

# GALERIE OSKAR WEISS

Mathis Gasser

*Works*

06.02.–14.03.2026

Oskar Weiss is pleased to present Mathis Gasser *Works*. The exhibition presents collages from the past 15 years alongside recent sculptures and paintings.

In the historical moment that we are living through, where we see the last fantasies of a unified world crumbling, it is tempting to interpret Mathis Gasser's work as a political allegory. And to begin to view as relics what until now seemed like ambivalent speculative visions. After all, the artist has persistently thematized the core elements of the narrative of Modernity, and it is now thoroughly breaking down. He has worked with the forms of transnational structures, incorporated the layout of the British Parliament into his works, repeatedly used the highly recognizable outline of the monolithic architecture of the United Nations headquarters in New York, and collected images of intergalactic organizations from science fiction books and films. Alongside the development of what he refers to as a "geopolitical unconscious", he has presented us with enigmatic visions of another one of the great legacies of the Modern Age, i.e. the Museum: the high-tech spaceship museum that carries what can be saved from human cultures into eternal futures; the horror film museum, a treasure trove as much as a pure product of the violent process of globalization, whose walls are dripping blood because it is filled with looted artifacts. And it is easy to detect in the poetry of the megastructures that inhabit his work, in this petroleum black, in these agglomerations of technical and organic bodies, a questioning of the historical process of the autonomization of technology, which, from Lewis Mumford to Günther Anders, via Langdon Winner, and more recently Yuk Hui, has occupied a large part of recent philosophical inquiry.

Instead of roaming the Alpine valleys to study their flora, visiting the poles to understand marine mammals, or sailing around the world aboard the *HMS Beagle*, Mathis Gasser has explored a vast cultural territory since the beginning of his artistic career. He has organized the data collected (most often in the form of images) through a process of clearly identifiable gestures and visual operations, isolating a specimen in order to observe its specificity, juxtaposing samples with collage or bringing different individuals of the same class together on a board in the form of an inventory, as is the case of the three paintings in the exhibition. These gestures could be likened to those of a naturalist (itself a great figure of Modernity) but far from any scientific sense of truth, they create artworks loaded with ambiguities, analogies that are more or less conclusive, but that are always conducive to reflection.

More recently, a new line of work has appeared, in the form of assemblages. And the openness of his artistic forms has become even more pronounced. The artist spontaneously creates assemblages of objects that he then unifies with the application of a coat of black paint. They are sometimes inhabited by an entity, such as the golden face that we glimpse in *M·E·S.*, and which creates a kind of poetic suspense, or the dog whose head and tail alone protrude from a surface that engulfs it (*Dog*). A great artistic liberty prevails in these sculptural compositions. But they could also result from an inescapable force of attraction, something that only Christopher Nolan or Denis Villeneuve would know how to portray in film: spaceships, trains, shrines,

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a dam, an ark filled with animals, a stadium whose stands are filled with humans clinging together under the effect of a still-unknown physical force. For my part, I feel that what emerges from these new sculptural pieces is a Great Silence, to borrow the title of Ted Chiang's deeply moving short story. A mixture of the desire to remain silent in a context where everyone talks too much (and where artists are expected to make transparent *statements*), the melancholic experience of cosmic silence, and a strange feeling of calm in the face of imminent extinction, which will open up new forms of contemplation.

– Jill Gasparina

Mathis Gasser, \*1984 in Zurich, lives and works in London. He recently had solo exhibitions at Sébastien Bertrand, Geneva (2025); Quality of Life Gallery, Glasgow; Brunette Coleman, London (2024); Mamco, Geneva (2023); Schiefe Zähne, Berlin; Centre d'art Neuchâtel (2022); Weiss Falk, Basel (2021), Swiss Institute, New York (with Angharad Williams, 2021); Josey, Norwich (2020); Lady Helen, London; Haus zur Liebe, Schaffhausen (2019); Cell Project Space, London (2018); Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris; Cordova, Barcelona; Chewday's, London; Kunsthaus Glarus, Glarus (2017); Piper Keys, London; Centre d'Édition Contemporaine, Geneva (2016).

