, used to observe, photograph, and document the surrounding geology. For his panels, Rohner creates a specific mixture of linseed oil and paint pigments, which he then uses for a range of technical interventions. Once these interventions have taken place, Rohner takes a step back and lets the material work on its own and, in a way, "organise itself". For this reason, the results are never the same or interchangeable, even where similar technical interventions (such as using pressure and tension, the application of colour using a spatula, brushing, painting or scratching colour off the surface) are used. This is because the materials - left to act by themselves - add unforeseeable processes to the work: big pieces of colour tear off from the panel with great authenticity, bluntness and almost a sense of brutality; liquid colour paves its way through thicker colour accumulations and forms notches and indentations; fine powder piles up on areas that stand out and falls down on others. The piece develops an independent dynamic and its own organisational power.

The individual "technical inputs" and layers, as well as the actions caused by these inputs, continue until compressed to a maximum, leading to the perception of an organic, intertwined whole with its interconnected, dynamic structure. Rohner refers to this kind of enmeshment and compression in the title - "entanglement". Deep cuts, slipped off material, as well as the different shades and tones marking different areas of the panel provide the observer with an insight into the different foregone dynamics and processes. Therewith, Rohner's pieces go beyond their state at the point of presentation, and touch on themes of temporality and perception. This causes the observer to adopt a view focussed on the past while simultaneously actively awaiting the future.

Rohner's works demonstrate the intensity and strength, as well as poetry and vulnerability of nature. The rugged, playful ups and downs of movement on the surface of his pieces invite the observer to adopt an approach which exceeds the conventional mindsets and ways of thinking. With its procedural character, he

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addresses the independence of materials and the relationship between humans and nature. His work raises questions around our position within our surrounding structures and processes, and Patrick Rohner found a fascinating, dialogic way of dealing with these questions, full of great severity and open for the observer's participation.

Cecilia Hock