

**Michael Hirschbichler** | Switzerland

## Pläne / Plans

30 January to 10 March 2024 at Kunstraum Engländerbau

Michael Hirschbichler engages with spaces, landscapes and environments, which he processes as fragments of a world view for our time. He is particularly interested in the interrelations between their material and immaterial aspects (narratives, memories, stories, ideologies, beliefs), between the visible and the invisible, between facts and fictions. He combines research and its speculative transformation, searching for traces and artistic interventions.

Plans play a central role in Hirschbichler's artistic work. Contrary to their usual purpose – as a planning instrument – they serve him as a medium for investigating the existing human-made environment. In plans, Hirschbichler traces and exaggerates tendencies, logics, claims to power and ideologies, condensing what is spatially and temporally distributed and thus making it legible. In this respect, the plans can be understood as notations in which social orders, political programs, ideologies, economic systems and claims to power, which are inscribed in the built space, can be recorded, speculatively processed and critically questioned.

The exhibition at Kunstraum Engländerbau shows a cycle of large-format plan drawings. These have a pronounced materiality and are mostly made from ground-up buildings on paper and pigments from various locations. The built environment in question – and the destructions associated with it – are therefore physically present in the exhibited works.

Starting from the exhibition space itself, a journey unfolds in the plans that leads through ideal cities, gated communities and slums, refugee camps, shopping malls, mines and oil fields. Between reality and fiction, everyday life and the abysses of our human-made environment emerge.

**Michael Hirschbichler** studied at the ETH Zurich and Humboldt University zu Berlin, and completed his doctorate at the Berlin University of the Arts on the subject of "Mythical Constructions". He was an artistic researcher at TU Delft, Goldsmiths and Aarhus University and taught as a visiting professor at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Artist residencies have taken him to YARAT Contemporary Art Space in Baku, the Cité internationale des arts in Paris, Binz39 Foundation in Zurich, Villa Kamogawa (Goethe Institute) in Kyoto and SACO (Goethe Institute and Institut Français) in Antofagasta. For his work he was awarded the Rome Prize by the German Academy Villa Massimo.

**Works on Display**1. *Kunstraum*

Ground-up building and graphite on paper, screen print, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 70 x 100 cm, 2024

2. *Ideal City I*

Fine art print on paper, laminated on museum board, 9 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 270 x 270 cm, 2014

3. *Oil Field*

Engraved drawing and crude oil on cardboard, 5 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 100 x 350 cm, 2024

4. *Shopping Mall*

Ground-up building, aluminum and graphite on paper, screen print in 6 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 210 x 300 cm, 2024

5. *Camp*

Earth pigments on paper, screen print in 9 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 210 x 300 cm, 2024

6. *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*

Ground-up building and aluminum on paper, screen print in 24 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 300 x 560 cm, 2012 / 2024

7. *Oil Field Paintings*

Crude oil on canvas, site-specific painting on the Bibi-Heybat oil field in Baku, 85 x 120 cm each, 2017

8. *Gated Community / Slum*

Ground-up building, aluminum and graphite on paper, screen print in 6 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 140 x 300 cm, 2024

9. *Ideal City II (Nitrate mine)*

Mine pigments on paper, screen print in 9 panels, edition of 7 + 2 APs, 210 x 300 cm, 2024

10. *Building on Paper*

Ground-up building (slate, mortar and aluminum) on paper, 100 x 70 cm each, 2024