

PRESS RELEASE 26 January 2017

## **Andrew Bick – original ghost variety shifted double echo**

curated by Sabine Schaschl

**9 February to 7 May 2017**

**Media orientation: 7 February, 11 am / Opening: 8 February, 6 pm**

**In his technically complex and layered paintings, using interplay of free and geometric forms, Andrew Bick (born in 1963 in Coleford, Gloucestershire, lives and works in London) amalgamates drawing and painting, line and plane, transparency and opacity, colorful and muted, as well as glossy and matt surfaces, to form an ambiguous and enigmatic whole. Colorful triangular and trapezoidal forms, gesturally applied color fields and sharp-edged structures in white, gray and black block out areas of his often unprimed canvases. Covered with translucent plexiglass or partially coated with layers of wax that lie over the colors like fog, his precisely constructed compositions combine seemingly contradictory painting methods and multi-layered textures. His architectural visual structures are positioned in the wake of British Constructivism and Systems art, which emerged in parallel with Minimalism, Conceptual Art and Cybernetics.**

Andrew Bick completed the foundation studies course at Cheltenham College of Art in the early 1980s, then continued to study painting at the University of Reading and later at Chelsea School of Art and Design in London. Bick became well known not only for paintings rich in variety, but also for art-in-architecture projects and his many years spent working as a curator, writer and lecturer. His critical engagement with pioneers of Abstract and Concrete Modernism, as well as with the foundations of his own artwork, has already given rise to numerous collaborations and projects with other artists, some of whom are younger or around the same age as Bick, such as Eva Berendes, Katrina Blannin and Cullinan Richards, whereas others were born in the 1930s, such as Norman Dilworth, Anthony Hill, Peter Lowe, Jeffrey Steele and Gillian Wise. This work is always characterized by his discursive approach, with which he identifies or creates links to art history. In so doing, he likes to pay particular attention to artists who he believes have been unjustly neglected in the established canon of art history.

Under the artist's chosen title "original/ghost/variety/shifted/double/echo", Museum Haus Konstruktiv is exhibiting a presentation of his latest works that makes reference to the architecture of the exhibition spaces. It includes a large-format mural, works on paper and an interactive installation with a kinetic object that can be observed through a Pseudoscope – an optical instrument that disturbs depth perception, invented by Constructivist and former tutor of Bicks, Terry Pope. In order

to architecturally link the smaller spaces to the largest on floor 3, as well as join five of the six pillars, Bick has collaborated with LUVVO Architekten to create a special shelf on which he will place small rubber stamp grid drawings. These drawings, on ordinary A4 isometric graph paper, reprise the grids systematically repeated in the paintings, as a kind of lo-fi and endless edition. The title “original/ghost/variety/shifted/double/echo” is a kind of mnemonic for the system that Bick uses to encrypt his works’ titles; they come from an associative, continually expanded mind map, in which his sources and references are charted. In the case of the current exhibition's title, its vertical arrangement and use of the lower case refer to the visual dimension of writing in concrete poetry and, in particular, it is to be understood as a reference to US author Robert Lax (1915–2000), whose concrete poems, often divided into columns of single words and syllables, were published in Zurich, among other places. Although language hardly retains any referential function in concrete poetry, it is highly coded in Bick’s titles. For instance, the word “ghost” in the titles of the pale works signifies not only the phantom-like presence of previous works, but also the spirit of older constructivists and systems artists, whose concept of rationalism and empiricism Bick has been addressing for some time. In a clever, lively manner, Bick’s work makes art history become current, as a constituent part of the medium and theme.

Museum Haus Konstruktiv is the first museum in Switzerland to dedicate a solo exhibition to Andrew Bick.

His major solo exhibitions have been held in venues such as Galerie Louise de Haan, Haarlem (1996), LiebmanMagnan, New York (2001), Niederrheinischer Kunstverein, Wesel (2003), Von Bartha Garage, Basel (2008), Bluecoat Liverpool (2009) Hales Gallery, London (2012) and the Cornerstone Gallery, Liverpool Hope University (2015). He has also taken part in exhibitions at the Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow (1999), Kuatespacio del Arte, San Sebastian (2002), Konsthallen-Bohuslans Museum, Uddevalla (2002), GoMA Glasgow (2003), the Turnpike Gallery, Leigh (2006), Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston University (2006), Drawing Biennial, London (2011/13/15), Kunsthalle Wilhelmshaven (2014), Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, Penzance (2014), Platform A, Middlesbrough (2014), the Pizzuti Collection, Cleveland, Ohio (2014), Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2015) and The Wilson, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum (2017). His curatorial projects have included "Construction & its Shadow", Leeds Art Gallery (2010/11), "Exchanges Around Construction", Derwent London (2012) and "Conversations Around Marlow Moss", & Model, Leeds (2014), to name but a few. Finally, the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds awarded him a research fellowship in 2007. He has been Reader in Fine Art at the University of Gloucestershire's School of Art and Design since 2015.

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