



From left: Cyprien Gaillard, *The Arena and the Wasteland*, 2008, bronze and concrete. Installation view, Skulpturenpark Berlin_Zentrum. From "When Things Cast No Shadow," Lars Laumann, *Berlinmuren*, 2008, still from a color video, 28 minutes.



5th Berlin Biennial

VARIOUS VENUES

André Rottmann

THE BIENNIAL FORMAT may exert a more decisive influence on the field of contemporary art than any other kind of exhibition today, but such shows are also regularly criticized on account of their instrumentalization in the service of both cultural and local political agendas. Noting that this type of large-scale show tends to prioritize post-Conceptual and lens-based practices that engage the historical, economic, and (geo-)political resonances of specific sites in a particular city or region, Julian Stallabrass, in *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art* (2004), goes so far as to argue that the biennial, "with all its crude jostling for position in the global market," performs the same function for a city "as a Picasso above the fireplace does for a tobacco executive," and as such it "not only embodies, but actively propagandizes the virtues of globalization."

The curators of the Fifth Berlin Biennial, Adam Szymczyk and Elena Filipovic, appear to have been acutely aware of this kind of fundamental criticism; indeed, in the catalogue they note almost apologetically that it "goes without saying that a biennial is a part of contemporary event culture," adding that "it belongs to a spectacular order." Their exhibition itself, in part by

attempting productively to engage the conventions of "biennial culture," prompted many critics in the German *feuilletons* to complain immediately about the timidity—aridity, even—of the show as a whole, inadvertently exposing a longing for spectacular gestures that these same critics would doubtless have been quick to condemn for some version of the reasons above. For one thing, Szymczyk and Filipovic's exhibition features a large number of relatively unknown artists, particularly young Europeans, but perhaps more significantly, the biennial is divided into two sections, with the exhibition proper labeled "Day" and an evening program—composed of more than sixty lectures, performances, artist talks, film screenings, and the like—labeled "Night." These events—devoted, for example, to Lacan's *Télévision*, "The Dust that Floats Between the Visible and the Invisible," or the Croatian postwar avant-garde—can be attributed to an impulse to expand the biennial into a *manifestation culturelle*, one that, according to the curators, "evad[es] the regime of absolute visibility, but also that of the materialized object." No matter how idiosyncratic their topics, however, it is questionable on the one hand whether these night shifts—which bear the alternative title "*Mes nuits sont plus belles que vos jours*" after an "erotic thriller" by Andrzej Żuławski from 1989—may really be regarded as challenging the reign of the spectacle rather than infusing it with the appeal of "criticality" so much in demand in our era of post-Fordist economies of immaterial labor. On the other hand, it goes without saying that critical gestures, even those seemingly opposed to event culture, always already run the risk of being recuperated into the marketing of a cityscape that (inadvertently) characterizes most biennials.

In any case, in the "Day" program, too, one cannot fail to notice that Szymczyk and Filipovic have attempted self-consciously to distance themselves from the approach of their predecessors in 2006—Maurizio Cattelan,

Massimiliano Gioni, and Ali Subotnick—who orchestrated a sort of processional in Berlin's Auguststrasse that sent visitors from a church to the site of a former school for Jewish girls to a cemetery, confronted at every step with supposedly existential questions of human destiny. With four venues in different parts of the city, it's clear that Szymczyk and Filipovic also want biennial visitors to move around Berlin—"but," they say, "not necessarily towards buildings whose histories are manifest in their peeling paint or picturesque state of ruination." So the sites for the "Day" program are loaded more distinctively in terms of the specificities of Berlin's postwar history and post-Wall present rather than merely evoking a somewhat farcical atmosphere of historicity. A series of monographic exhibitions is taking place in the Schinkel Pavilion, for example, which is a tower-shaped hybrid of socialist modernism and Neoclassical decor built in East Berlin in 1969 as an annex to the Kronprinzenpalais on Unter den Linden, while the rest of the "Day" program is distributed among the Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, the traditional headquarters of the Berlin Biennial; the 1968 Neue Nationalgalerie, Mies van der Rohe's icon of late modernism; and an area of vacant lots on the former "death strip" of the Berlin Wall between the districts of Mitte and Kreuzberg that the artists' collective KUNSTrePUBLIK in November 2006 converted into the Skulpturenpark Berlin_Zentrum.

