Bernhard Buff

On Appointment Only

Bernshammar, February 18, 2022

Dear Bernhard,

The last time we talked you were very much into traps of various kinds. This was in June, 2018, a couple of days before your previous exhibition at Å+. Now, four years later, you deal with mechanisms that almost have an opposite function. They do not attract and entrap, but reject and exclude. At least that is what they seem to do.

I wonder if this shift in your work mirrors the Janus-face of our time; a fundamental ambivalence that has become obvious during the refugee crisis and the pandemic. On the one hand, the self-understanding of many Western societies is that they are very open-minded, tolerant, emphatic and so on. On the other hand, every time this openness is put to test another face shows itself, distrustful and fearful. Suddenly, eve-rything is closed.

The discrepancy between who we want to be, and who we are could not be bigger. Sadly, open doors are regarded as naive in societies dominated by fear. Everybody is a potential threat, and technology makes it easy to avoid meeting strangers, yes, it makes it possible to disassociate oneself from the shared world.

My first impression of your new works was that they are very political. I guess that this is because a closed door is never just a closed door. It is also always a message with a clear and simple meaning that can be un-derstood by anyone. Nevertheless, your works also make me think about other aspects of things or spaces that are unattainable.

Closed doors evoke imagination. What is concealed and ambiguous is far more desirable than all the user-friendly, smooth stuff that surrounds us all the time. It resists interpretations and triggers the will to understand. Sometimes it makes us feel stupid and inferior and I think that it is a good thing. Why? Because you might learn something from them: the language that they speak. You must create your own key. No one else can do it for you. This is how I think real art works. It isn't smooth and welcoming like a smart phone app or a design piece. It is more like a dense forest, almost impenetrable.

My best,
Jens

Letter from Jens Soneryd to Bernhard Buff. On Appointment Only.19 February–16 March, 2022. Åplus, Berlin.

