

Fantastic Fragility

... and how it's difficult to move on

I want to explore an art of fierce delicacy and passionate fragility.

– Carl Andre, A Statement of Need and Intent

But he stays by the window, remembering. They had laughed. They had leaned on each other and laughed until the tears had come, while everything else – the cold, and where he'd go in it – was outside, for a while anyway.

– Raymond Carver, Everything Stuck to Him

As we go through our daily lives, we are usually focused on our immediate concerns: our tasks, our worries, our plans. We work, we meet, we move, we talk, we read. The mundane serves as a veneer to make us feel safe. Only when the everyday is fractured, we are made aware of the fragility of life. Accidents happen. The unexpected happens. Are we ever prepared?

I say we are not. We might try to prepare ourselves for disaster (though most of us avoid even the thought of it), but we can neither prevent nor plan for a shift in our psyche after a profound incident. «One might easily suppose that nothing had happened», Rainer Maria Rilke cautions aspiring poet Franz Xaver Kappus in a letter, «but we have altered the way a house alters when a guest enters it.» The construction of our inner being is so intricate and delicate that the outside world inevitably shapes it.

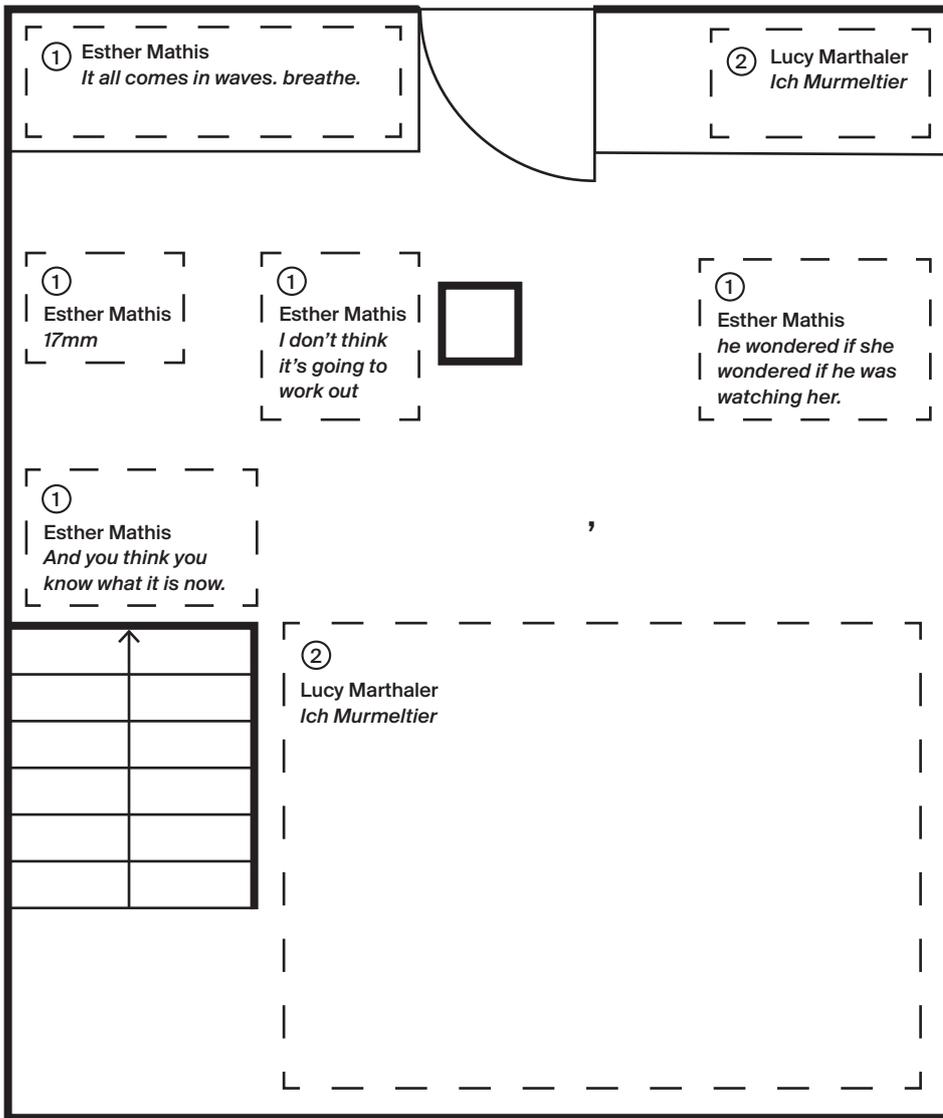
We are fragile beings and in this fragility we find beauty. The fragility of emotions, of creativity, of relationships. Everything seems to hang on tiny threads, able to be destroyed in an instant, or hover in the mysterious space between collapse and stability. Most of the time we live in this «in-between». The tension between fragility and strength keeps us standing so we can face the world. We need strength for dignity. Strength to move on, even though it is difficult.