According to the biennial's "short guide," the no-man's-land of this last venue "reads not only as a scar left behind by the Berlin Wall—a reminder of a dramatic past—but also as a monument to failed urban development in conditions of sluggish economic growth and as a locus of investor fantasies." This section of the show is, however, its weakest segment, if not its biggest failure: The curators seem to have relied too much on the exceptionality and supposed self-evidence of the site and—contrary to their curatorial mission statement—its "state



of ruination." The Skulpturenpark contains many works that seem like "plop" sculptures, unrelated to the site where they have been installed. This is true, for instance, of a construction of metal and wood by Polish artist Ania Molska that also appears in her film piece *W=F*s (work)*, 2008, at the Kunst-Werke, where it does at least succeed in provoking an allegorical reflection on the heroic iconography of physical labor in the Russian avant-garde and in the context of postcommunist Poland. When literally displaced, works like this makeshift structure can at most be interpreted—generously—as ironic commentaries on the ongoing crisis of "art in the public sphere": One cannot but be aware that the biennial here partakes in the logic of public art programs that recodes contemporary art as an interim solution for abandoned sites. The pieces that do take on the demands of site-specific relevance, by contrast, tend to exhaust themselves in a more illustrative than reflective relationship to Berlin's history and present status as it is allegedly manifested here. In Cyprien Gaillard's installation *The Arena and the Wasteland*, 2008, for instance, a group of pole-mounted floodlights garishly light up an area of the sculpture park covered with weeds and garbage, as if to evoke the former surveillance apparatus over the death strip as well as to expose the still-undeveloped terrain as an object for speculation in real estate. A similarly simplistic model of site-specificity can be seen at work in the film installation *Berlinmuren*, 2008, by Norwegian artist Lars Laumann, which is projected inside a construction incorporating debris found at the site and tells the story of an "objectophile" woman who married the Berlin Wall in 1979 and has been mourning its loss for the past nineteen years.

IN ANOTHER GESTURE OF contrarianism against biennial culture, the series of exhibitions in the Schinkel Pavilion began two weeks prior to the biennial's official opening, and will end two weeks after its finishing date—with the

intention, according to the curators, of "upsetting the demand for a single, spectacular beginning and end." And the shows in this section of the exhibition are themselves atypical fare for biennials: Each involves a young artist (whose own productions appear elsewhere in the biennial) presenting the work of an artist from a previous generation who has had a significant influence on his or her practice—figures whom Szymczyk and Filipovic characterize *grosso modo* as representing "counter-modernist positions." The first of the exhibitions in the Schinkel Pavilion, titled "*La Lampe dans l'horloge*" (The Lamp in the Clock) and organized by Berlin-based artist Nairy Baghramian, featured a selection of "mirror objects" created between 1989 and 2008 by ninety-eight-year-old Swiss designer Janette Laverrière. Using Laverrière's Paris apartment as a point of departure, the two artists collaborated on a roofless construction with a small staircase, an aluminum floor, and colorful walls, whose inside and outside served as a support for works fashioned by Laverrière out of wood, metal, and reflective surfaces. In front of several of these assemblages, shutters that had an almost late-Surrealist look undermined the objects' functionality as mirrors; while Laverrière's titles frequently reference particular figures (e.g., Cocteau, Courbet, Hugo) and works (e.g., *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) from the canon of modern literature and art. The interior of the installation included a bookshelf with a few volumes from Laverrière's library, providing a partial glimpse into her varied horizon of references.

This series of shows—curated by artists, apparently immune to any anxiety of influence, in homage to artists—represents in condensed form the dominant

modus operandi of the biennial as a whole. Symptomatically, the catalogue is a voluminous tome that not only compiles essays on architectural and urban theory by the likes of Beatriz Colomina and Georges Didi-Huberman but also replaces any discussion of individual artists or works with an endless cascade of "source material" provided by all the participating artists, along with literary texts (selected by the curators) by Francis Ponge, Henry Green, Robert Walser, and others. If Szymczyk and Filipovic emphasize in their own contribution that their intention was not to organize their exhibition around content defined *a priori*, it nevertheless becomes clear that this Berlin Biennial—even though its title, "When Things Cast No Shadow," summons a metaphorical sus-

pension of historical indices—reflects above all contemporary art's current interest in modernism's formal languages and revisits the concomitant aspiration to artistic autonomy. These concerns were amply evident in last year's much-debated Documenta 12, but whereas that exhibition for the most part emphasized morphological correspondences between the abstract

forms of high-modernist art and premodern aesthetics, Szymczyk and Filipovic instead present projects that, by way of references to specific historical moments and aesthetic currents in artistic modernism and modernity at large, continuously link an engagement with this legacy to the sites of the exhibition.

