

ARTFORUM

MUMOK – MUSEUM MODERNER KUNST STIFTUNG LUDWIG WIEN

Museumsplatz 1

May 6–September 3



View of “rumors and murmurs,” 2017.

What makes an exhibition? How do the individual elements come together, and how does new meaning unfold as a result? What praxis must a curator follow in order to deploy the “gestures of showing,” as described by Mieke Bal, so that they can be experienced and construed by the public? Martin Beck’s art moves within this constellation of questions and complicates them. His latest show of sculptures, videos, drawings, artists’ books, and installations also includes works he selected by Eadweard Muybridge and Julie Ault, which appear as references to Beck’s own output. Beck has additionally curated a separate show of works from the museum’s collection, featuring pieces by Sol LeWitt and Louise Lawler, among others.

The subtlest piece in the solo exhibition is Beck’s “Flowers,” 2015. In this photo series, which runs through the entire show, emerging now and again, there are flower arrangements shown in various compositions and physical states: an empty vase, only a few stems, a full bouquet, or with hands that compose the flora into an overall picture. Exhibiting is performed within the frame of the image—selecting, disassembling, and putting it all back together again. In “Flowers,” Beck moves the importance of process subtly into the foreground. A similar effect happens in *all that is left*, 2015, a work that is at once a painting, a sculpture, and a piece of functional architecture (a wall) that is meant to guide the visitor through the galleries.

— Franz Thalmair