

SOPHIE BOUVIER AUSLÄNDER
WORDS, WORKS, WORLDS

Exhibition: 18 October – 28 November 2019

“We can have words without a world but no world without words or other symbols.”
Nelson Goodman, *Ways of worldmaking*.

A world and a work cannot exist without language, whether in terms of speech, vision or touch. *Radar/Austerlitz*, *In hands* or *What do you feel? / the FT series* are words, worlds and works, all at the same time.

Radar/Austerlitz includes two series placed side by side. On the one hand, as a positive often placed to the right of the composition, *Radar* reveals the names of places under the gouache as bombed cities or an animal's eyes looking into a car's headlights. On the other hand, as a negative placed on the left, *Austerlitz* places the smashed pieces of *Radar* on another sheet of paper. It preserves all elements of the original painting by maintaining the dynamics of its deterioration and exposing this transformation itself. The pages that have become paintings are similar to those in photo albums where pergamine is used to protect the prints. They are also the pages of a book that forms a collection of language elements. *Austerlitz* is in fact a reference to W.G. Sebald. By superimposing the two series again, two layers of paper on top of one other would enjoy the work with a painting-like quality again. The work would lose its relief and its meaning would again be obscured.

In hands offers, in the hands of whoever wishes to hold them, ambidextrous objects shaped to re-appropriate the world and seek to place the fingers exactly where the artist's fingers compressed the earth before firing it. This gesture is printed in imitation of geological compressions but with its own relatively low force. It is about supporting the ambivalent side of reality; the artist sees double and inhabits two worlds. Her spheres are hollow; only the envelope of each world is deformed because the human condition is, above all, a matter of dialogue between being and form.

What do you feel? /the FT series tells the tale of the war between the queen of touch and the king of abstraction. The abstract mundanity of a printed newspaper becomes an ephemeral relief. Its flesh colour causes the attacks to contemplate what it is that induces exchanges of values on the bodies, to make the impact itself visible and tangible. The raw material on which the lives of people who work actually depends is substituted in merchant rates printed on a rose whose source is questioned by the artist. What emerges from this colour? Evidence of the founding colonialism of our wealth? Desire and money? Vapid conservatism or only tenderness?

All these series strive to inextricably bind words, works and worlds to make their mutual influences and permanent transformation tangible; from words to work, from work to the world and from worlds to words.

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Sophie Bouvier Ausländer was born in 1970. She works in Lausanne and London, where she recently defended her doctoral thesis in art on the notion of tangibility, contemporary reliefs and continuous dimensions. She is represented by the Heinzer Reszler Lausanne Gallery, Patrick Heide CA London and Davidson Contemporary NYC. Her work is included in the Frankel Collection USA, Caldic Collectie NL, UCL Art Museum UK, MCBA Lausanne, MBAL Le Locle, City of Lausanne, Crédit Suisse, Banque Cantonale Vaudoise, Bordier & Cie, Retraites Populaires, CH. Sophie Bouvier Ausländer was awarded the Grand Prix from the Vaudoise Culture Foundation in 2017.