This itself may reflect broader trends in art today. Art historian, critic, and curator Helmut Draxler has written that "virtually everywhere the relationship between situation and reference is at issue," defining "situation" as "the various spatial relations that almost every contemporary work in fact creates to the site of its appearance,"

The series of shows in the Schinkel Pavilion—curated by artists in homage to artists—represents in condensed form the dominant modus operandi of the biennial as a whole.



Opposite page, from left: Daniel Knorr, *Nationalgalerie* (detail), 2008, fifty-eight fabric and metal flags, each 12' 7 1/4" x 10' 1/4". From "When Things Cast No Shadow," Neue Nationalgalerie. View of Janette Laverrière and Nairy Baghramian, "La Lampe dans l'horloge" (The Lamp in the Clock), 2008. From left: Janette Laverrière, *Bibliothèque verticale* (Vertical Library), 2008; Le Carré, 2001; and Victor Hugo, 2004. From "When Things Cast No Shadow," Schinkel Pavilion. This page, from left: Nairy Baghramian, *La Colonne cassée* (1871) (The Broken Column [1871]), 2008, metal, 11' 1 1/2" x 4' 7 1/4" x 5' 10 1/4". From "When Things Cast No Shadow," Neue Nationalgalerie. Susanne M. Winterling, *Eileen Gray, The Jewel and Troubled Water* (detail), 2008, 16 mm film, photographs, collage, sculptures, postcards, and mixed media, dimensions variable. From "When Things Cast No Shadow," Neue Nationalgalerie.

while "reference" describes "all sorts of allusions, denotations and citations, which perhaps to a special degree represent the communication code of contemporary art." Against the backdrop of this observation, one might even speak of a prevalent mode of referentialism in contemporary art, an artistic model that integrates pointers to particular works of preceding generations of artists, a vast array of historical episodes, theoretical writings, or aesthetic codes outside the field of art proper. And this Berlin Biennial, although it lacks any theoretical or curatorial approach that might offer insight into this process of constant allusion and citation, nevertheless offers ample opportunity to take stock of the currency of referentialism in contemporary art, in both its formulaic and its productive variants.

IN THE KUNST-WERKE, references to the history of modernism's reactionary as well as progressive currents are everywhere apparent. A series of drawings by Danish artist Pushwagner, *Soft City*, 1969–75, for example, depicts the minutely identical behavior of the inhabitants of a city characterized by endless streets and Brutalist architecture. In more than 150 pencil sketches, the work shows *Soft City*'s heavily medicated denizens carrying out repetitive work in the arms industry and in administration, or engaging in disciplinary consumerism. This dystopian vision is dialectically countered by David Maljković's *Lost Memories from These Days*, 2006–2008, in which a series of collages and a video expose the specters of modernist utopianism in 1960s Yugoslavia. In a structure made of green construction plywood whose still-visible serial numbers seemingly allude to Constructivist principles, the Croatian artist brings together photographs of the now-derelict site of the World Fair in Zagreb with newspaper clippings and snapshots from its heyday, allowing a sobering present-day perspective to coincide with past hopes for progress and prosperity in a palimpsest-

like arrangement. As if to allegorize this mode of nonsimultaneity, the video next to these photographs shows models lounging in rigid poses beside shiny new cars in the fair's Italian pavilion, which is thus recast as a futuristic car showroom.

