

**sommer & kohl**  
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**Vanessa Billy**  
***Dear energy***

opening Friday 1 November 2013, 6–9 pm  
exhibition 2 September – 7 December 2013  
Wednesday–Saturday 11 am – 6 pm and by appointment

Sommer & Kohl are happy to present the first solo exhibition of new works by Swiss artist Vanessa Billy (\*1978 in Geneva, Switzerland).

The exhibition *Dear energy* can be understood as a homage to energy, how we can get it through the transformation of matter, whether it be food, gas, petrol or water, all of which are constantly available to us. In every household there are countless appliances that need electricity to function. The energy consumption when sending an email amounts to the same as when sending a letter by post. The fact is that sending pixels to transfer data uses an incredible amount of electricity, which one can notice by how often computers, mobile tablets or telephones need to be charged.

In the media the way energy is talked about seems to be tainted with worry and fear: the need for it, shortages, the rising prices, the environmental damages that are caused. All these facts prove how dependable we are on this resource. On the other hand there is the energy we individually generate, and this is considered something positive.

The title of this exhibition is open – why would we address energy? – and this openness reflects the major concerns in Vanessa Billy's practice. Her work is relational in the same way in which words are relating to another within a sentence. In Billy's work, there is also always another: the spectator; a second or third object set in relation to a first; or even a process or a starting point from which the work recedes or draws back to the spectator. Billy emphasises the strangeness of relationships, their undeniable presence and their tangible absence. In articulating this in her work, she makes these absences palpable, how they bind together different objects and persons, and in this process of articulation something unfathomable is formulated.

The central work in the exhibition is *The smell of electricity*, 2013, which directly connects to the exhibition title. Functional everyday objects are piled onto a piece of asphalt. Underneath, the artist redirects the electricity and internet cables which are used in the gallery. Metaphorically, all objects stacked on top are carried into the wires and leads and so through the internet, as if they were the re-materialised pixels which pass underneath the sculpture.

Vanessa Billy has had solo exhibitions at Piano Nobile, Genf (CH); unosolo project room, Mailand (IT); Kunsthaus Baselland, Muttenz (CH); Project Space, The Photographer's Gallery, London (UK) as well as in numerous group exhibitions, such as in *La jeunesse est un Art*, Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau (CH), *Art and the City*, Zürich (CH); *Keep floors and passages clear*, White Columns, New York (US); Royal College of Art, London (UK); GAM Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin (IT). On 15 November 2013 her solo exhibition opens at BolteLang, Zürich (CH) in 2014 at Limoncello, London (UK).

For further information and/or images please contact Sommer & Kohl.