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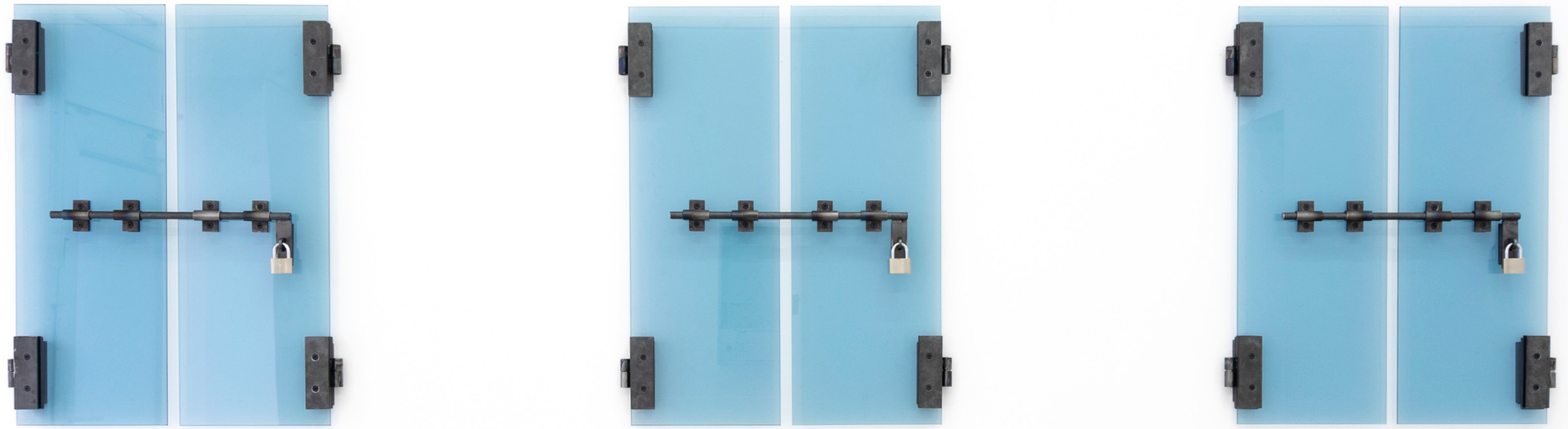
