

Timo Fahler

slow relief

15 July – 26 August 2017

Ibid Gallery is pleased to present *slow relief*, a solo exhibition by Timo Fahler. This new body of work builds upon his sculpture-based practice of inquiring into the formation of individual and collective identities as physical, psychological, and social beings. Through wall works and architectural sculpture, this new work references the physical structures of the human body while reflecting on the ways in which bodies read and record the information around them. The poured, swaddled, filled, and layered artworks convey distinct relationships between formation, time, and their material composition.

Fahler's four large wall works, titled *walking*, *climbing*, *falling*, and *dying* (all 2017) each utilize a steel structure upon which dyed hydrocal is poured and strips of burlap and linen are layered. A key visual element of the work is the line created by the bent and welded steel rebar used to reinforce the dyed hydrocal. These steel structures act as preparatory drawings upon which Fahler facilitates their sedimentary formation. This sense of an additive identity formation contrasts commonly held ideas of essential singularity as that which remains after casting off the unnecessary. Rather than finding "essential" form by removing material, whether physical or psycho-social, Fahler's investigation into identity formation comes out of an additive process whereby individual elements come together to create larger, more cohesive wholes. This is evident in Fahler's social practices, especially his leadership in the artist-run exhibition project BBQLA and the youth-oriented art club MEATGRINDER.

Cinder blocks, steel rebar, burlap, black beans, linen, hay, and dyed hydrocal are resonant materials in both Fahler's work and the communities in which Fahler once had or currently participates. Objects and materials are used and re-used both out of economic necessity and a sensitivity to the life forces within the seemingly inanimate objects. Bricolage is as much an ethos for Fahler as it is a tool for semantic meaning-making. The language of our physical surroundings speak as loudly as those who inhabit them, and it behooves the occupier to listen. Fahler's work reaffirms that bodies read and record more than our cerebral cognition follows.

The material composition of the artworks in *slow relief*, as well as Fahler's more community-based projects, points towards an interest in David Humes' concept of 'bundle theory'. Humes' 18th century writing posited an ontological theory about objecthood whereby objects are nothing more than a collection of their own properties. It is with this non-essentializing perspective that Fahler's work recognizes the importance of personhood without reducing individuals to unique objects due to their singularity. His work proposes that it is the collected experiences, impressions, and histories of the human body and spirit that make individuals valuable – an argument which, frighteningly, often needs defending.

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Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm

Timo Fahler was born 1978 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He studied at San Francisco City College, Kansas City Art Institute, and received an MFA from UCLA in 2012. Recent solo exhibitions include a *A Most Imperfect Understanding, A Most Slanted Manner* at LA > < ART, Los Angeles, CA, and *In* (with Rafa Esperanza) at Club Pro, Los Angeles, CA. Upcoming projects include *Tierra. Sanger. Oro.*, a collaboration with Rafa Esparza at Ballroom Marfa, TX. Fahler lives and works in Los Angeles where he co-organizes the migrating exhibition platform BBQLA and the youth-oriented art club and community building contextual conversation MEATGRINDER.

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