

Mathis Altmann  
PRESS



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REVIEW: MATHIS ALTMANN AT FREEDMAN  
FITZPATRICK

by Darius Sabbaghzadeh

# Mathis Altmann

Freedman Fitzpatrick /  
Los Angeles

Between dismantled dollhouses and assemblages comprising golf clubs, Porsche-branded trainers and children's strollers, Mathis Altmann's solo exhibition "Wir sind das Volk" is a sweeping portrait of a bourgeoisie sucked into an abyss of its own making. Named after a portmanteau of the German terms for "wood" and "people," this show draws on the cabinet houses of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe that once symbolized wealth and social mores in miniature. Altmann's gutted cross sections of model homes frame materialistic aspirations as political carcinogens.

Accompanied by Mr. Flagio's 1983 disco hit "Take a Chance" played on repeat, the exhibition takes collector culture as its point of departure. This is most striking in a work entitled *Indulge* (2017), which includes a hot-pink toddler push car filled with furniture and design magazines situated next to a framed portrait of a Miami collector couple ripped from the pages of *Patron*. This motif is echoed in *All human waste to be stored in the privacy of one's home* (2017), a sprawling arrangement of human hair, LED lights and a rotating luxury sneaker, while a nearby stack of wood leaning against the wall presents itself in raw form. In his exhibition text, Altmann writes, "History taught us, the fainting of the bourgeoisie caused fascists to disinhibit their darkest desires." Through his focus on wood — a material designed to fence off as much as to construct — Altmann links our retreat into private space to the isolationism of right-wing populism. This is literally so in the aptly titled *EUROZONE* (2017), in which a blue-tinted lantern dangles above a hole bored into a dollhouse floor.

For an art world in which political interventions are made at the level of high-end biennials, Altmann warns that exempting ourselves in such bourgeois safe spaces only serves to amplify the unencumbered Right.



From top, clockwise:  
**Mathis Altmann**  
*Indulge* (detail; 2017)  
Courtesy of the Artist  
and Freedman Fitzpatrick,  
Los Angeles  
Photography by  
Mathis Altmann

**Eliza Douglas**  
*Sun Spilling Everywhere*  
*On Me* (2017)  
Courtesy of the Artist  
and Overduin & Co.,  
Los Angeles

**Alexandre Da Cunha**  
*"Boom," Installation*  
view at PIVO,  
São Paulo (2017)  
Courtesy of the Artist  
and PIVO, São Paulo  
Photography by  
Eduardo Ballarín