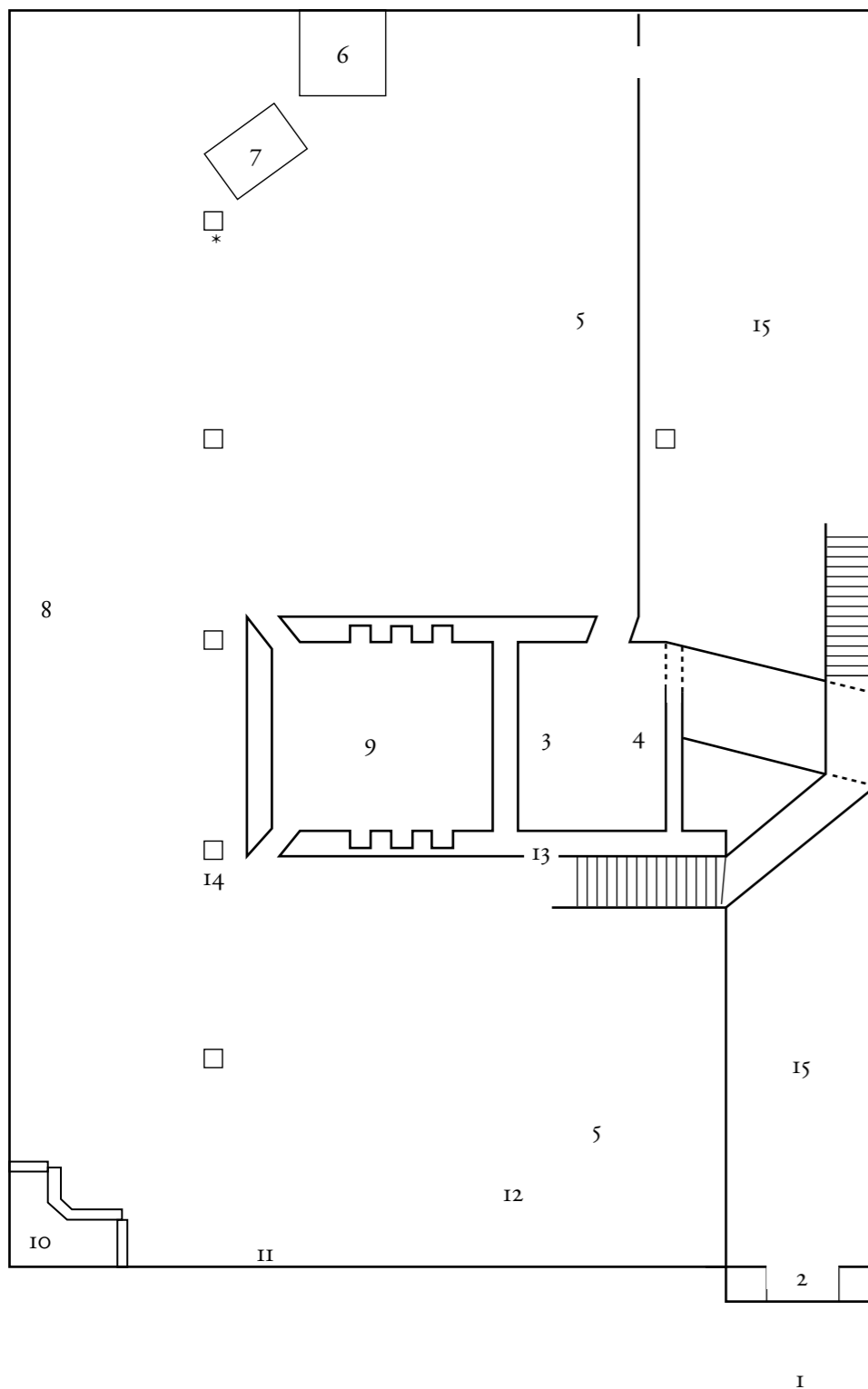


Michael Kleine in der Blumenhalle



- 1 *Il Gennaio by Bartolomeo Ammannati 1565*, 2023, ready-made, steel palette, warning light, cardboard, clamping belt, 167 × 94 × 203 cm
- 2 *Sitznischen*, 2023, 315 × 118 × 265 cm
- 3 *Steinblock*, 2023, ready-made, sandstone, 76 × 14 × 102 cm
- 4 *Oberkörper*, 2023, ready-made, velvet, wood, 52 × 28 × 72 cm
- 5 *Leuchter*, 2017, aluminium sheet, steel, chain, candles, 50 × 47 × 50 cm
- 6 *Sockel*, 2023, wood, paint, 200 × 200 × 170 cm

