

a handprint, and “expressive” drips appear on separate works, painted with deliberate restraint in relation to the image underneath: pinkish daubs resemble the highlights on the glistening skin of Harrison’s *Chicken*, and lavender swaths partially “redact” the user info in her *Add a Comment*. Paint is a reassertion of the human presence these works have otherwise ceded to the app. Harrison uses as little as possible—“just enough and nothing more”, she has said—to make these images her own.

One Scanner Pro Painting depicts a studio image of the Infanta Margarita marred by ink trails from a faulty printer; upstairs, she reappears in photos of the U.S. Capitol Rotunda on January 6th, mid-insurrection. Clipped to suspended lengths of rope and parachute cord like the proverbial dirty laundry, these doctored images join sundry objects in a thicket of string titled *Hot Topic Framing Device*.

Harrison’s device suggests a kind of map or diagram of the paranoid thinking that thrives online: it’s as if the Infanta had secretly led the charge to overturn a national election (trending alongside topics like JFK Jr. surviving his plane crash and plotting to be Trump’s next Vice President). Wild turkeys cross the road, obstacles abound, and democracy hangs by a thread.

## Raphaela Vogel

Mit der Vogel kannst Du mich jagen  
January–March 2022  
Location Eschenbachgasse  
Publication  
(ill. p. 790)

Review  
Steph Holl-Trieu und Sophia Rohwetter, Texte zur Kunst, Mai 2022

### WHO LET THE MEN OUT?

Nachdem sie auf ihre Frage „Where have all the interesting women gone?“ keine Antwort gefunden zu haben scheint, widmet sich die Philosophin und Kulturkritikerin Nina Power (der man angesichts ihrer Hinwendung zu neokonservativen Positionen diese Frage wohl selbst stellen könnte) nun den Männern, insbesondere Incels und anderen Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW). Ihr neues Buch *What Do Men Want? Masculinity and Its Discontents* (2022) befragt das Begehren des Mannes und findet es in der Vaterfigur, jener paternalistischen Instanz, die laut Power vom feministischen Kampf gegen das Patriarchat und der infantilisierenden Cancel Culture zu Unrecht mit abgeschafft werden soll. Unter dem Vorwand einer Kritik am Lifestyle-Feminismus, der mit „Smash the Patriarchy“ bedruckten Tassen auskommt, begibt sie sich auf die Suche nach den verloren gegangenen Vätern und greift dabei nach einer anderen Tasse: „I have a mug with Putin riding a bear and Trump holding a gun and riding a lion that a friend brought back from Russia.“<sup>1</sup> Obwohl diese Formen der Männlichkeit oft Ekel und Abneigung hervorriefen, müsse ihr Erfolg, so Power, auf ein bestimmtes Bedürfnis, Begehren oder gesellschaftliches Desiderat hindeuten. Verkörperungen von dominanter, monumentaler Männlichkeit finden sich auch in „Mit der Vogel kannst du mich jagen“, Raphaela Vogels erster Einzelausstellung in der Wiener Galerie Meyer Kainer. Vogel behauptet und betrauert aber im Gegensatz zu Power nicht den Verlust dieser Männlichkeit. Vielmehr konfrontiert sie diese mit einem heterogenen Ensemble männlicher Archetypen aus Mensch- und Tierwelt, verdichtet und zerschlägt maskuline Bilder und patriarchale Vorbilder und setzt dabei zeitgenössische sowie historische Männlichkeitsfantasien in surrealen Bilderwelten und absurden Kompositionen neu zusammen. Besinnt Power sich zurück auf traditionell männlich kodierte Werte und Tugenden wie Ehre, Treue, Mut und die „gute“ Vaterfigur, treten bei Vogel König, Hooligan, Liebhaber, Exfreund, Protz und Schlappschwanz in einer Fabel ohne Epimythion auf.