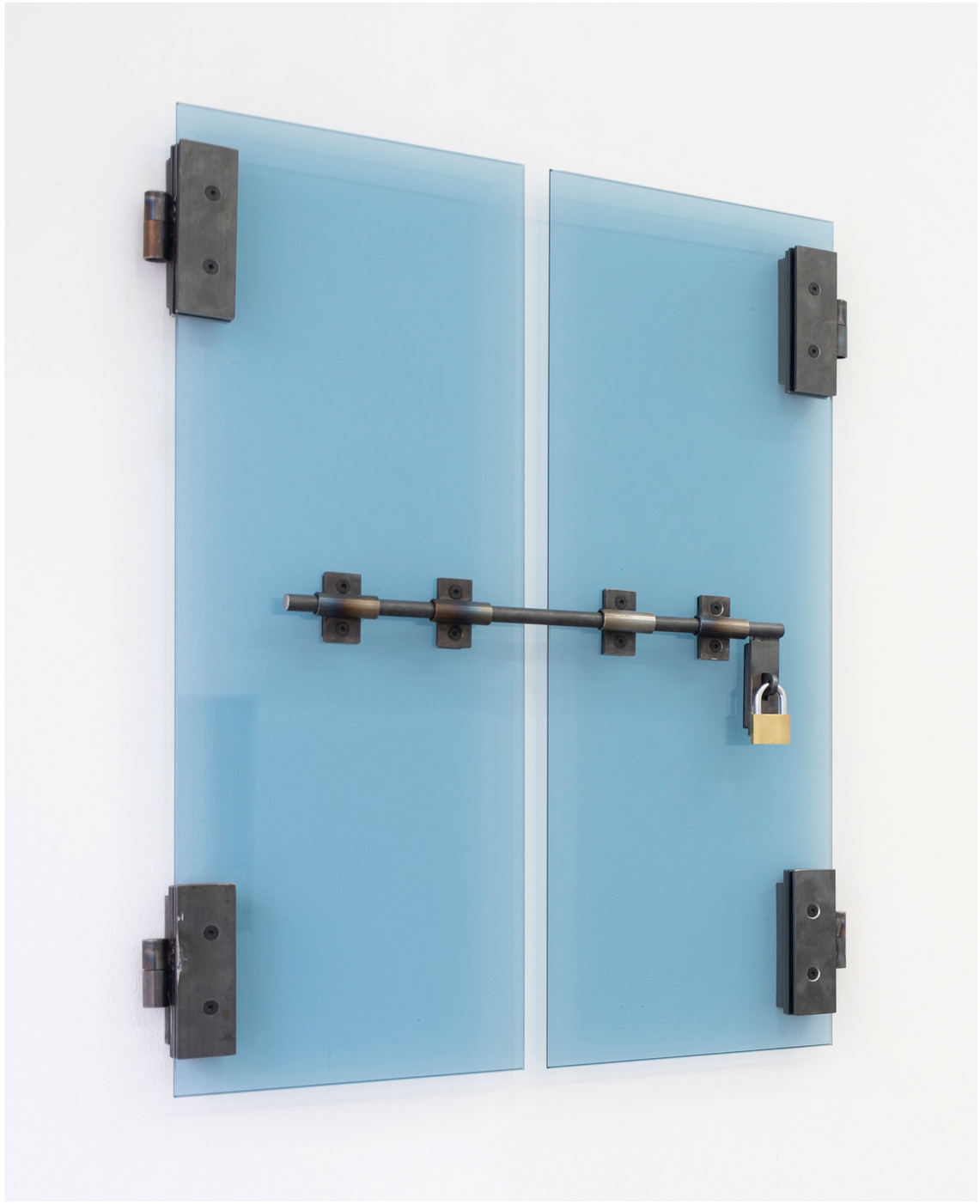
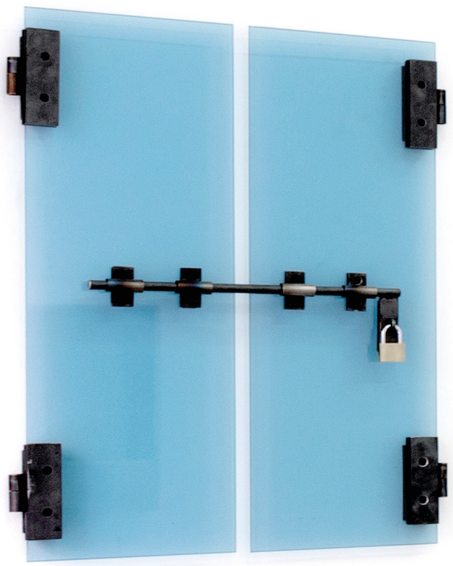
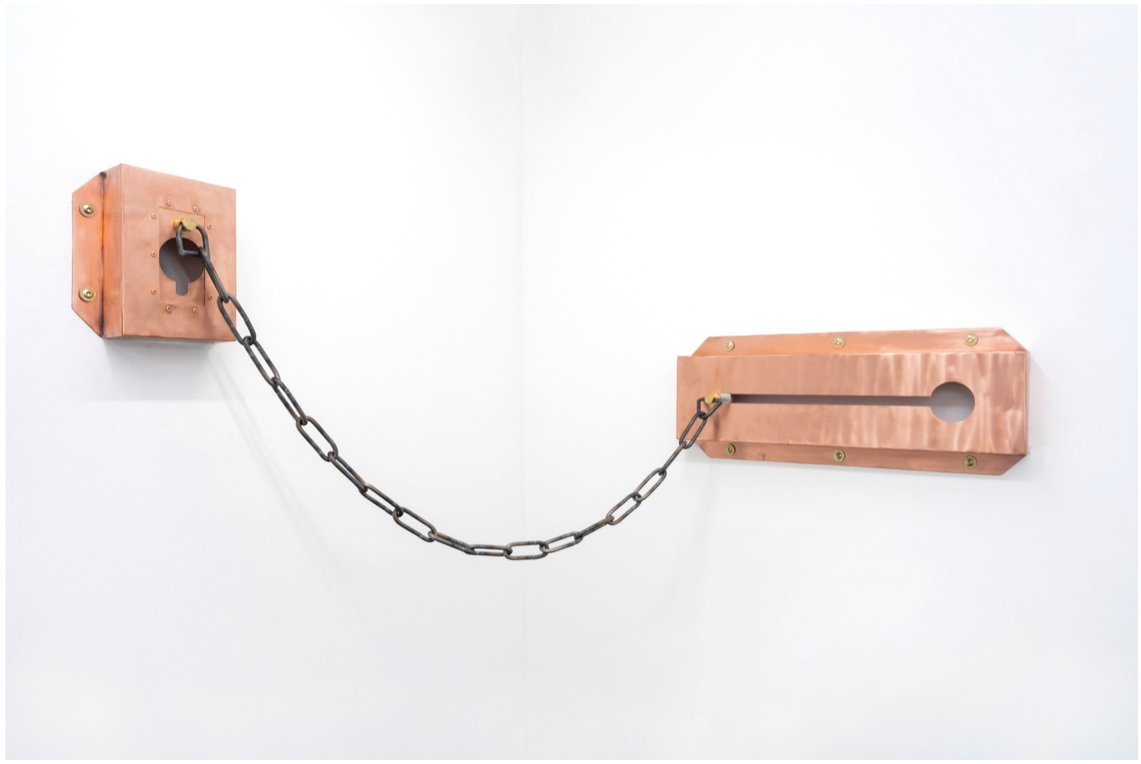


