

GALERIE MITTERRAND

KATJA SCHENKER

TEMPS SUSPENDU

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PRESS RELEASE

The Galerie Mitterrand is delighted to announce the first solo exhibition, in Paris, of Swiss artist Katja Schenker. The exhibition offers the public an ideal opportunity to discover an ensemble of work, representative of the Zurich artist's oeuvre.

Since the 1990s, Katja Schenker has been developing a work that combines performance and sculpture, using drawing, photography and video to deepen and document the successive stages of her creative process. During her performances, the artist creates different physical actions which transform materials or objects. During the *moll* performance presented at the Jinji Lake Museum in Suzhou, China, the artist spread a huge white sheet of paper over the entire floor of the exhibition space. This action may be said to demonstrate the physical and spatial dimension of her work. For her *veröffnen* performance, Katja Schenker cut bundles of strings allowing orange tulle curtains to open around the spectators, fully including them in this sensory and poetic experience. These performances are complex processes which often originate in an emotional intention, then transcribed to a drawing, then staged, before culminating in sculptures which conserve the trace of the creative act, sometimes becoming even relic-like objects. The trace of a physical action is evident in the work called *rencontre* shown at the gallery. In this subtle metaphor of motherhood, the artist holds in her arms a bag of cement until it hardens completely; the sculpture becoming the plastic result of this action.

For her exhibition at the Galerie Mitterrand, the performance dimension of Katja Schenker's work is put in the spotlight. The *lüften* performance programmed for the inauguration of the exhibition opens this encounter which continues with the presentation of works representative of the artist's production for the past ten years. The *Nougat* sculpture (*Abschnitt*), composed of concrete and various natural materials is the result of a performance carried out in 2009. The cement and clay panels of *Mit angewinkelten Beinen (Platten)*, create a porous surface within the gallery space, evoking the importance of nature as a central object in Katja Schenker's creation. The *füllen* photographs reflect a past performance, illustrating the process of creation, also tangible in the drawings *Mit angewinkelten Beinen (Margareten)*, precursors to the creative act, evidence of an initial, guiding thought or inspiration.

Katja Schenker was born in Saint-Gall, Switzerland in 1968. She lives and works in Zurich. Her work has been the object of numerous exhibitions, including a solo exhibition at the Jinji Lake Art Museum in Suzhou or the group exhibition *I am the space where I am* at the He Xiangning Art Museum in Shenzhen, China. Recently, videos of her performances were shown at the Kochi Biennale in India. Her work will also be included in the upcoming thirty year anniversary exhibition at the Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris (*PerformanceProcess*). She is the recipient of several awards, including the Swiss Art Awards, (three years in succession). Before studying art at the Hochschule der Künste in Zurich, Katja Schenker studied comparative literature, art history and philosophy at the University of Zurich and at the EHESS in Paris.

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