Der König der Tiere, der auf Powers Tasse von Trump geritten wird, hängt als erster Teil der Installation *Für uns* (2021) herrenlos und vom Sockel geschlagen in zweifacher Ausfertigung, Pfote an Pfote, den Hintern in Richtung Decke gestreckt, an einer Stahlrohrkonstruktion im Vorraum der Galerie. Aus Kugellautsprechern, die jeweils von einem Septumpiercing aus der Nase des Tieres hängen, skandiert ein Männerchor: „Für uns!“ Dass es sich hierbei um Stimmen von Fußballfans handelt, wird erkennbar, sobald die Borussia-Dortmund-Torhymne „Olé, hier kommt der BVB“ ertönt. Diese entstand 1993 während eines Auswärtsspiels bei Brøndby Kopenhagen, in jenem Jahr, als das Pet Shop Boys-Cover des Village-People-Disco-Hits „Go West“ die Charts stürmte. Fußballfans ersetzten den Songtext „Go West! Life is peaceful there“ mit ihrem eigenen Schlachtruf. So kam es, dass die kommunistische Hymne – „Go West“ beruht ursprünglich auf der Melodie und Harmonie der Nationalhymne der Sowjetunion – von der Gay Liberation zum BVB wanderte und die gleiche Fußballkultur, die bis heute mit Maskulinität und Homophobie zu kämpfen hat, die Erfolge „ihrer Jungs“ mit der Melodie einer „Schwulenhymne“ ehrt. Aber was und wen meint „Für uns“ eigentlich? Versteht es sich als kommunistische Forderung (als Expropriation der Expropriateure), als Siegesruf (eines Sportvereins, einer Gemeinschaft, einer Nation), als Solidaritätsbekundung unter Männern oder doch als Rückzug ins Private (in die RZB, in die Kernfamilie)?

Der zweite Teil der Installation *Für uns* (2021) besteht aus einer Videoskulptur, die sich im Mezzanin der Galerie befindet. Der aus Bronze gegossene griechisch-mythologische Held Bellerophon hält den Beamer, während er den sich aufbäumenden Pegasus zu zähmen versucht, aus dessen Maul die Verkabelung austritt. Das Video erscheint auf einer gelb gefärbten, lederen Leinwand. Wieder ertönt der Sound aus Kugellautsprechern, die von gedoppelten Bronzegüssen an Stahlrohrkonstruktionen herabhängen. Diesmal sind es keine Löwen, sondern Gefäße, die an die Rubinsche Vase erinnern, bei der die visuelle Wahrnehmung zwischen dem Bild einer Vase und dem Bild von zwei einander zugewandten Gesichtern oszilliert. Das Video, das in typisch Voogesquer Manier im Kugelpanorama Schwindel erregt, beginnt mit einer ein Reklameheft fressenden Katze, die von dem aggressiven Flügelschlag einer Drohne wie von einem Helikopter-Vater umkreist wird. Die geografisch unspezifische Straßenkatze wird im Begleittext von Rollo du Chateau (vermutlich ein Pseudonym Diedrich Diederichsens und nicht Rollos, Vogels Pudel) in Thailand lokalisiert. Gerade weil sie keine thailändische Siamkatze ist, sondern eine „universelle, skeptische, lakonische“, verschlinge die Katze neben den Versprechungen der Konsumgesellschaft auch die exotistischen Erwartungen westlicher Tourist\*innen.

Mit der universellen Katze und dem Kugelpanorama, das zugleich sphärisch und klaustrophobisch wirkt, evoziert das Video eine globale Welt, in der Bangkok nur einen kurzen Drohnenflug von Berlin entfernt ist. Dieselbe Drohne steigt jetzt über das vom Architekturatelier Bruno Paul entworfene Kathreiner-Hochhaus am Kleistpark, dessen Bau 1928 unter der Bedingung genehmigt wurde, dass auf der anderen Seite der barocken Königskolonnen ein weiteres Hochhaus errichtet werden würde. Als dieser Forderung nachgekommen wurde, war es bereits 1938, die Nazis waren an der Macht, und die Bauleitung der Reichsautobahn zog ein, gleich neben der Hauptvereinigung der Deutschen Milch- und Fettwirtschaft. Über Ecken und Rotationsbewegungen verbindet sich die Geschichte des Kleistparks wieder mit dem BVB, erinnern Akronym und Logofarben des Vereins doch an die BVG (Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe), die das Verwaltungsgebäude unmittelbar nach Kriegsende bezogen.