Whereas the artworks in the Kunst-Werke generally refer to histories and politics independent of the site of their display, the Neue Nationalgalerie, which features by far the most convincing part of this biennial, provides a productive spatial and historical context for the exhibited works. Indeed, Mies van der Rohe's steel and glass square is the ideal location for art that creates a self-reflexive relationship between situation and reference, encoded in this instance as the architectural parameters of the site, on the one hand, and the aporias and aspirations of the project of modernism, on the other. Even here, however, one at times encounters the merely self-legitimizing use of references. This is most apparent in the row of flags, titled *Nationalgalerie*, 2008, that Romanian artist Daniel Knorr installed on the edges of the building's flat roof. While bringing to mind Color Field painting, these flags are in fact copies of the banners of Berlin's deeply conservative, not to say outright reactionary, student fraternities—but Knorr's work (all the research that went into it notwithstanding) ultimately seems to propose merely that even modernist abstraction can be coded in antiprogressive terms. Indeed, the tenuous nature of the link between the work and its site is only made clearer by the title's misleading implication that these flags present a mode of national representation without further ado comparable to that of the building itself. Indoors, Susanne M. Winterling uses Mies van der Rohe's structure in a more sophisticated way by incorporating the Nationalgalerie's two symmetrical coat-check areas into her piece *Eileen Gray, The Jewel and Troubled Water*, 2008. This formally convincing installation consists of a projection, an architectural model, and photographs, each replicated in the opposite cloakroom

space as if by its mirror image. Her abstract film of the condensation that forms on the museum's plate-glass windows, defying the architect's goal of transparency, may be a laconic site-specific commentary on the relationship between calculation and contingency, but since Winterling refers not only to Irish architect and designer Eileen Gray but also to her relationship to Le Corbusier, modern furniture design, and Kenneth Anger, the work ends up seeming overly freighted with culturally sanctioned references that have already been engaged critically ad nauseam.

In one corner of the Nationalgalerie's ground floor, Marc Camille Chaimowicz domesticates the space with *For Mr. R*, 2008. A large lace curtain hangs in front of the architect's glass walls, and slabs of marble, propped against the air shafts, are covered with wallpaper patterns that themselves reappear in adjacent collages along with images of decorative interiors in the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut. The work thus confronts the building's Minimalist severity with the opulence of early-modern domestic style. Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer likewise use a curtain to section off part of the museum for their collaborative work *Pygmalion*, 2008, which focuses on Henri Matisse's design for the liturgical garments of the priests at the Chapelle du Rosaire in Venice, connecting these costumes to ancient myths of statues coming to life with a series of clay models of horses' legs whose "originals" are shown in a Plexiglas floor mosaic, and with reproduced book pages—in the process also revealing the often hidden interrelationships of modern abstraction and applied crafts, while decidedly abjuring the corporate-minimalist style relied on by too many recent artworks concerned with design history.

One of the most rewardingly dense works in the show is right at the back of the building: Baghramian's sculpture *La Colonne cassée* (1871), 2008, in which two black-lacquered rectangular metal plates with small circular cutouts, their lower ends bent

continued on page 473



DANIEL KNORR (geb. 1968 in Bukarest, lebt und arbeitet in Berlin)
 European Influenza, 2005, Installation

RUMÄNISCHER PAVILLON: Ein leerer Raum ist ein leerer Raum. Angesichts dieser Trivialität könnte man sich zufrieden geben mit dem ersten Blick in den Pavillon Rumäniens. Er steht einfach leer, nur noch die Gebrauchsspuren der Ausstellung davor sind sichtbar. Zur Eröffnung waren im ‚Foyer‘ noch die kleinen Kataloge gestapelt. Die fünftausend Exemplare waren allerdings schon nach wenigen Tagen vergeben, so dass sich der Betrachter von der Szene bald abwenden konnte. Aber vielleicht entdeckte er hinten in der Ecke des Ausstellungsraums jene offene Tür, die normalerweise nicht zum Standard von Ausstellungsräumen gehört. Die haben meistens aus Sicherheitsgründen nur einen Eingang, der dann gleichzeitig auch Ausgang ist. Wer sich dieser Tür näherte, hatte eines jener Erlebnisse, für die man nach Venedig reist. Denn hinter der geöffneten Tür zeigte sich ein ganz anderes Leben. Und wer wollte, konnte darin auch so etwas wie einen Film entdecken, Dogma live. Mit dieser offenen Tür zeigt sich dann auch eine doppelte Leere.

Spätestens seit Yves Kleins ‚Le Grand Vide‘ ist die Leere des Ausstellungsraums ein Topos der zeitgenössischen Kunst. Zum einen steckt dahinter der Impuls der Verweigerung, wie bei Daniel Buren, aber ebenso die Feier, wie bei Yves Klein.

