

Sunah Choi
Nach Material

February 21, 2014 - March 29, 2014

Opening on Friday, February 21, 2014
7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

In her third solo show at Galerie Cinzia Friedlaender, Sunah Choi continues her engagement with the underlying relations between material and form, focusing her observations once again on the physical realities found in the streets of modern cities, and on everyday interactions with urban environments. These, however, are internalized and intuitive interactions, ones that we're hardly aware of, like the almost mystical way in which the body knows to calculate how many steps to take so that it's always with the stronger leg that we reach the first step of stairs.

A series of cyanotypes hangs in one room. These photograms in "Prussian Blue" go back to the very early moments of photography. Created by laying objects on chemically treated paper and exposing these temporary arrangements to sunlight, chance and an element of the unexpected play a role in the final results. The length and time of exposure varied, the objects themselves cast shadows on the paper, and the brush strokes of the chemical coating on paper are also traceable.

These works relate to the artist's ongoing exploration of different modes of photography: negative images, imprints, frottage and photograms are just some of the techniques Choi uses, as well as directly drawing with light, placing changing arrangements of objects in her slide shows, or - in her performances - on overhead projectors. A performative element also resides within the cyanotypes, with their tracing of the artist's interventions.

Metal, stone and concrete works set the atmosphere in the second room; materials that in an urban setting, are so omnipresent they simply blend in. Magnets are placed strategically as connectors between stone and steel - a physical element which is widely used in our everyday, present in everything from computers to household appliance but hardly ever noticed. Choi stages provisional-seeming and precarious situations, sculptures held together by gravity or magnets, as if alluding to the automated carelessness with which things are put aside, organized quickly, collected under a magnet for later consideration.

The steel and brick sculpture "provisorisch stabil" (provisionally stable), follows a rudimentary rule the artist had imposed on herself: As she collected and recorded found forms and materials, she particularly noted their dimensions. Electricity boxes, phone cable boxes, trash cans - these are some of the rectangular shapes measured and repeated in this work. A concrete sculpture, "Geschichtet" (Layered), on the other hand, negates the provisional situations with its semi-permanent mass. Layer after layer of concrete was poured unto equally-sized, thin plates of varying materials, like glass, steel, plastic and so on, which appear nearly buried under the concrete. This stacking of layers is a manifestation of simplicity and directness of technique, creating permanence that seems rather haphazard.

Choi uses specific measurements, forms and materials in this new body of work as if to create an environment inhabited by objects of familiar dimensions. What are the effects the forms and materials that shape perception and movement in cities have on our intuitive and corporeal perspicacity?

Text: Hili Perlson