Die Drohne in Vogels Video dreht sich Richtung Westen, im Hintergrund ist nun das Kammergericht zu sehen, wo 1971 das letzte Viermächteabkommen unterzeichnet wurde. Rollo (Diederichsen, nicht der Hund) läuft ins Bild und auf die Künstlerin zu, küsst sie zur Begrüßung. Ein Kamel nimmt den Kuss auf. Indem der Kleistpark als historischer Ort und unmittelbarer Lebensraum der Künstlerin mit dem Mittelmeerraum, wo sie Tiere aus Südeuropa und Nordafrika trifft, eingemeindet wird, wird ein gewisser Bedeutungszusammenhang und ein bestimmtes „Für uns“ zwar arbiträr, aber bestimmt konstruiert. Grenzziehungen zwischen „uns“ und „nicht uns“, wie diejenigen entlang der Nord-Süd-Achse, des eigenen und des gegnerischen Teams, vermengen sich mit privaten Ein- und Ausschlüssen. Fußballgegröl wird von Babygeschrei überlagert, der Kussversuch des Kamels wird von Vogels gesanglicher Interpretation eines passiv-aggressiven Briefes ihres Exfreundes und einer Schubert-Paraphrase begleitet: „Wenn du mir etwas Gutes tun willst, dann geh mir aus dem Weg.“ Ähnlich beleidigt erscheint ein balzender Pfauenhahn, der, obwohl er einer Henne sein Federkleid protzend zur Schau stellt, von dieser kaum beachtet wird.



Publication, 2022

Das Bild des Pfaus (wie Vogels Exfreund, ein verlassener MGHOW) mutiert zur Drohne, die, umgeben vom Schaum brechender Wellen über das Mittelmeer fliegt, um auf Vogels Po zu landen, die in fliegender Hocke ihr Revier markiert. Wieder Rollo (also Diederichsen): „So entstand das Mittelmeer.“