Beide Momente spielen in dem Werk von Daniel Knorr kaum eine Bedeutung, aber wer will kann sie entdecken. Vielleicht muss man, will man das Konzept verstehen, sich eingehend mit dem Katalog befassen.



Der ist so umfassend, daß man seine Zeit braucht, ihn durchgängig zu studieren. Auf der anderen Seite muss zugegeben werden, daß das Thema ‚Ost-West‘ und vice versa nicht mehr angesagt ist. Das liegt sicherlich zum einen daran, dass andere Themen in den Vordergrund rücken wie der Iran, der Terrorismus und in diesem Lande die prekäre ökonomische Situation mit ihren Begleiterscheinungen. Die Zeitenwende, das Ende des kalten Kriegs scheinen in tiefer Vergangenheit zu liegen, dabei sind die damit verbundenen Probleme nur unter den Teppich gekehrt. Sie werden deutlich, wenn die schon erwähnte ökonomische Situation sich ‚verschärft oder Wahlkampfzeiten anbrechen. Andererseits sind die Probleme, die das vereinigte Deutschland hat, verglichen mit den Problemen von Rumänien vergleichsweise gering.

Vielleicht ist auch System dahinter. Wenn es das Andere gibt und das deutlich wird, gibt es eine Alternative. An die mag man nicht mehr glauben, denn auch Frau Merkel oder Herr Gysi sind nicht die Alternative zu Herrn Schröder. Auf der letzten Seite des erwähnten Katalogs findet sich folgender Satz: „However, enclosure is not the same as the acculturation of differentness, but rather an institutional form of the

expansion of exclusion; here the ‚other‘ is no longer branded and fought as a foe, but incorporated into the European Union’s sphere of power and sorted into a well balanced system of subordination.“

Andererseits ist der Osten, der nahe über die Grenze, auch Projektionsfläche von beiderseitigen Wünschen und Vorstellungen. Da bekommt der leere Raum von Daniel Knorr seine andere Bedeutung. Aber dahinten befindet sich die Tür, treten wir ein oder treten wir hinaus. Wo ist der leere Raum, hinter oder vor uns?

Thomas Wulffen





Hommage an
Don Quijote:
Knorr setzte 2000
einer ehemaligen
Rotterdammer
Windmühle einen
Propeller auf

DANIEL KNORR Fast hätte sich der künstlerische Beitrag „European Influenza“ des 1968 in Bukarest geborenen Künstlers für den rumänischen Pavillon zur Venedig-Biennale 2005 zu einer kleinen Staatsaffäre ausgewachsen. Im Parlament musste Rumäniens Premierminister Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu besorgte Anfragen beantworten, und in der nationalen Presse zürnten die konservativen Kommentatoren. Dabei gab es buchstäblich gar nichts zu sehen. Knorr hatte das Bauwerk gänzlich

leer gelassen, um die Aufmerksamkeit der Besucher auf seine Geschichte zu lenken. Als Dreingabe ließ der Künstler am Eingang 5000 zusammen mit dem Kurator Marius Babias herausgegebene Reader mit kunstkritischen und politischen Essays verteilen, um so seinem Konzept des „immateriellen Kunstwerks“ Nachdruck zu verleihen. Denn die Kunst, so Knorr, findet in den Köpfen der Betrachter statt. „Erst durch die Rezeption des Publikums wird ein Werk lebendig.“



Christine Macel

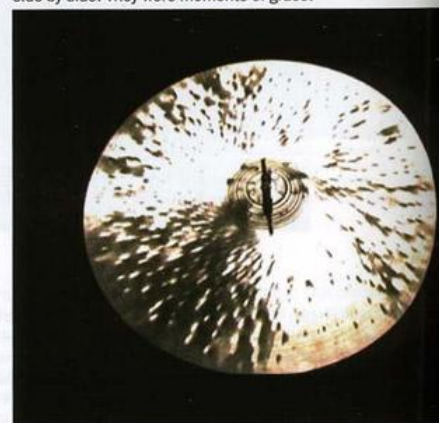
CHRISTINE MACEL IS CHIEF CURATOR OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT PARIS'S CENTRE POMPIDOU, WHERE SHE HAS STAGED MANY MONOGRAPHIC AND GROUP SHOWS, SUCH AS "SOPHIE CALLE, 2003-2004," "DIONYSIAC," 2005; AND "AIRS DE PARIS," 2007. SHE IS CURRENTLY PREPARING AN EXHIBITION OF THE WORK OF PHILIPPE PARRENO FOR JUNE 2009.



