

CRITICS' PICKS

Basel

Joëlle Tuerlinckx

KUNSTMUSEUM BASEL | GEGENWART

St. Alban-Rheinweg 60

October 15, 2016–February 26, 2017

27 FEB 2017

For Joëlle Tuerlinckx, the making and showing of art are connected in an inherently infinite circle. In her latest exhibition, “Nothing for Eternity,” she breaks through institutional authority. Here, the artist stages the ground floor of the museum as a site of experimental activity and assembly—in short, as a studio. Appropriately, the final gallery of the show is completely lined with silver chocolate wrappers, which naturally evokes Billy Name’s design for the Factory. Beyond this, the silver foil draws a correlation between the chocolate-producing countries of Switzerland and Tuerlinckx’s homeland of Belgium. It also functions within Tuerlinckx’s garbology. Copies of drawings affixed to the foil further strengthen the impression of an artist’s workshop.



View of “Joëlle Tuerlinckx: Nothing for Eternity,” 2016–17

Central to her practice is the making available of handwritten notes, scrawlings, and sketches, all of which belong to Tuerlinckx’s standard exhibition repertoire. This time, a nearly forty-nine-foot-long display case exhibits various travel notations from the past twenty years, out of which the indistinguishability between forms of work and forms of life emerges quite beautifully. That her manner of laboring also strongly correlates with the respective site of origination clarifies the circumstance that the display case contains numerous sketches executed during visits to various Basel museums.

A slideshow running on a security monitor of the kind installed throughout the museum was recorded just outside the institution: Tuerlinckx photographed a small eddy in the little river that runs alongside the museum, in which discarded bottles and plastic garbage gather for a while and, with other finds, are finally driven further along. To be sure, this is “Nothing for Eternity” in a nutshell.

Translated from German by Diana Reese

Moritz Scheper