Weit weniger schöpferisch als Vogels Urin mutet im Hauptraum der Galerie die raumgreifende Installation Können und Müssen (2022) an, die aus einem überlebensgroßen anatomischen Modell eines erektionsgestörten Penis besteht. Eine feine goldene Kette zieht sich durch die Harnsamenröhre und ist über eine pensumpfenartige Maschine an eine skeletthafte Giraffenkarawane gespannt, die versucht, den Schwanz abzuschleppen oder ihn wieder aufzurichten. Eine erschöpfte Männlichkeit, die das Pendant zu Vogels Arbeit Uterusland (2017) bildet, bei der ein Pferd in Pesade an ein anatomisches Modell einer ebenfalls kranken weiblichen Brust vernabelschnurt wird. Pferd und Giraffen sind aus Polyurethan gefertigt – ein Material, das an erstarrte weiße Flüssigkeit, an Muttermilch oder Sperma erinnert. Edukative Plaketten benennen die anatomische Struktur des Penis und weisen auf die Genitalwarzen und Karzinome des schlappen Gliedes hin. Der Penis ist mehr phobisches Objekt als Phallus. Kein symbolischer Vater, einfach nur krank. „Einen Penisneid krieg ich sicher nicht davon“<sup>2</sup>, bemerkt eine Kritikerin. Der Penis wird vollständig zum Mangel, als er kurz vor Ausstellungsende tatsächlich abtransportiert wird, um auf der Venedig-Biennale ausgestellt zu werden. Statt seiner müssen in Wien dann am Boden kriechende Tiger mit Eiern und Augen aus Christbaumkugeln und einem mit Polyurethan-Sperma bespritzten Engelskopf als Symptom, als Ersatzbefriedigung herhalten. Wo ist der Penis? Where has all the interesting art gone? Das fragt sich auch Adam Lehrer, der wie Power Kolumnist des kürzlich gelaunchten Onlinejournals compact ist, dessen behauptete Radikalität sich in vorhersehbaren Provokationen erschöpft. In einem Essay, der nur als geistig impotenter Versuch verstanden werden kann, argumentiert Lehrer, dass die MeToo-Bewegung für männliche Künstler (gemeint sind hier ausschließlich heterosexuelle) eine Form der ästhetischen Kastration darstelle, die es ihnen verbiete, ihr Begehren auszudrücken. Auch Vogel beschneidet das männliche Begehren, nicht aber um Verbote zu erteilen oder Kastrationsangst zu schüren; sie klammert das Wollen aus, um über Können und Müssen, über Potenz und Zwang von Männlichkeit zu sprechen. Denn auch oder gerade ein antiphallischer Schlappschwanz, der nicht mehr kann, aber muss, kann politisch sein. Versucht Power die angeblich bedrohte Männlichkeit unter dem Zeichen eines antikapitalistischen Widerstands der paternalistischen Sorge zu retten, reduziert Vogel Männlichkeit nicht auf ihre väterliche Vorbildfunktion, sondern lässt sie in ihren vielschichtigen, historischen und zeitgenössischen, ästhetischen und ideologischen Formen erscheinen. Für uns bleibt ambivalent, klingt nach Kollektivität und Kommunismus, nach Fußball und Krieg, nach RZB und gebrochenem Herzen. Monumentale, kriegstreiberische, beim Fußball grölende Männlichkeit begegnet hier einem schlaffen Schwanz, Gay Liberation, animalischer, mythologischer Männlichkeit und in sphärischen Umkreisungen immer auch sich selbst.

1 – Nina Power, *What Do Men Want? Masculinity and Its Discontents*, 2022, S. 140f.

2 – Claudia Aigner, „Raphaella Vogel. Mich laust die Giraffe“, *Wiener Zeitung*, 17.03.2022

## Amelie von Wulffen

April–May 2022  
Location Eschenbachgasse  
(ill. p. 794)

Review  
Vanessa Joan Müller, Artforum, Summer 2022

Amelie von Wulffen

*If there is such a thing as painterly autofiction— fictionalized autobiographical painting that explores representation's effect on the "I"— then the work of Amelie von Wulffen fits the bill. In an eclectic accumulation of styles and references, the artist maneuvers her way through art history, feeling out the possibilities of a voice that could speak about a contemporaneity shadowed by the past, while also reflecting her own position within that present context.*

