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“Jan Kiefer, Pedro Wirz, 2018” at Galerie Nagel Draxler, Cologne

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“JAJA ...,” 2018, by Jan Kiefer (1845, Germany), Birch wood, stainless steel, PUR lacquer, European table wine, 5 pieces, each 115 x 98 x 34 cm, Photo: Simon Vogel, Galerie Nagel Draxler Cologne (Courtesy: Galerie Nagel Draxler)

At its Cologne venue, Galerie Nagel Draxler is hosting an exhibition by Jan Kiefer and Pedro Wirz that focuses on the artistic approach of both the artists.

According to the gallery, the artistic approaches of Jan Kiefer and Pedro Wirz could not be more different because they create imaginary cultures, with completely different visual codes and connotations.

Wirz’s sculptures seem to testify to a culture of earthy origins and fertility myths and a primitivist proximity of primitive man to primitive man.

“Animal architectures, termites or nest buildings, cocoons and eggs merge directly with human cultural practices (house building), or serve as a model for Wirz’s sculptures. In a laboratory practice imagined as prehistoric, Wirz creates images of beings in cycles of pre-capitalist economies. In an art practice that evokes memories of Art Brut and primitivism, he creates

moments of constructed authenticity. It creates the aura of an originality that has never been a factual one, and that behaves like a cultivated world, as in Artaud's sense of double," the gallery states.

On the contrary, Jan Kiefer in his sculptural arrangements and pictorial series addresses the myth of the achievements of a currently well-off middle class, yet facing the threat of social decline due to the progressive redistribution of resources.

Jan Kiefer's art is conceptual, yet unlike many conceptual art creations of the present his language is not characterized by minimal gestures and reduced forms, but by a direct and undisguised access to the respective topic. The artist smoothly combines the conceptual with the haptic and crafts many of his works himself. This direct working with the material corresponds to direct theoretical engagement, and a mutual influencing of the two areas is inherent in this work structure.

"While one could describe the artistic practice of Pedro Wirz as transgressive materialism, with Jan Kiefer one deals with transgressive conceptualism. Both artists create an ambiguous aura of culture that questions the validity of predominant cultural forces," the gallery adds.

The exhibition is on view through August 31, 2018 at Galerie Nagel Draxler, Komodienstraße 48 50667 Cologne, Germany.