

ENDLESS COLLAPSE IV

RAPHAËL DENIS



Endless Collapse IV is the fourth chapter in a cycle of exhibitions by Raphaël Denis that began in 2017 and that has been successively presented in Nice, Berlin and Lille. In this cycle, Denis creates original dialogues between elements of his own making that belong to different series and periods in his oeuvre, casting a retrospective gaze over his temporally-marked body of work to reactivate old pieces in new contexts. And yet, this is also a prospective exhibition that sketches out future avenues for his artistic practice.

exhibition
from January 12th
to March 28th 2020

opening
Sunday, January 12th
from 12am to 6pm

galerie Sator
Charlène Fustier
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from tuesday to saturday 2pm-7pm
and by appointment

This fourth instalment of “Endless Collapse” is presented in Galerie Sator’s new space at Komunuma, and features works from the series Corps 1, Éléments pour un ensemble, La Loi normale des erreurs, Regelbau, Europa and Fahrenheit alongside several new pieces.

Denis’ iconic work, La Recherche du Temps perdu – Corps 1, was initially presented in 2011 as part of his first solo exhibition at Galerie Sator, “Surface Volume Virtuel”. Through a radical typographic compression, the work began Denis’ exploration of the question of the inaccessible forms of knowledge. In 2019, he returned to this theme with the charred library shelves of the Fahrenheit series that was first shown at the gallery in October last year as part of the exhibition “Versuche aus der Literature und Moral II».

Following the Proustian monument of the first version of Corps 1, with Éléments pour un ensemble (2013), Denis turned his attention to the mysterious polyhedron that appears in Dürer’s engraving Melancolia I. His interest in history and in the history of art as well as his ongoing interrogation of cultural objects came to the fore again in La Loi normale des erreurs, a series begun in 2014 that centred on artwork plundered from Jewish collectors during the Second World War. This project saw Denis participate in the summer university of the Bibliothèque Kandinsky at the Centre Georges Pompidou, and exhibit his work at the Musée national Picasso, the Musée national d’art modern, and the Berggruen Museum in Berlin.

Alongside the multiple versions of La Loi normale des erreurs, from 2015 Denis began to work on a new series inspired by the bunkers of the Atlantic Wall, a system of coastal defences built by the Nazis. Entitled Regelbau, this sculptural work in concrete raised questions of geography and territory that were extended in the 2017 series Europa, which features lead flags whose immobility evokes the anxiety of identity experienced by peoples and nations at war.

Denis’ oeuvre constitutes a commemorative reflection on history, the history of art, and the mechanisms of destruction or even of annihilation to which cultural objects as expressions of human identities can be subjected. In plastic terms, this reflection emerges from his exploration of materials widely used in the construction of societies – lead, wood, concrete – in tandem with various black binding agents. By presenting his existing works in new configurations, Denis institutes new relationships between them that offer a humanist response to the seemingly unending flow of destruction and violence referenced in this exhibition’s title, “Endless Collapse”.

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