For her 2021 retrospective at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, von Wulffen transformed the exhibition space into a traumatic cabinet of curiosities that featured paintings, drawings, sculptures, and pieces of furniture. In her recent exhibition at Galerie Meyer Kainer, the artist alluded to that presentation by rearranging some of those paintings and sculptures and supplementing them with others. For instance, in Vienna the eccentric seashell creatures that look like contemporary versions of Hieronymus Bosch figures once again sat on wooden plinths embellished with nautical imagery. The painting *Untitled*, 2019, features images of well-known ice cream classics and trigger childhood memories before the viewer's eye falls on a sleeping man with a huge erect penis who has snuck in between the Popsicles. In another *Untitled*, 2019, old photographs of clumsily posing teenagers, presumably the artist's siblings, decorate the surface of a painting of a tabletop behind which hangs a painting of a pseudo-dramatic sea-scape complete with sailing ship—a painting within a painting. The rustic German brown that used to dominate many of von Wulffen's paintings has given way to an almost maritime palette in many of the artist's more recent works. But the nostalgic register these paintings evoke only draws us deeper into the atmosphere of alienation that continues to haunt von Wulffen's work. Right at the entrance to the exhibition sat a papier-mâché sculpture of children's-book heroine Maya the Bee in a puddle of urine. She guarded an abstract painting that alludes to the Amber Room, which was formerly in a palace near Saint Petersburg but was famously dismantled and relocated by the Nazis; missing after the war, its pieces have never been found. Condensed in this pairing, *Bernsteinzimmer und Biene Maja* (Amber Room and Maya the Bee), 2019–2020, are the familiar motifs of von Wulffen's art: the personal and the suppressed, art history's symbolism reappearing in cartoon cuteness, and psychoanalytic clichés presented tongue in cheek. *Verwandtschaft / groß* (Relatives/Large), 2022, depicts von Wulffen and her extended family gathered for a group portrait. Everyone is trying to look casual and relaxed, but the depths and unspoken trials of family life resonate from the canvas. Other works turned the darkness of Brothers Grimm-like tales into grotesque scenarios. In *Musische Mutter* (Artistic Mother), 2019, the artist places a crudely painted copy of Vermeer's lute player in a corner of the canvas, with an audience of nattily dressed piglets. It is not so much that a combination such as this stages an aesthetic conflict as that it articulates a disunity designed to elicit new formal possibilities. Von Wulffen often combines two genres in one painting, for instance, landscape and portrait, or landscape and allegory. The longer you look at the details, the more references become apparent, ranging from baroque vanitas symbols to mass-culture icons. In a self-portrait, *Untitled*, 2022, the artist is seen sitting in front of what seems to be a large window. To the viewer's left, it appears to open out onto the city, while on the right we see a rural landscape with horses. She holds a butterfly in her hand—a symbol of transcendence, regeneration, or fragile beauty, and, in classical thought, the soul. She is the protagonist of action composed of fragments of her reality.



this is the end, 2021  
oil on canvas  
180x140 cm



Kris Lemsalu during the opening, 2022

## Kris Lemsalu

Love Stories

June–July 2022

Location Eschenbachgasse

(ill. p. 796)

Text

Kris Lemsalu

*Love Stories*

*Love Stories* combines three settings, three self-encounters each of them a site on a voyage, where memories and premonitions pierce the present. Sometimes an intuition materializes, a fear rings a bell, lust escapes, contradictions merge into unbearable certainties.

When the fortune-teller collapses all the lush symbolism of the prophecy is doomed to implode and reveal reality as a dusty diorama.

Lazy Flower

As of this world I have an ancient native name: Lazy Flower. This name approached me in an altered state of mind. It came to me as a manifold spirit. There was an image of me around it like a subjective bodily experience. More myself than me. A mirror, a jungle, a clown on a crane. I have my own zodiac sign. Our identity is so weirdly attached to our name. We all have a different name inside us and outside society. Mine is Lazy Flower.

River Rock Bird Sky

My seven-league-boots always step forward and through. I know myself as far as investigated myself, as far as I tried myself out, as far as I went. I can grow together with someone, I can live in a parallel state entangled like quanta with someone, I can be difference and equality, a conglomerate of future and past, surrendering to the possibilities, a freeze image of my own plurality, pointing in all directions in time and space. I laid the card of the five swords, I could only breathe under water, I took the hollow wooden unicorn as full of cunning. All in the same moment.

Love Is A Beautiful Thing

It is obviously a mighty gnome, a little fairy-tale creature, coming down centuries of imagination into my metabolism. It bypasses my regulations and seduces me with a greedy grin and a beautiful bouquet. Friendly or hostile, it won't matter, as it promises to please me and my soul is sore. A sucker for love, it knows when I am off guard, when I am ready, when I am willing to believe that it is a love affair, but it is not me and something, not a relation, it is only me.

