

## ARTFORUM

## Yves Scherer and Ophelia Finke

HONOLULU

Hirschengraben 3

August 18–September 17, 2016



Hot-pink theatrical lights, a cocaine-colored motorcycle, and sexy-sweet cuddling—this show wants to knock you out with its bold arrangements. Ophelia Finke contributes the bike (Balthazar, all works cited, 2016) and Yves Scherer the cuddling, in the form of a figurative wall sculpture titled Johnny & Kate (indeed, Depp and Moss, respectively). The vibe is of smart, restless young things trashing their parent’s house. Or in this case, Our Lord and Father’s house: The central collaborative work anchoring the presentation is a deranged manger inside a hut, Crib—a nightclubby yet weirdly Arte Povera-ish version of the baby Jesus’s farmhouse bed, tricked out with neon rods. The imprint of a splayed body on the floor dents some pungent hay. It could be an impression from Scherer’s aforementioned work (but enlarged, life-size, as the sculpture is only about three feet tall). It’s eerie—like evidence from a crime scene.

Finke’s ultra-smooth hog, which looks 3-D printed, is the real deal, transformed by white spray paint on one side and blue camo on the other. Scherer’s Johnny & Kate—based on a 1990s picture by Annie Leibovitz—is dead/alive, made of dull bronze but soft looking, as if it were molded in Plasticine. Its mixture of sexiness and vacancy overrides the sordid celebrity voyeurism—the serene figures seem more pleasantly bored than blissed out.

Profanation isn’t simply the debasement of the holy—it’s the returning of divinity to the human realm. Finke and Scherer try to find transcendence in a world of slutty tabloids and LEDs. Their tableaux don’t trade in mean-spiritedness, as a shooting-star ornament made from pinecones adorning the entrance to the (maybe?) Christ child’s resting place lovingly suggests.

— Nicholas Chittenden Morgan