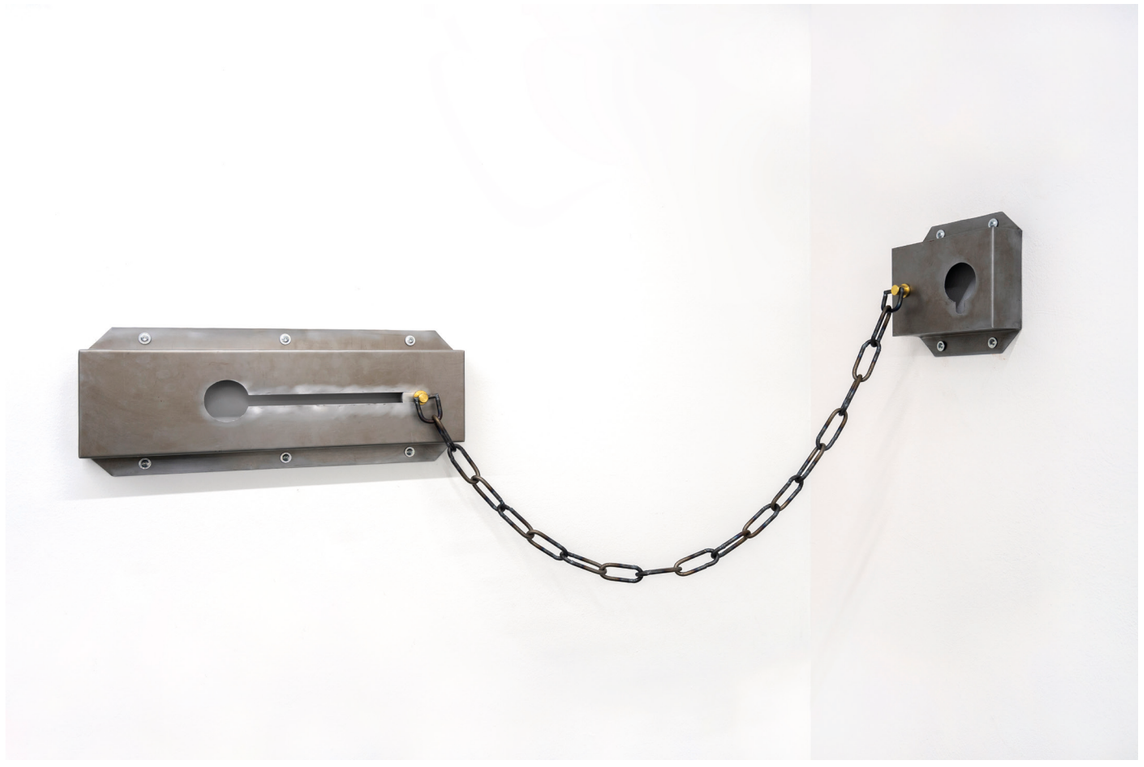


Only On Appointment (1), 2022
Steel, glass, padlock
80 x 62 x 4 cm
31 1/2 x 24 3/8 x 1 5/8 in





Placebo (C), 2022
Copper, steel, aluminium, brass
17 x 63 x 7 cm / 24 x 17 x 7 cm
6 3/4 x 24 3/4 x 2 3/4 in / 9 1/2 x 6 3/4 x 2 3/4 in, hanging size variable



Placebo (S), 2022
Steel, aluminium, brass
17 x 63 x 7 cm / 17 x 24 x 7 cm
6 3/4 x 24 3/4 x 2 3/4 in / 6 3/4 x 9 1/2 x 2 3/4 in, hanging size variable

Schönes Wochende, 2022
Stainless steel, steel, plastic, glass
80 x 59 x 21 cm
31 1/2 x 23 1/4 x 8 1/4 in

Bernhard Buff

*1983 in Bonn, Germany
Lives and works in Vienna

2009 – 2014 Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien

Exhibitions (selected)

2022
‚On Appointment Only“, Åplus, Berlin (S)

2021
‚Ka Tschick is an“ Halle für Kunst e.V., Halle an der Saale
‚Works On Paper“, Schaulager Kunstbüro, Wien, Austria

2020
‚MilleniumCity“, Kunstverein Offenbach

2019
‚Friedensstiftende Maßnahmen“, Christine König Galerie, Wien, Austria
‚Schlimm“, Bistro21, Leipzig
‚if you built it, they will come“, Zollamt Galerie, Offenbach
‚UKYA City“, Takeover, Nottingham, (UK)

2018
‚Funtomia“, HUSSLEHOF, Frankfurt (Main) (S)
‚boardwalk bullet“, Åplus, Berlin (S)

2016
‚Disziplinatores“, Galerie Nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna, Austria

2015
“Hallo Wien“, HUSSLEHOF, Frankfurt am Main, Germany
“PARALLEL Vienna 2015“, Alte Post (Kunstmesse/ Art Fair), Vienna, Austria
“To Define and Punish“, Galerie Jacob Bjørn, Aarhus, Denmark

2014
“Bernhard Buff“, Ve.Sch, Vienna, Austria (Solo)

2012
Leaving Space, Galerie Vernon, Prag, Czech Republic

2011
“Young Painting”, DIEAUSSTELLUNGSSTRASSE, Vienna, Austria

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