

Mayday Mayday Mayday!

Opening of a new exhibition space in the Basel harbour with a solo show by Sophie Jung.

On the 27th of March, Mayday opens with “Sophie Jung — M’aider” – the very first exhibition of its 2021 programme.

The space

Mayday is a newly established exhibition space for contemporary art. The 70 m² room is situated in the premises of a former shipping company in the industrial quarter of the harbour district in Basel. Mayday offers artists the possibility to produce site-specific work and has planned 6 solo and duo exhibitions for 2021 as well as an accompanying educational programme, performances, lectures and concerts.

Inaugural exhibition: Sophie Jung — M’aider

Sophie Jung works with text, sculpture, drawing and performance.

Typically, her point of departure tends to be an assemblage of found and sourced objects and materials. To underline the inaugural character of the exhibition and to ready the space for its new role, however, she developed an exhibition that investigates the space as the found object itself, rather than presenting art in a “for-granted” space. Beyond its embedding in the overly stylized and often-quoted industrial chic of the area and the accompanying formal romanticisation of working-class labour practices and global trade, she focusses on the room’s disturbing aesthetics, its ideologically violent past, its liminal location directly surrounded by three national borders and the absurd facts and the structural implications around the Swiss customs area and its position within global trade.

The straying harbour cat Médée leads her into an affective realm of storytelling in which the stereotype of the Sailor’s Yarn is used to weave the manifold aspects of the space into a knotty set of unstable relationships. She presents the space as politicised trompe l’oeil, a traitor in quotidian camouflage, as sticky skin and empty gut, as a raided archive, a set of slipped translations and as seductive projection-room for old omphs and new hi/stories.

The title M’aider refers to the original distress call “Mayday”, whose phonetic rendition probably derives from an abbreviation of the French “Venez m’aider” – come to help me.

The overall tenor of the exhibition is based on that accidental call for existential anchorage in exploitative waters and structures, as well as the terror before one’s own moral unsaveability.

The trailer to the show “Médée” can be watched online at www.maydaymaydaymayday.ch

Sophie Jung (lives and works in London and Basel) graduated with a BA from the Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam and an MFA from Goldsmiths College, University of London. Her work has been shown at Instituto Svizzero, Milano; Casino Luxembourg; National gallery, Prague; Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich; JOAN, Los Angeles, Block Universe, London and Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart amongst others. In 2016 and 2019, she won the Swiss Art Award, and in 2018, she was the recipient of the Manor Kunstpreis

Press release

Mayday

Opening hours

27, 28 March, 3, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 April, 1, 2 May
each from 12–17 h
or by appointment (info@maydaymaydaymayday.ch)

Further information on the annual programme

www.maydaymaydaymayday.ch

Further information about the artist

www.sophiejung.com

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All photos by Moritz Schermbach / the artist