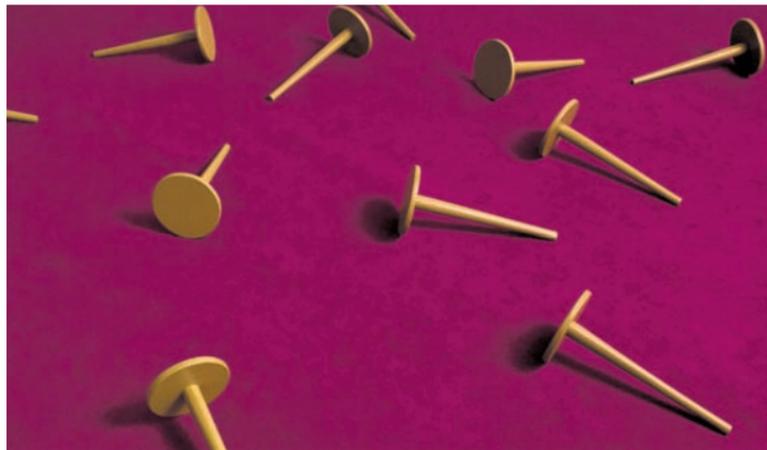


BERLIN

FORT

Exile // January 14–February 11

THE EXHIBITION “LOU” is a series of nothings, of negation. The Berlin-based collective FORT’s latest work—a three-part video and sculptural installation—takes the viewer from a public pool in which swimmers move spontaneously in sync, to a zoo where a docile orangutan blinks slowly and falls asleep, and on a helicopter ride over an abstracted alternating terrain of trees and clearings to an invitingly jump-able trampoline with a pause symbol, two parallel



vertical lines, painted on it. Yet all these scenes lead back to the same nowhere from which they arose. Don’t let the sound of that depress you. On the contrary, FORT’s nowheres allow us to pause, to relax our collective retina, and to slip into a state of consciousness with a trifle of cognition, similar to that of a springtime suburban stroll.

The collective, founded in 2006 by Alberta Niemann, Anna Jandt, and Jenny Kropp, transformed the Kreuzberg gallery’s main space into a makeshift movie theater for the duration of the show, with several notable changes: The usual cushioned chairs were replaced by awkward one-legged stools that resemble wooden thumbtacks—seating that is more sculptural than functional. A retro-looking lighted sign emblazoned with the exhibition’s title turns on at the end of each of the work’s three parts and remains lit until the next segment begins.

According to the artists, *lou*—a slang term from northern Germany—refers to the safe zone in the children’s game tag, in which a player cannot be eliminated but also can’t participate. The work’s liminality proceeds unquestionably without this additional knowledge, but it complicates the reading nonetheless. For if the *lou* exists in the void of video, what can one make of the void, the nothing, created by the videos themselves? We are told that interaction is impossible without visual stimuli, but perhaps it is in that very moment when the works can reach their peak. —Alexander Forbes

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Installation view of “Lou,” 2012. Handmade wooden one-legged stools, each 19 x 9 x 9 in.