- 7 *Bühne*, 2023, wood veneer, branches, aluminum, foam, 221 × 176 × 310 cm
- 8 *Tapiserie*, 2023, ready-mades, wooden supports, padded cushions, ribbons, wax, cotton threads, 625 × 76 × 238 cm
980 × 76 × 314 cm
980 × 76 × 300 cm
- 9 *Brunnenraum*, 2023, ready-made, niches, steel, brass, silicon, motor, 490 × 560 × 600 cm
- 10 *Podest*, 2023, wood, paint, 288 × 253 × 72 cm

- 11 *Brotscheibe*, 2023, ready-made, iron nails, 23 × 8 × 13 cm
 - 12 *Baumstamm*, 2023, tree trunk, spray paint, 726 × 50 × 50 cm
 - 13 *Thermobox*, 2023, ready-made, light bulb, wooden trays, stacking dishes, cutlery, napkin, porcelain vase, 42 × 70 × 56 cm
 - 14 *Glockenrad*, 2023, beehive bells, iron wheel, motor, 83 × 80 × 29 cm
 - 15 *plein air*, 2023, dimensions variable
- * coin-operated-timer-box, please use for illumination

Michael Kleine *in der Blumenhalle* emerges from long-running work and collaborations with the artist. In this iteration, the format is that of the solo show. In a reflection on exhibition making as form, there is a careful consideration of the filling and emptying of space and content and what this does to the visiting person held in this condition.

The Kunstverein is approached as a public space hosted in a purpose-built industrial flower market – a space to be inhabited. It is also approached as an oversized sculpture where considerations of body – the body of the audience, of the artist, and of the objects themselves – are central negotiations.

Within Michael Kleine *in der Blumenhalle*, objects are uprooted from their original realities and use through a series of framing devices. In their new containers, they are still part of their former lives ‘out there’ as theatre props, organic matter, and found objects, whilst also being integral elements of one total work.

As part of the exhibition opening, Michael Kleine is working with Asako Iwama and Roman Lemberg on the staging and hosting of a celebration, extending from Bonner Kunstverein’s galleries into its courtyard.

Michael Kleine’s practice recurrently moves between formats, across set design, performance, architecture, music and sculptural work in close dialogue with site and context. Across these genres, he develops concepts for the encounter of visitor, art and artist. He often integrates historical artifacts into his work. Artistic collaborations are a returning element of Michael Kleine’s practice.

His work has been on view at institutions of the visual and performing arts, including: Bonner Kunstverein; Schinkelpavillon, Berlin; Volksbühne, Berlin; Kunstverein Leipzig; Künstlerhaus Stuttgart; Ruhrtriennale, Bochum; Theater Basel; Kampnagel, Hamburg; Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe; Hamburgische Staatsoper; Museion, Bolzano; Sammlung Klosterfelde, Hamburg; Biennale Arte di Venezia; Philharmonie de Paris; Opéra de Reims; Radialsystem, Berlin.

FATIMA HELLBERG You have been an important conversation partner and collaborator over the last years, and in the process this generative, shared space has been taking form. Running through much of your work, I sense a kind of undercurrent. I think it resists ready categorisation but it does contain this remarkable attunement for liveness. That is, a careful attention to the experience of the viewer and the circumstances of an encounter.

MICHAEL KLEINE In my encounter with artworks, and this is quite elastic in the sense that it also applies to historical works, I am continuously drawn back into this strange transferral of energy. This transferral connects the artist, the recipient and the circumstances of the here and now – all these things play together. And in that interplay, you realise that something has happened, an activation... Once you pay attention to this occurrence, it also shifts the perspective on how you understand art. It becomes a kind of *Haltung* towards exhibition making, performance, staging etc. It also means that the recipient becomes absolutely central – an active maker of their experience – because the work of art does not exist on its own. I pay a great deal of attention to elements that are “just there,” say, the quality of light, density, temperature, volume, elements that have a great enveloping and mood-based presence. I also like to smudge the edges between these things, a form of fascination with the transitional, one thing passing into the next. In the time running up to this show, I made a performance within the previous exhibition, *The First Finger* by Tolia Astakhishvili that created a bridge and a form of transition from one container into another.

