

Olaf Metzel

Heimo Zobernig

Placing together Olaf Metzel and Heimo Zobernig's artworks in an exhibition enables us to reflect upon what they have in common but also what distinguishes them.

The exhibition includes a series of monochrome tableaux by Heimo Zobernig, which are almost a backdrop for Olaf Metzel's sculptures. The use of Trevira Television CS fabrics – a support for chroma key in film production, a technique that allows to replace blue, red or green screen background with another image – is familiar for Zobernig. In this set of works the background has been conceived to be a further white background, just like the gallery's wall, therefore ideally offering a neutral perception of the art pieces. Some canvases have an interference colour as last layer.

Heimo Zobernig continues to deconstruct Modernism's formal language, by compromising the aesthetic purity of the monochrome and by bringing it back to the decorative, functional and ironic level. Zobernig is pragmatic. His canvases are exactly what they should be: objects on display. The surface deception drives the public to participate in the behavioural routine coordinated by the artist.

Olaf Metzel folds, bends and distorts the urban images that are printed on both sides of aluminium panels and in this way generates the perplexing illusion of paper. The layers that are formed against the resistance of the material reflect the motif of aggression as one of Metzel's sculptural techniques. The formal, aesthetic repetition of folds in the monochromatic variations *Argento d'oro* creates a kind of image within an image – a reflection of the everyday aesthetics of our commodified world. In related ways, *Fano* (28/12/2017) provides the superficial textures of store façades a tangible form.

Metzel also contextualises the dimensions and fixed points of the urban atmosphere with such iconic buildings as the monumental Palazzo delle Poste in Naples. *Anno 1936* and *XXLarge* reflect the distinctive substance of the highly sculptural building and paraphrase architecture as an ideological instrument and a constructed manifesto. *come sempre*, as an architectural element that reproduces the social phenomenon, can be read in similar fashion. As an abstract moment, the work thematises the aesthetic potential of plastic materials and negotiates the possibilities of sculpture. The raw, crude state of the sculpture displays the traces of the modelling process, thereby making the working process visible.

Olaf Metzel (b.1952, Berlin, Germany) lives Metzel lives in Munich. Metzel studied at the Freie Universität and the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. Since 1990 he has been professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, where he also served as principal 1995-1999. He had numerous solo exhibitions in Germany and abroad, as well as participated amongst others in documenta 8, Sculpture Projects Munster (1987 and 1997), Sydney Biennial (1990), Istanbul Biennial (1995), and Sao Paulo Biennial (2002). Metzel's prizes include the Villa Massimo Prize (Rome, 1987), the Arnold Bode Prize (Kassel, 1994), the Wilhelm Loth Prize (Darmstadt, 1997), the Lichtwark Prize (Hamburg, 2010), and the mfi Graduate Award (Essen, 2014), Jerg Ratgeb Preis (2018). Public sculptures by Metzel can be seen in Germany, Europe, and Asia. He has curated many exhibitions – for example in 2006 as part of the Berlin Biennale – and published numerous contributions in newspapers and magazines.

Heimo Zobernig (b. 1958, Mauthen, Austria) lives in Vienna. The artist has had numerous international exhibitions, among them Heimo Zobernig, Sammlung Grässlin, Kunstraum, St. Georgen (2016); Malmö Konsthall, Malmö (2016) Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2016); La Biennale di Venezia (2015); MUDAM, Luxembourg (2014); Documenta 9 and X in Kassel, solo shows at the Kunsthhaus Graz (2013); Palacio de Velázquez, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2012); Kunsthalle Zurich (2011); Pestorius Sweeney House, Brisbane, Australia (2011); Sammlung Essl, Klosterneuburg (2011); the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon (2009); Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux (2009); MAK, Vienna (2008); the Kunsthalle Basel (2003); the K21, Düsseldorf (2003); Museum of Modern Art, Vienna (2002); and his work has been featured in group exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart (2012); the Kunstmuseum Basel, Basel (2012); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2009); Tate St Ives, Cornwall (2008); and Galleria Civica di Modena (2008).