## Curated by Karel Císař

Lucy McKenzie & Atelier E.B

September–October 2022

Location Eschenbachgasse

(ill. p. 798)

Text

Karel Císař

The Scottish artist Lucy McKenzie mixes fine art painting practice with multiple collaborations in design, historic research and commercial fashion. The greatest manifestation of this is in her long term collaboration with the designer Beca Lipscombe in the company Atelier E.B. The present exhibition follows in the steps of a 2016 fashion presentation prepared by Atelier E.B, for Boltenstern.Raum Galerie Meyer Kainer. That antecedent clothing collection, called 'The Inventors of Tradition II', focused on the issue of expressing cultural identity by means of sportswear. Here, the present interest of McKenzie – both within Atelier E.B and independently – are the relationships

between the pre-war *haute couture* and post-war Soviet fashion. This shift manifests itself not only in the historical and geographical difference of the sources of inspiration for the past and present projects but also in apparent details, such as the mannequins. Whereas six years ago, Atelier E.B presented its sportswear collection on schematic mannequins, McKenzie's present artworks – which are copies of 1920s clothing designs of the French designer Madeleine Vionnet – are installed upon mannequins with heads of a real person, the very young guerilla fighter Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, murdered in 1941 by the invading Wehrmacht and posthumously awarded the order of Hero of the Soviet Union. Her martyr's death was commemorated by numerous public monuments, depicting Kosmodemyanskaya either as a combat-ready androgynous figure with a boyish haircut and in a skirt, or on the contrary as a harrowed female figure, scantily clad in torn petticoats and with her hands bound behind her back.

By presenting *haute couture* clothing on a mannequin with the face of a socialist war hero, Lucy McKenzie establishes a relationship between mutually opposite yet equally ideologically conditioned aesthetic regimes. Whereas in 1920s France, the bias cut introduced by Madeleine Vionnet represented a fashion revolution by freeing the female body as it did, in the 1940s Soviet Union it was taken for a sign of Western decadence. However, when the sculptors producing the historically later monuments of Kosmodemyanskaya wanted to emphasize her innocent victimhood they represented her in a flowing dress and barefooted, as did Vionnet with her models in her fashion shows. On the other hand, while Kosmodemyanskaya's androgynous figure epitomized in the 1940s the 'New Soviet Woman', today similarly shaped figures, showing young people of vague gender and ethnicity, serve to sell the hypercapitalist 'fast fashion'. McKenzie further underscored this ambivalence by choosing polychrome: the sitting figure is painted in a terracotta hue, commonly seen on classical Greek vases, whereas the standing figure is treated in aubergine, as known from Roman marble sculptures. The ambivalence was then heightened yet further by the artist's choice of models to be reproduced, as their geometrical pattern can refer to ancient Greek architecture as well as to Soviet constructivist art.

These contradictions, stemming from the ideological presuppositions of aesthetic 'regimes', are summarized by McKenzie in her 2021 work 'Ethnic Composition (Moldova, Russian Ethnographic Museum)'. This is a replica of a map to be found in the Russian Ethnographic Museum in Saint Petersburg which defines the ethnic types of the population of Moldova on the basis of their traditional garb. However, the photographic illustrations from the original museum exposition were replaced by photos of other figurines, such as a mannequin exhibiting the traditional Jewish costume, a mannequin dressed as *La Calavera Catrina* on the occasion of the Mexican Day of the Dead, or a male figure illustrating the history of the Moscow department store GUM. Whereas the terracotta-hued mannequin is looking out of the entrance of the gallery, the aubergine one, installed behind a separating panel, is turned inwards, as if imitating not only human proportions but also a person's movement in space. It is wearily resting its back against the wall and looking over a paravent towards a vitrine with clothing. Since all three plastic installations have been produced in realistic dimensions and utilizing *trompe l'oeil* painterly techniques for imitating textiles, marble, wood and other materials commonly used in the interiors of modern fashion stores, the result is destabilizing both for our sense-perception, which is incapable of distinguishing what's real and what's painted, and for the character of the place we are in. At the same time, the installations refer to the complex history of mutual relationships between art and fashion and to the methods of their presentation.