Monika Sosnowska, *Rubble*, 2006/2008, wood, emulsion paint. Installation view, Schaulager, Basel, 2008. Photo: Tom Bisig.

1 **Monika Sosnowska** (Schaulager, Basel) This thirty-six-year-old Polish artist mounted the most compelling exhibition I saw this year (curated by Theodora Vischer). For the first time in her career, Sosnowska brought together old work and some new—nine sculptures, both tiny and huge, each engaging the problem of scale. I'll never forget her enormous hanging/dropped ceiling, with pieces of its center having fallen onto the floor; her human-size sculpture on "legs"; her mini-city in a paper bag.

2 **Anri Sala** (Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris) As a reflection on the notion of site, both its space and its time, this exhibition had a subtle pace set by the temporal succession of the different pieces. Two works in particular have stayed with me: *After Three Minutes*, 2007, a two-channel video projection of a cymbal lit by a strobe and filmed first in video, then at two frames per second without sound, generating an arrhythmic syncopation within and between images; and *Title Suspended*, 2008, a small sculpture of two hands gloved in purple plastic and spinning in place side by side. They were moments of grace.



Anri Sala, *After Three Minutes*, 2007, still from a color video, 6 minutes.



Philippe Parreno, *Fraught Times: For Eleven Months of the Year It's an Artwork and in December It's Christmas* (October), 2008, cast aluminum, paint, musical score, 107 1/2 x 72 1/2 x 72 1/2".

3 **Philippe Parreno** (Pilar Corrias, London) What would a work of art be if it were a functional object for just one month out of the year? A Christmas tree, of course. Parreno's *Fraught Times: For Eleven Months of the Year It's an Artwork and in December It's Christmas* (October), 2008, is an aluminum tree sculpture painted by hand, covered in artificial snow and chrome ornaments. The idea came to him eighteen years ago: It is an anachronistic gift that, in Parreno's words and true to its title, "troubles time."

4 **Ziad Antar** (Blank, Paris) How does one make art today in a torn Lebanon, a nation just out of war with Israel and where nearly one hundred people died in Beirut's civil conflict this past winter? Antar attempts to answer this question, working between Paris and Saïda, Lebanon, and creating videos and photographs that suggest far more than they name. *La Marche Turque* (Turkish March), 2007, a minimal video piece charged with emotion and exhibited at the independent space Blank, presents a high-angle view of a young woman playing Mozart's "Alla Turca" sonata while dampening the sounds, so that we hear only the blunted tones of the keys, like a silent military march. One of the year's very elegiac pieces.

Ziad Antar, *La Marche Turque* (Turkish March), 2007, still from a black-and-white video, 3 minutes.





5 **Mélik Ohanian** (*Le Plateau*, Paris, and various locations) Rather than choosing a single venue, Ohanian selected fifteen sites in Paris and on its outskirts for "From the Voice to the Hand," a series of simultaneous retrospectives of sorts. The installation at Le Plateau, for its part, rambled through space with a waist-high horizontal fluorescent tube and sculptural letters piled on the ground, citing the likes of Henri Bergson, Jean-Luc Godard, and Louis Althusser. While readability was lost in favor of sheer visibility, one could listen to each phrase, a series of meditations on art and philosophy, through a related website (albeit only once). Continuing to expand the traditional spaces of exhibition into the discursive and the digital, Ohanian reconfigured the time frame of the piece with brio.

6 **5th Berlin Biennial, "When Things Cast No Shadow"** Very different from the wonderful edition organized by Maurizio Cattelan, Massimiliano Gioni, and Ali Subotnik, this year's Berlin Biennial again turned to one of today's major questions, the legacy of modernism. Curated by Elena Filipovic and Adam Szymczyk, the show proposed a thesis statement that was unquestionably a bit weak and obvious, suggesting merely that the work of art, in the end, belongs to the viewer. But there were still some very fine moments, like the presentation at the Neue Nationalgalerie—a gem in terms of exhibition hanging. I cherish, for instance, my memory of the giant flags Daniel Knorr installed around Mies van der Rohe's iconic building, fluttering in the wind. Each flag was a different color and evoked Berlin's many student communities.