FH I'm interested in this notion that you establish a form of container, one which holds its internal logic. As soon as a container has been established there is also a certain porousness to its outside, and also of course the question of whether filling also needs to be accompanied with acts of removal. Can you say something about the notion of emptiness, or perhaps more accurately, emptying? I think there is a process there in how I experience your work and how I've observed others inside it.

MK This is an exhibition which includes various types of frames and thresholds – both actual and metaphoric. When it comes to the act of emptying, it doesn't matter whether it's in a performance or in an exhibition, it's really a question of creating room for the recipient. The emptying is a way to give space. So the artwork is there for the recipient and they can decide to fill it.

FH This emphasis on the viewer, also suggests a certain element of sharing responsibility. You provide the situation, but it also suggests, much like a conversation, a certain willingness of engagement. To be able to take the work in also requires a certain openness, and a mutual giving, also in the sense of the viewer giving their time to inhabit that space.

MK As I work across formats and disciplines, from art exhibitions and performances, to musical stagings, set design and directing, a recurring vocabulary has organically taken form over time. And still, I cannot always rely on it, it's fragile. I find that paying attention to the circumstances I am given, and attending to the conditions of a specific site involves a continuous negotiation. And this is where the uncontrollable comes in, and this is really important. I like the space of ambivalence, of doubt, my own and that of the viewer's.

FH What you are describing in a sense is the establishing of a technique but also allowing its fragilities. The spaces and situations you make have a great deal also to do with bringing forth a moment of surrender, of the person letting the outside in, which also involves the act of letting go in a way which interestingly also leaves this room for feeling.

MK I find dealing with feelings central to my work... This happens on many levels and it's hard to describe, but I think it might also be connected with this interest in ideas of hosting and care. I create these situations and I like to think that there

is an element of generosity and the desire to share as part of this. And like any experience of hosting, it involves aspects of providing, of giving and of caring about how the guest feels. I often pay attention to the whole choreography of how this hosting takes place. This is also the case with the opening of this exhibition – we have invested an absurd level of preparation and labour into that moment of celebration, and that is part of it.

FH We have spoken of care here in the encounter with the viewer and it makes me think of how this word might be useful in thinking of the process and in the stages of production. Of caring *about* something... Some notions like skill, technique, craft come to mind.

MK I think my understanding of these qualities is shaped by working with musicians. Here practices of craftsmanship are standard. When a musical performance works, it brings together this delicate combination of technical knowledge and artistic sensibility. I like the complex and foggy intertwining of these elements.

FH There's a mode here of how elements are attended to individually but also in a very active consideration of composition. I think on the one hand these elements are very ephemeral, like what you described here, and at other times, they are really concrete physical elements that are arranged and worked with through a logic of composition and the notion of the interaction of parts.

MK Yes, that is a key part of the process... In this show, many of the included elements come from the outside, such as the found objects. They have been selected by me, which is a decision, but there are a lot of decisions being made that extend beyond me and the logic of the exhibition. I like how *Plein air* functions. The elements are very reduced, it comes together through a number of components: daylight, wind, air, sounds, the space, the viewer. That's all.

FH What you're describing makes me think of a score, or scoring. I mean, the implication that the show as a whole also behaves in a certain way...

MK There are a number of elements that have a durational quality. Some are more openly based in a space of activation: the step of putting a coin into the slot of the coin-operated-timer-box for light for example. Others are more subtle and self-sufficient in their relationship with time and change, like the tree trunk. I like what these elements are doing together as a whole, that there are no edges around it – they add to the overall organic quality and liveliness of the work.

Michael Kleine, in der Blumenhalle

Bonner Kunstverein
17 September 2023 – 25 February 2024
Curated by Fatima Hellberg

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Opening hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 12–6pm

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