

VON BARTHA

MIKE MEIRÉ: „CONFLICTS AND HOLES“ — 13. APRIL – 18. MAI 2013

In the broadly conceived show of his first solo exhibition at the von Bartha Garage Mike Meiré is presenting predominantly works on paper. It is, however, the very play of contrasts between the well-known works on paper and the works that seem to be stepping out of line with the medium, the form or material used which elucidate Meiré's central artistic objective.

Is he a painter? A sculptor? A performance artist? Mike Meiré, actually best known as a designer (Meiré and Meiré, Cologne), transcends any and all clichés with his enormous energy and enthusiasm for artistic production. His main interest is aimed at the ambivalence between structured cognitive intellect and libidinal organic chaos. He playfully incorporates the connected, sometimes completely contradictory ideas of beauty (order; chaos, grid; alternatively, baroque plenitude, kitsch and pop), puts them into question and presents them to us in a direct, humorous, but also always clearly conceptualized form of expression.

With his geometrically structured and intensely coloured compositions on paper Meiré fits well into the tradition of Concrete Art. But traditions stay alive by changing within the range of a certain consistency. Thus his paper works (industrial lacquer on newspaper) may appear to be minimalistic constructivist compositions while they are actually following economic necessity. By painting on separated pages of newspapers according to a grid determined by the layout he confronts us with the economy of our time. Those who pay more get more space, be it for an advertisement or for an obituary notice.

When one just looks at Meiré's paintings without trying to discern various references to famous artists or possible meanings, one encounters an artist with an extraordinary sensitivity for material, colour and composition. Mike Meiré does not need to decide whether he is a painter, a graphic designer or a sculptor. His ability to express ideas in various forms, with various media and materials convinces in its multiplicity. "When everything becomes equal" – a quote which he cites often -- describes his manner of working with well-know symbols and materials perfectly. It is the clash between high and low, between so-called beautiful/elegant and cheap/ugly that interests him. Whether in a bronze cast or in a collage made out of the pages of the yellow press newspaper "Bild" his is an artistic search for formalism in things purportedly dirty and for chaos in ostensible order.