The works by Esther Mathis, Lucy Marthaler, and Felix Schregenberger are placed in this seemingly mystic space between both strength and delicateness. They anticipate and risk possible collapse, while simultaneously demonstrating tenacious strength. Mathis and Schregenberger's pieces challenge the physical limits of objects; whereas, Marthaler confronts herself and the viewer with the limits of body and mind.

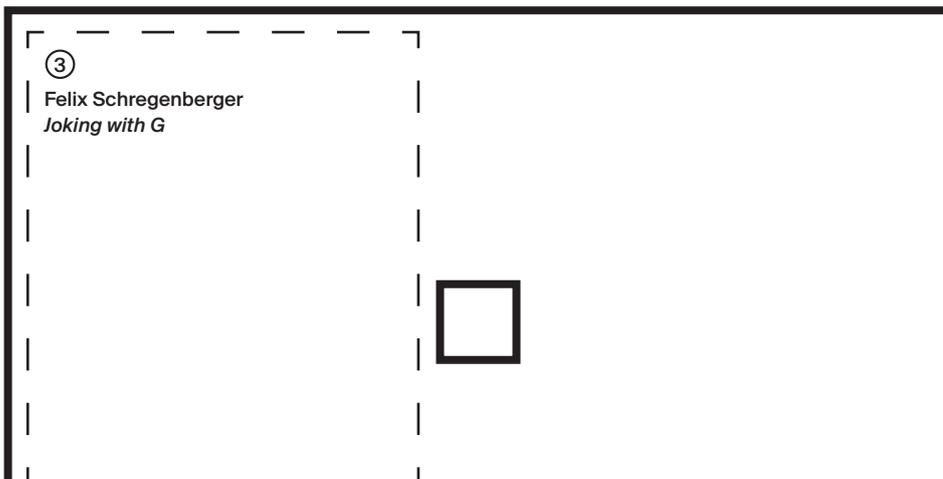
Fantastic Fragility ... and how it's difficult to move on invites you into the richness of dreams and worlds inside creators. Mathis, Marthaler and Schregenberger's works embrace fragility and celebrate the fantastic. Harsh realities face all of us outside; but now we are inside, for a while anyway.

– Robert Steinberger

Langstrasse



Erdgeschoss



Keller

①

Esther Mathis

it all comes in waves. breathe. (2013) 170 test tubes, thread, nails, fans dimensions variable

17mm (2013), glass, 2 magnets positioned at a 17mm distance, magnetic field, iron powder, cm 16 x 4 x 4

I don't think it's going to work out. (2013) carrot tops, glass, water, wood dimensions variable

he wondered if she wondered if he was watching her. (2013) glass, nylon, rotor, wood, fan dimensions variable

and you think you know what it is now (2013), pressurized water sprayer, light bulb, water dimensions variable

②

Lucy Marthaler

Ich Murmeltier, (2013) flokati rug, yarn, speakers dimensions variable

③

Felix Schregenberger

joking with G, (2013) Sandstone (ca. 800kg), wire cables, stretching screws, steel screws, brass anchor bolts dimensions variable