

MIT List Visual Arts Center
20 Ames Street, Building E15
Cambridge, MA 02139

listart.mit.edu

Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds

February 17 – April 16, 2017



FRONT *At Odds*, chromogenic color print (photogram), metal, magnets, chromogenic color print (opaque projection), paper, glass, umbrella frame, tie wrap, 2015, 177.6" × 98.4"
Courtesy of the artist, Klemm's, Berlin and Grimm, Amsterdam

ABOVE *Riveted*, exhibition view, at Klemm's, Berlin, 2013

INSIDE *Liars Cloth (guileless note)*, 2015 (detail)
chromogenic color print (photogram, opaque projection), aluminum
Courtesy of the artist, Klemm's, Berlin and Grimm, Amsterdam



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Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds

Reference Gallery February 17 – April 16, 2017

Gwenneth Boelens is concerned with perception, memory, and time. She has developed an abstract visual language that attempts to capture fleeting moments and gestures, the physical and metaphysical impressions we leave in space. Originally trained as a photographer, she uses light, time, and various chemical and material processes to suspend and inscribe traces of movement and thought. *At Odds*, Boelens's first solo museum exhibition, features a group of recently produced photograms, wall works, weavings, floor sculptures, and an acoustic piece.

Boelens's earlier work involved the antiquated wet plate collodion process, during which chemicals are distributed onto large glass plates and exposed to light, thus capturing the artist's traces while handling the plates during the process. Expanding on this approach, in her recent photographic work Boelens has shifted focus to the in-between state of the negative and the space in the image. The large-scale photograms on view are made over an extended exposure period during which the light source is obstructed by bodies that move and carry different objects—or "shields." Other photographic works are made by folding the material repeatedly in front of the light to create radiant fields of color. These works attempt to embody a polarity of exposure and shelter, of exclusion and inclusion. This duality is fixed in time and inscribed onto the photosensitive paper. Rudimentary shapes, derived from the shields used to create the compositions, are also exhibited as sculptural objects on their own.

Beyond photographic processes, traces of gestures are present throughout the exhibition. A group of hand-pressed clay tablets evoke preliminary acts of writing. For a hanging textile work dividing the gallery space in the center, fibers were extracted methodically from the woven material. The performative gesture of unthreading, or destabilizing, by hand is further emphasized by the use of a forensic chemical revealing the fingerprints on the material. In *Liar's Cloth* (2017), Boelens uses electroconductive and reflective fibers to weave a cloth, inspired by a West African pattern of the same name that originated during the Ashanti Empire. Boelens makes a tapestry from a material used in radio antennas, heating elements, and electromagnetic shielding. The work thus literalizes the communicative application the cloth's title suggests, but also articulates her ambivalence towards appropriative strategies.

The exhibition also includes *Riveted II* (2014), a percussive sculpture focusing on the simplicity and immediacy of a clap. The eight-hour revolving rhythm evokes a recurring signal or counting mechanism, resonating with the markings of time embedded in the other sculptural works in the show. Boelens's experimental approach to translating processes of time and thought into material form often results in works situated at the threshold of abstraction, inscribing, however fleeting, a moment in time.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gwenneth Boelens (b. 1980 in Soest, NL) lives and works in Amsterdam.

Gwenneth Boelens: At Odds is curated by Henriette Huldisch, Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public Reception

Thursday, February 16, 6–8 PM

For more information about upcoming events and programs, visit: listart.mit.edu/events-programs.

   #MITList #GwennethBoelens

SUPPORT

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