

NEW RELEASE SEPTEMBER 2022



## Claus Stolz *Kammerspiel / Chamber Play*

Text by Pamela Pachl  
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### A theater stage for plants in all their splendor—alive or just deceptively real?

The *Chamber Play*—an intimate play on small stage, focusing on the individual actors. With Claus Stolz's current series, a kind of theatrical production has been brought to paper, thus presenting its protagonists in the purest form. Here, Stolz combines and re-contextualizes natural and artificial beauty into irritating, absurd arrangements. What is real, what is of natural origin? What is alive? Each shot a small staging, a chamber play, a poem of the feasible,

From the text *Ping-Pong Balls, Calla Lilies, and Cable Ties* by **Pamela Pachl, PhD:**

*These photographs present a challenge to our eyes. Perhaps our sense of vision has actually become somewhat worn down through the flood of images that has also been created through image-based phenomena like Instagram. As welcome and enriching as digital developments and more convenient methods for distributing images may be for our society, they can, at the same time, lead to individual images being viewed much less attentively, due to the mass of images that confront us every day in 2022. Through their (also technically) complex staging and the resulting effect of confusion, Stolz's chamber plays present our sense of vision with a challenge. They are simultaneously food porn and superfood for the eyes (and mind) after a long day at the screen — something besides the consumption of visual fast food for a change.*

*The precision of Stolz's photographs presents us with an opportunity not just to take a better look at the surface of things, but behind it, so to speak. Transience, the passage of time, aging—and possibly also, on a deeper level of significance, our aging as humans—are all presented on the stage formed by these works. In this context, the withered orchid almost exudes the aura of an aging film diva, who*

*has been given this opportunity to make one last glamorous appearance in the spotlight.*

*The equal status that Stolz assigns to real and fake plants in his arrangements and portraits leads to a persistent and deliberate sense of confusion. Chamber Play #113 shows a pale, bluish-white calla lily in front of a black ground. A single blossom is turned toward us, almost as if it were gazing at us with a look of suffering. It is not just the cable-tie restraint from the plant's packaging that is purposely left in the picture, but also the unnatural bending of the stem and, above all, the texture of the petals born from silicone foam that reveal these calla lilies as imitations: rolled up, bound together, squeezed into little boxes like sardines, and imported from faraway lands. The cable tie functions like a fracture, a rupture in our visual habits. It immediately destroys the last illusion of an authentic nature.*

The photo artist **Claus Stolz** (b. 1963) lives and works in Mannheim. His works have been shown in numerous museums and institutions, including the Grassi Museum, Leipzig, and Photo Edition Berlin. His book *Sunburns* was published by Kehrere Verlag in 2009. [www.clausstolz.de](http://www.clausstolz.de)

#### Exhibition

*Reflektor*  
 Neue Sächsische Galerie Chemnitz  
 06.12.2022 – 23.02.2023

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