VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE



Wolfgang Flad

The Dark Side of the Moon

07.06.2019–27.07.2019

On the one hand, the title of the new series of works *The Dark Side of the Moon* describes the vivid, highly aesthetically pleasing appearance of these images. On the other hand, however, the title goes much further, in the metaphorical sense also clearly intended by the artist.

The aesthetic appearance of the work, its *face*, is inspired by the crater-pocked surface of the moon. Wolfgang Flad's whole body of sculptural work draws on observations from micro- and macrobiology, of biomorphic structures and phases of growth, for its formal repertoire. Now this is joined by an extraterrestrial language of form, familiar to us since the advent of photography. And at the same time, these new wall pieces are a progression arising out of the steps taken in earlier reliefs: first, indentations are made in monochrome-painted wooden panels, the milling of which allows the grain of the plywood beneath to come to light. Next, structures are milled into painted surfaces on which various iridescent colors run together, suddenly creating a breathtaking pictorial space. This seems to virtually compel the next progression in the work: surfaces that display a material that is torn open,

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wounded and, contrary to the *drawing* created by the milling, here gives rise to a raw, sculptural intervention into the material. One can certainly speak here of an opening of the dark, existential side of these images. The reliefs are paired with a colored mirrored glass plate, which shields the delicate "moonscape" while creating a chatoyant color effect that can best be compared to the shimmering changeable luster of a hologram.

The latest mid-sized and large format relief pieces work an exceptional magic and the manner of their creation remains enigmatic. The unusual combination of materials, the way they are formed and the resulting effect clearly places them in the tradition of the reliefs of Yves Klein, works which are highly significant for post-war art history: by means of abstraction they made resonant bodies of spirituality possible.