

ARENA

Hubert Becker, Simon Mehling

25. April – 30. Mai 2026

GALERIE
M29

ARENA is the third part of the gallery's double exhibition series, bringing together established artists with emerging positions. In this interplay, the photographs by **Hubert Becker** are set against the objects and drawings by **Simon Mehling**.

Hubert Becker presents photographs taken during his travels across Europe. With a distanced, curious, and questioning gaze, he seeks out moments that he both captures and constructs at the same time. The works are titled according to the date they were taken, but are not arranged chronologically; instead, they are organized in series according to different groupings, such as form, subject, or content. Becker uses the camera as both a constructor and a narrator, translating the depicted reality into another, more enigmatic reality and staging it as if on a theatrical set. As a result, what is depicted is called into question and remains partially obscured, so that it sometimes becomes unclear what is actually shown in the images. Photography as a deceptive image, as a copy and as a subjective construct of reality, is a central theme in Becker's model photographs, in which he restages iconic works from art history as models and re-photographs them, as well as in his photographed drawings. His travel photographs likewise engage with this tension between reality and illusion, moving between what we perceive, remember, and imagine.

Simon Mehling focuses on the interconnections and developments of cities in which nature is altered, exploited and destroyed. These processes and their effects—through pollution, transformation, and decay—are documented and at the same time newly constructed. Mehling collects natural and urban fragments that have influenced and transformed one another. His sculptures are assembled like collages from the waste of our contemporary consumer society. They consist exclusively of found, reused materials, from which he often builds large structures that cannot be clearly categorized, existing somewhere between wall, building, and abstract construction. The smaller sculptures shown here, titled *Mauerkronen*, represent defensive walls and fences. Questionable in both their function and meaning, they point to the futility of excessive protective measures and reveal the absurdity of separation, isolation and control. The colored pencil drawings tell, with irony, in a playful, exaggerated, and naively kitschy, comic-like style, of landscapes shaped and threatened by agriculture and industry.

Babette Richter