

# A Baronian

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## Press Release

### « DIE GEOMETRIE IN DER BREDUILLE – LA GEOMETRIE DANS LE PETRIN », Olaf Holzapfel

**Exhibition from 19 April until 02 June 2018**

**Opening 18 April, 6-9pm**

How can you make flat-plane pictures out of thick grass ropes? Or what does a landscape look like on the famous Belgian canvas when one zooms in only to discover that it is made up of a chaotic cluster of fibres that are entangled and intertwined, an inextricable spatial construct? How do we logically legitimize bundling up materials into images the way we do with information?

Olaf Holzapfel's work is made from hay, straw, cactus fibre, wood and digital sketches. When combined, these components create sculptures as big as houses or as tiny as miniatures, reflecting on what lies in between surface and space. And repeatedly the physicality of the materials Holzapfel works with gets, as it were, in his way. As an artist who works with diverse media, Holzapfel focuses on the extent to which the material and the informal worlds are connected. The ostensible anachronism of half-timbered wooden houses carpentered by craftsmen appears almost out-of-time to an observer schooled in the modern age. Time? And anyway, when one looks at the textile works as at the blown-up snippet of an indigo tinted jeans, is time a central category at all? We are looking for a fixed order, an underlying predictable pattern, that really only exists in our heads. In reality we are constantly affected by the diametrically opposed, ephemeral forces of Nature. The Chaguar textile pictures are collaborative work produced from the artist's digital sketches by a group of Wichí, an indigenous minority, in the North Argentinian cactus jungle. The works seem to be leading us on – they present us with landscapes that in turn elude our eyes. Indecision is Holzapfel's programme; the in-between is where he artistically locates himself. In groups of works which he entitles "Die Technik des Landes / The technique of the land", "Zaun / Fence" or "Das Verwobene, in dem ich wohne / The interwoven world that I live in", he describes the transformation – how the very materials always carry the process inherently within themselves. Landscape, organization and abstraction are recurring themes in Holzapfel's work. The purely abstract pictures of the Wichí which were exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 2011 also denote images of the real world, depicting animals, world-pictures of forest nomads, streets and blocks in Buenos Aires. The question whether a seemingly 'old' world is still present in our things and in our actions is also central to the works made out of hay, straw and wood which Olaf Holzapfel showed at documenta 14 in Kassel and Athens. The material for the straw works is harvested by the artist from the fields in Brandenburg has its local history. But at the same time these works are serial and determined by certain systems. Each stem can be divided in four parts, which can then be placed on the picture's plane in various arrangements. The never changing measurements of the straw, the hay or the grass determine our cultural techniques.

Akin to the exhibition "Anachronism in Contemporary Art" held in the Kunsthalle Kiel in 2011, Holzapfel's works ask whether it is really true that we progress in a linear timeline or whether we move rather in a kind of spiral allowing us to connect to certain things again and again, even if time progresses and temporality is our image of things that are nevertheless continuously present independent of our self-perception. And just as everything fits together perfectly in the realm of logic and yet mistakes still occur, so it is with geometry: every circuit loses energy because it needs time to bridge the distances within itself. Geometry gets everything in a real bind. [La géométrie dans le pétrin]