

## DOMINIQUE TEUFEN

entfaltet (unfolded)

26<sup>th</sup> of February – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015

Opening reception: Wednesday, 25th of February 2015, 6 – 8 p.m.

**Dominique Teufen (\*1975, Swiss) spies her motifs not through the viewfinder of her camera, but rather first finds her unique subjects through resourceful research and creative skill. She builds architectural or sculptural-appearing structures of mirror surfaces – her “flashlight sculptures” – and captures them photographically using a strong flash, the mirrors reflect only themselves and the glaring lights. So committed to paper, the crystalline as well as fleeting “monuments” shine in a seemingly extra-terrestrial grandeur, rendering jewels, ceremonial shrines and palaces in the shadows. From the simple, temporary constructs, the artist creates phantasms who celebrate – but never quite divulge – their secret.**

No less fascinating are the atmospheric marine and mountain landscapes, usually portrayed in the diffuse light of dawn. What appears to our eye as the reflective surface of moving water against the background of a distinct coastline or as elongated mountain slopes and glaciers turns out on closer inspection to be stupendous deception; in truth, the seemingly photographic evidence of the real world is the product of a very unorthodox handling of the photocopy machine. Dominique Teufen shows how to use this tool of unlimited reproduction as a device for painting to create black and white twilight scenes. She regulates the exposure through manipulations to the lid. Cellophane and coffee grounds rendezvous on this glassy surface, from which appears the idyll on the gulf; crumpled tissue paper evokes the furrows and fissures of the snow-covered mountain range and fine pieces of cloth behave as foam that is absorbed by the sandy shores. This virtuoso optical illusions cast spells and revel in virtual worlds, all without digital fiction.

In her recent series Dominique Teufen takes on a subject that she began exploring in 2011: the paper trompe-l'oeil. At that time she photographed a sheet of paper that had been folded and unfolded several times, then folded and unfolded the photograph and finally took a new photograph of the photograph. The resulting potentiated optical illusion joins the tradition of refined – especially baroque – illusions and visualises most beautifully the discrepancy between appearance and reality. Taking up folded paper again as a motif and applying her experiences with the flashlight sculptures, Dominique Teufen's latest series *gefaltete Schatten belichtet* (*Folded Shade Exposed*) explores the sculptural quality of specially illuminated glossy photo papers whose bent corners cast dramatic shadows or cause subtle shading. The brilliantly staged and photographed folds pay homage to nothing less than light itself.

*Dr. phil. Gabrielle Obrist, Director and Co-curator of the Kunsthalle Wil/St Gallen, Switzerland  
December 2014*