

**Lena Schramm**

***Toutes Directions***

**EIGEN + ART Lab**

**18. Januar – 24. Februar 2024**

Press release by Dr. Cora Waschke

The central work in the exhibition *Toutes Directions* (engl. All Directions) by Lena Schramm is an old white Mercedes estate car with a French license plate. An accompanying inventory list records miscellaneous contents of a household and car accessories – items ranging from meat hooks, a mattress and a champagne cooler over to the facial product *Idealist* by Estée Lauder, a black toothbrush and a black lacquered egg carton with a stapled-on Dior banderole. The list reads – to use the words of writer Annie Ernaux on the „inventory“ of her childhood in the French working class milieu – as if „feelings and desires [have been placed] into some kind of chronological order (Shame/La honte, 1997).“ Some of the products are reflective of specific times and places, yet the fetishism of goods and brands as such moves through all groups and in all directions.

The shifting nature of Lena Schramm’s work irritates fixed categorizations of high and low with a rebellious humor. In the exhibited paintings, stained and patched up white ‘painters’ overalls are painted with impasto brushstrokes against a white background. Visible on them are logos of brands from the automotive and fashion sectors and emblems modified or designed by the artist. The paintings vary in degrees of abstraction, their creamy white surfaces with opposing structures reminiscent of similar series of works by Robert Ryman – and of decorative plaster.

Schramm weaves her appropriation of brands and symbols through a contrasting blend of childrens crafts and anarchic gestures of punk. The exhibition title therefore highlights a subversion of predetermined paths. And the type of freedom that comes from always following the road signs in France that read „Toutes Directions“.