

Real Distortions

andreas **dobler** - sylvie **fleury** - richard **hambleton** – hayan
kam **nakache** - stéphane **kropf**

Exhibition March 4th - April 18th, 2015

Opening Wednesday, March 4th starting at 5 p.m.

When I was invited to curate a show at Renos Xippas's Paris gallery, I remembered a conversation we'd had about the disturbing reaction to **Richard Hambleton's** urban interventions in the 1980s in New York City. His rapidly-sketched figures emerged from the most surprising places: the artist had his finger on the pulse of the city, which at times was violent, and through repeated jolts, the city's character temporarily changed into a cultural epicenter.

This exhibition evokes the feeling of this strange energy by focusing on a significant selection of **Richard Hambleton's** artwork and bringing together four artists living and working in Switzerland.

Hayan Kam Nakache welcomes visitors with vast murals of figurines: half in nostalgia, half in disappointment, giant clowns stand in single file under a glass ceiling as if waiting at a club entrance.

On the first floor of the gallery, **Sylvie Fleury** co-opts the slogan, "the only good system is a sound system," to present her wave, formed from an agglomeration of materials used for hanging paintings and drawings, and shaped similarly to the ones we would ecstatically stare at on stereo equalizers when there wasn't much else to see.

It is the clash and intensity of distortion that seems to unite these works: **Hayan Kam Nakache's** drawings amplify the loquacious world of comic books; **Sylvie Fleury's** paper artworks shatter chromatic scales in an almost hypnotic manner and are accompanied by the captivating iconography of **Andreas Dobler's** paintings; meanwhile the ostensible tranquility of **Stéphane Kropf's** monochromes are torn apart by their pigments' iridescent effects.

According to legend, distortion was created when a guitarist, unable to escape the feeble range of his instrument, became enraged and smashed his guitar on his amplifier. When his guitar cracked, it produced a sound never heard before. This exhibition lets us imagine that images, sounds, and rhythms bubbling up from fissures, nooks, and crevices, irrigate reality with energy beyond what we thought possible.

Samuel Gross