In fashion environment, the function of the paravent is to protect the body from the gaze of passers-by. In our exhibition, it further serves – from the front – as the support for Lipscombe's silkscreen depicting the cuts of the *Jasperwear* collection and – from the back – for McKenzie's painting of a false terazzo depicting East Dunbartonshire landscape. The 'Street Vitrine', which holds the Atelier E.B products, installed by the trimmers Howard Tong and Barbara Kell, is a polemic with the surrealist objectification of the female body, as the artist avoids employing a mannequin and has the clothing installed dramatically by means of nylon threads. Yet at the same time McKenzie subverts the exclusivity of contemporary art, since the installation includes her own and Lipscombe's off-the-rack models. Finally, the 'GUM' display, built for Atelier E.B by the artist and designer Steff Norwood, is a reconstruction – based upon McKenzie's archival research – of the 1950s offer of fabric in the Moscow department store GUM, and with regard to the history of painting it further thematizes the classical relationships between the frame and the image, since the entire image here is merely

the frame filled with random samples of fabrics. In contrast to the public manner, the Atelier E.B production is installed in the main space, McKenzie's presentation upstairs focuses upon the Villa de Ooievaar, a historically significant and officially protected building which the artist acquired in 2014 and whose reconstruction she pursues from that time. The modernist dwelling, called 'The Stork Villa' after the stork's association with childbirth, was designed by the Flemish architect Jozef De Bruycker in 1935, in the era of growing authoritarianism in Europe. The villa, commissioned by a Catholic medical doctor for his 15-member family and his own medical practice, remained the family's possession until the mid-1990s. Yet notwithstanding its private purpose, the villa's interior is also marked by ideology, as it depicts stereotypes following from the definition of family as a basic societal unit, and its design adapts avant-garde notions to conservative and nationalist interests. Flemish nationalism is then referenced by McKenzie's *trompe l'oeil* paintings, known as quodlibets, laid out under the glass tops of two round coffee tables and depicting objects relating to the villa, such as a memorial of Flemish nationalism, a postcard with a painting by the Belgian abstract artist Marthe Donas or a souvenir powder-box from the 1939 Glasgow Empire Exhibition. Even though the coffee tables and the replica of a chair were originally produced for standard use, they are presented in the exhibition not in immediate contact but rather upon a low pedestal, as used for exhibiting furniture in applied arts museums. These are complemented by two hanged paintings which include the motif of marble, the 2016 'V&A Paonazzo' and 'Bridge Club Breche II' based on marble from the Vienna bridge club by Adolf Loos, which may give the appearance of a reconstruction of paintings contemporary with the building at the borderline of abstraction and decoration; yet in fact, these are the artist's original works in which she resigned upon illusory depiction, and instead, captured the stone's texture by means of pure, unmixed colors. The installation closes with an older metal mannequin, these stand here as autonomous plastic works, and in comparison with the mannequins' realism appear almost like pictograms from a visual statistics. The exposition in its entirety establishes a phantasmagoric space which both destabilizes binary oppositions – such as fine and applied arts, individual creativity and collective design, or focused aesthetic contemplation and the browsing glance at shopwindows with fashion products – and discloses the ideological presuppositions of seemingly contradictory aesthetic (and other) regimes.

## Résumé by Christian Meyer and Renate Kainer

A program that proves to be an open structure in the sense of a “work in progress” and has no intrinsic standards can be characterized as an endless assemblage, as a juxtaposition of contrasting elements. “In short, life filling the screen like a tap fills a bathtub that is simultaneously emptying at the same rate,” as Jean Paul Godard opined.<sup>1</sup>

If the introduction then states a priori that there was no programmatic concept, in retrospect of the history of the development of the gallerie(s), some transitory features, as far as the style of the gallerie(s) is concerned, can be noted, which nevertheless point to an implicitly existing understanding of art, for instance as asserted by Seth Price:

“Art is the productive outcome of wrong seeing, odd thinking, strange action.”<sup>2</sup>

