

Uwe Wittwer

Location: Tal Museum, first floor, old part

The local history museum is the living room of every community. It's where you can see what the locals want to remember. Evidence of hardship, growth and prosperity. It is less common, however, to find out what lies behind this beautiful facade of the "we". For example, the long history of colonialism, whose products and ideas reached even the remotest valleys of Switzerland via trade and the church.

Uwe Wittwer has now made this empty space visible with a reduced but highly effective intervention. For his installation *Trachtenraum* in the traditional costume room of the Tal Museum, he removed the family photos, postcards and engravings from the frames in which they hung on the walls of the homey interior and replaced them with his own works. These all red watercolors are based on old photographs that Wittwer found while researching colonial imagery in the Basel Mission Archives and the Pitt Rivers Foundation Archives in Oxford. They show various small sculptures of African or Asian origin in close-up, mostly in shadow or superimposed, sometimes in negative, sometimes with the scratches and foxing of the original photographs. Through this distanced approach to his originals, Wittwer directs the viewer's gaze from what is depicted to the image itself as a site of collective discourses on visibility, power and the order of things, but also as a medium of repression, oblivion and transience. (roe)

Uwe Wittwer was born in 1954 in Zurich, Switzerland, where he lives and works. His work has been exhibited in Switzerland at the Gewerbemuseum Winterthur (2023), the Musée Ariana, Geneva (2020), and the Kunstmuseum Bern (2019), as well as at the Herbert Art Museum, Coventry, Great Britain (2018).

Further information: uwewittwer.com