

Oculus

Drift

The Eye	/	The I
<	\	3
Mountain	/	Chain
Twin	\	Peaks
∧	/	^^
W av	\	.es
∧ t.	/	Tramuntana
Trauma	\	Aura
Altan	/	By the pool
By the sea	\	Buy to see
Picknick at	/	Loggia
I land	\	on an island
Wood	/	would
give	\	GIF
free	/	tree
Pyramid	\	high
∧	/	V
Ocean	\	Frank
Blue	/	White
Now you see me	\	2
Real	/	Magic
Lines	\	on linen
Vast cans	/	on canvas
Scotomatic	\	Anthropology
Virtual reality	/	in a recreational vehicle
Tokyo	\	Drift

Drift

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Oculus Drift is an associative play of words inspired by Kenneth Alme's work work work accompanying his exhibitions drift drift drift and *drift drift drift*. Working with reoccurring themes and icons in his body of work repetition repetition repetition itself is a mode of production that also finds expression in his studio practice. The style of writing of these lines at hand and their layout hereby try to pick up and mirror strategies of Alme's artistic approach. On paper the artist's two recent solo exhibitions at Studio Picknick in Berlin and Loggia in Munich are brought together in a way unfolded in the following.

The two columns of the first page can be seen respectively read as text for the individual shows from top to bottom. From left to right another meaning might appear due to the significance of the writing's sequentiality. The line separating the text functions as image. It can be read respectively seen as both a crack, rip, or rift and simultaneously as a possible counter move of stitches, analog to previous work of Alme where different canvases were cut and sewn back together by the artist. Here *slash /* and *backslash * form an alternating pattern. Thus creating yet another *shift / drift *

Working with simple tools of the keyboard – tabs and slashes for example // – instead of making use of the potential of a more complex text editing software reminds of an analog handling of a digital surface that seems characteristic for Alme as well. Older work of so called *Fake GIFs* are an exhibit A. De-skilling is here a choice of making. On the other hand, pre-writing this text in Apple Inc.'s TextEdit (Version 1.13 (333)) and transferring it in Adobe InDesign CC (Version 9.3) goes hand in hand with a form of loss that one can also find in Alme's works – from simply sparse and faded colors to letting go of control in general. For example, bringing together oil and water creates a drifting moment that can go out of the artist's hands. Alme's artistic techniques however are mainly manually.

Making again the connection between the analog and digital, the Internet as representation of the latter comes to mind. Spelled out as *world wide web* it seems to function as a map for Alme's way of thinking where making links is central. Historical and pop cultural reference points are interwoven in new narratives, underlining how information is shared and distributed and how story telling can and will change over the course of time, slowly drifting like something being carried away by a current of air or water. The image of a *live stream* relates to Alme's immediate gestures on the once water soaked canvases that are however timely displaced by their display in the exhibition setting. There is something anachronistic about the analog anyway.

Alme creates his own reading of a world where the finding of symbols happens consciously all over. He takes in his direct surroundings where suddenly there is this eye-shaped mountain, and mountain chains begin to look like waves that carry you away. The saying *to keep one's eyes open* allows a seeing of such connections. The eye itself becoming a motif again and again on the canvas' surfaces.

The title of the present text also references this with a blink. *Oculus* with it's origin in the Latin language points explicitly towards the eye. Close enough yet with one added letter marking a slight shift in it's meaning one might be thinking of *Oculus Rift*, a virtual reality system that appears to be both close and yet far away from what Alme is concerned with. Whereas the artist again deliberately dilettantish would not know how such a technical construction of a reality could work, he finds his own way of making a world and invites the I and us to finally *drift drift drift* –

Franz Hempel