7 **"As Soon As I Open My Eyes I See a Film"** (Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw) The temporary headquarters for the Museum of Modern Art lies in the heart of Warsaw (a new building is currently being developed elsewhere in the city); here, curator Ana Janevski mounted a fascinating exhibition on the 1960s and '70s Eastern European avant-garde—its underground, experimental cinema, and "anti-art" scene. Who would have thought that so much happened beyond the well-known work of Marina Abramović in Zagreb, Belgrade, Ljubljana, Novi Sad, and Split during this moment? A few favorites (along with a contribution from Monika Sosnowska that took the form of extra-simple architecture): Goran Tribuljak's conceptual film piece, the spiritual performances of David Nez from the OHO group, and a film featuring my heartthrob, Neša Paripović.

8 **Laurent Quintreau, *Marge brute*** (Paris, Les Éditions Noël, 2006; translated as *Gross Margin*, London, Harvill Secker, 2008) If Danté were to rewrite *The Divine Comedy* today, he would have little choice but to populate hell with executives from a multinational company. With *Marge brute*, the writer and trade unionist Quintreau in effect takes up this scenario and delivers the sharpest, funniest book of the year. A founding member of the famed '90s magazine *Perpendiculaire*—along with Nicolas Bourriaud, Michel Houellebecq, and others (Houellebecq's film about the publication, *La possibilité d'une île*, is the flop of the year)—Quintreau created monologues for eleven frustrated executives sitting around a table at a management meeting with their cynical president. Delicious and damning.

9 **"Monument to Transformation, Fragment #7: Communism Never Happened"/Vocabulary"** (Tranzit Workshops, Bratislava, Slovakia) This initiative overlapping art and theory, organized by Czech artist Zbyněk Baladrán and critic Vít Havránek, explores the collective and personal memory around the Czech social and political changes that transpired between 1989 and 2009. How to consider the phenomenon of transformation through an exhibition, but also through texts and a collective dictionary? This seventh segment of an ongoing exhibition and publication series was centered around the idea of a collaboratively compiled glossary, uniting the work of artists such as Yael Bartana, Anri Sala, and Fernando Sanchez Castillo, as well as texts by Chantal Mouffe, Slavoj Žižek, and others. Multisided truth bringing the possibilities of hypertext to the fore.

Ciprian Muresan, *Communism Never Happened*, 2006. Installation view, Studená 12, Bratislava, 2008. From Tranzit's "Monument to Transformation, Fragment #7." Photo: Zbyněk Baladrán.



10 **Olafur Eliasson, "Life in Space 3 (LIS 3)"**, May 9, 2008 (Studio Eliasson, Berlin) "Life in Space" is a day-long experimental event organized annually by Eliasson in his Berlin studio. This year, the occasion revolved around the theme of "the relativity of light and color." Bringing together friends, collaborators, and experts in art, architecture, and the social and natural sciences, this year's presentations—which are already published in a catalogue for the event—nevertheless made me consider a truth neuroscientists have been shedding new light on for the past thirty years or more: The brain processes reality, rather than reflects it. Color, form, line: translations and transformations of the real. Very Zen. □

Translated from French by Molly Stevens.



Participants at Studio Eliasson, "Life in Space 3 (LIS 3)", Berlin, May 9, 2008. Photo: Marie Sjovold.

Daniel Knorr, «Led R. Nanirok»

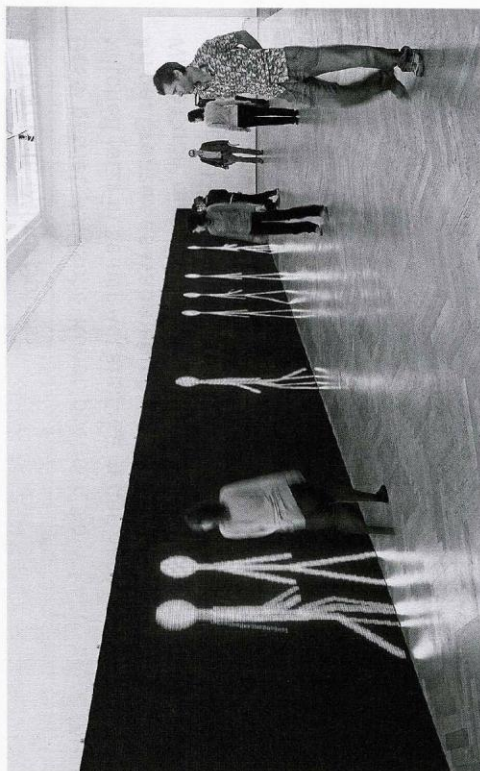
Manchmal in verblüffend einfachen Formen und dem Einsatz bescheidener Mittel. Manchmal in fast übermütig grossformatigen Gesten. Daniel Knorr entwickelt seine Arbeiten aus dem jeweils gegebenen Kontext. Mit «Led R. Nanirok» zeigt die Kunsthalle Basel eine erste umfassende Einzelpresentation.

