

Felix Bahret  
*Petit Bleu*  
Press Release

GAO is pleased to inaugurate its new London space with *Petit Bleu*, an exhibition of recent work by Felix Bahret. *Petit Bleu* continues Bahret's ongoing sculptural enquiry into the relationship between failure, self-discipline and the hollowed-out notions of neoliberal authenticity.

The centrepiece of the show consists of sixteen portions of Belgian Blue Stone, which Bahret has hand-carved in an attempt to evoke the animism of industrial design. Though close inspection reveals various deviations, irregularities and remnants of the carving process, Bahret is uninterested in simply rhetoricising the artist's hand. Instead, by avoiding a predetermined blueprint or plan, his practice enables a multi-layered complexity to accrue over the course of several months. His intentions change as he works with, rather than against, the physical restrictions of his material. This allows for greater spontaneity in decision-making, as initial ideas atrophy down and give way to new ones.

The resulting sculpture is at once formally striking and ascetic, creating a politically charged vehicle for Bahret's interest in the contradictions of neoliberalism, and his place within the cultural economy. In an economic era marked by dematerialisation and austerity, Bahret suggests that the creative imagination is glorified as a bottomless well of surplus. This is also something which is well understood by the contemporary hipster. With all their weightless irony, they are individuals especially talented at noticing minor shifts in the changing distinctions of consumerism: adopting the rhetoric of counterculture, and buying products to personalise themselves as transgressive, their attention now once again turns to recovering the signs of pastoral innocence and simplicity. But in the light of real scarcity this appetite for the rustic verges on

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29 Sep – 01 Nov 2017

Opening reception:  
7-9pm, Thu 28 Sep 2017

Felix Bahret (b. 1989 in Bühl, Germany) completed an apprenticeship as a stone mason at the Minster-Workshop Freiburg in 2011 and graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2016. He lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

For any enquiries please contact the gallery at [info@gao.gallery](mailto:info@gao.gallery)



1. Felix Bahret, Detail of *Petit Bleu*, 2017, Pierre Bleue Belge/Belgian blue stone.

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the sentimental. In its futuristic aspirations, Bahret's sculpture dramatises this tension, pointing to the material disenchantment of a generation unnecessarily enacting pre-industrial labour: searching for authenticity by spending hours doing something a machine could do in minutes.