In addition, three habitual focal points can be affirmed:

From the start, an initial focus was directed toward problems of formalism, though it was ultimately understood as an expansion or inversion of the concept in the narrower sense, if one considers, for example, the use of Wittgenstein quotations by Franz West or Heimo Zobernig, or also the counteracting of the specific Juddian object by Charles Ray, who extended his cube ( $32 \times 33 \times 35 = 34 \times 33 \times 35$ ) by a base sunk 5 cm deep into the gallery floor. (ill. p. 289)

The external evidentness of the art object is thus regularly juxtaposed with its inwardness, which points to a dissociation in order to trigger a phantasmal process that disavows the veil of any tautology (for example, the postulated evidentness of the specific object in Minimalism, but also the priority of the work of art's visuality

in Abstract Expressionism), just as it disavows any religious practice that attempts to transcend the dissociation in an imaginary way.

For that generation of artists with whom the gallery was closely associated, seeing has always been considered a divided, restless, moving, open operation on the part of the subject. Art that produces dialectical images as transmitters of latency and energy, and brings restlessness to the act of seeing. Carl Einstein pointed out, however, that even then the presence or aura of a form was to be sought in the form itself, that is, in the interplay of its formation and presentation rather than, say, in its symbolism. Accordingly, pieces by Ad Reinhardt, which often appeared as reference works in various exhibitions at the gallerie(s), are neither “specific” at all costs nor “mystical” in any way, but simply reveal themselves as intense forms that incorporate the viewer's gaze into the strategy of the form itself, rather than negating it.

As John Rajchman noted in his text for the exhibition, *Schreibtischuhr* (see p. 194), of the two desks at which the exploration of art—understood as the dialectic of an endless visual game—was successfully advanced in Vienna, one belonged to Ludwig Wittgenstein and the other to Sigmund Freud.

A second focus of the gallery aimed at negotiating gender-specific discourses, beginning with a confrontational exhibition by Minimalist artist Franz Graf and feminist activist Elke Krystufek, described by the press as a “war of the roses” (Erwin Melchart). Later, there were numerous gender-role confounding performances and installations by the “boy group” gelatin, or Ulrike Müller's gender-queer settings.

As a third focus, the gallery program prominently featured the fundamental importance of contextual references, through presentations of work by representatives of both the first generation of contextual artists, such as Dan Graham, as well as the following younger generation, such as Andrea Fraser. Florian Pumhösl or Liam Gillick, for their part, furthermore combine formalist aspects in their work with a recognition of the phenomenological world of experience on the basis of intersubjectivity and context. “Such works no longer allow for a trusting reading [...], but by the same token they do not allow for a *tautological*, conclusive or specific, ‘modernist’ or ‘formalist’ reading in the strict sense of the two terms.”<sup>3</sup>

When a contemporary work of art goes beyond absolute novelty value to the same extent that it goes beyond a striving for a return to the roots, in that it succeeds in recognizing the present moment in which it partakes, it is dialectical in the sense of a project of plastic reason. In a playful setting at the Japanese gallery Tomio Koyama in 2007, in which their naked bodies took the position of stones in a Zen garden, gelatin showed how mobile, living subjects may become pieces in a chess game in which the stakes are the act of disappearance itself.

An image emerges of the long-gone, ancient Zen garden, putting both modern rationality and archaic irrationalism up for discussion. The beauty of the dialectical image lies in the paradox that it represents a new, reinvented shape of memory, a place where the past becomes anachronistic while the present appears as reminiscence.

1 – Cited in: Susan Sontag, *Gesten radikalen Willens*, Frankfurt a. M. 2011, p. 281

2 – Seth Price, *Wrong seeing, Odd Thinking, Strange Action*, Texte zur Kunst, no. 106, June 2017

3 – Didi Huberman, *Was wir sehen blickt uns an*, Munich 1999, p. 184



Installation view, GELATIN  
Klunk Garden, 2009  
at Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo, Japan