Basel — Daniel Knorr (*1968, Bukarest) hat sich in den letzten Jahren mit spektakulären Interventionen im internationalen Kunstbetrieb positioniert. 2005 öffnete er an der Biennale in Venedig die Hintertür des leer belassenen Rumänischen Pavillons und schaffte so eine Möglichkeit, das Ausstellungsgelände ohne gültige Eintrittskarte betreten zu können. 2008 befragte er im Rahmen der Berlin Biennale die Neue Nationalgalerie mit Fahnen von in Berlin ansässigen studentischen Burschenschaften und fragte so nach der Geschichte und Gegenwart deutscher nationaler Identität. Ortspezifische Arbeiten in den neutralisierten Raum einer Einzelausstellung zu transferieren, ohne dass diese dabei an Relevanz verlieren, ist fast ein Ding der Unmöglichkeit. So sind es auch die eigens für Basel entstandenen Werke, «Digital Mirror» und «Validate Me», die in der Überblicksschau am meisten überzeugen.

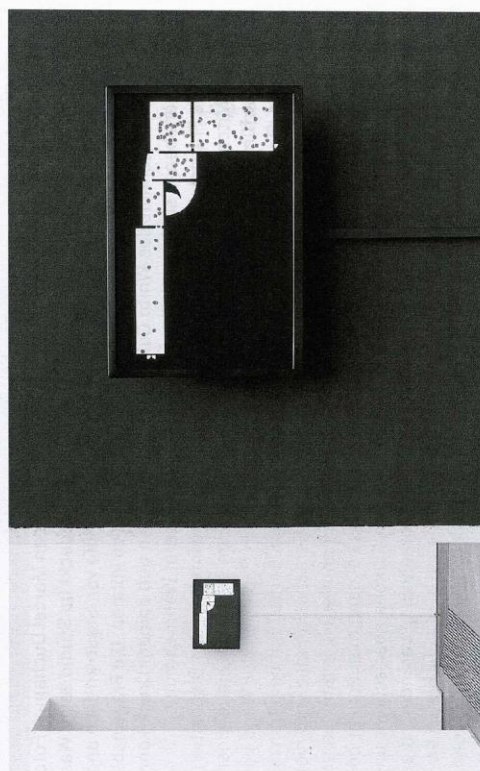
«Digital Mirror» ist eine 27 Meter lange, interaktive LED-Wand, welche die Besucher mittels eines digitalen Codes als schematische Strichmännchen spiegelt. Auch «Validate Me» bezieht die Betrachter mit ein. Im Empfangsbereich der Kunsthalle, gut sichtbar über dem Eingang, ist ein Messgerät installiert, das jeden eintretenden Besucher erfasst. Fünf Bildschirme – einer in jedem der Ausstellungsräume – sind über ein Netzwerk mit dem Messgerät verbunden und zeigen, wie sich die als rote Punkte dargestellten Besucher durch die Kunsthalle bewegen. «Validate Me» verweist auf den Umstand, dass sich im Zuge der Ökonomisierung Kunstinstitutionen immer mehr über Besucherzahlen rechtfertigen müssen. Andererseits – der Grundriss der Kunsthalle hat die Form einer handlichen Faustfeuerwaffe – hofft die Arbeit auf das kritische Potenzial von Kunst.

Auch die 2008 begonnene Serie «Awake Asleep» arbeitet mit der Kodierung des Individuellen. Dabei wird eine Lichtquelle – eine Lampe, eine Leuchtreklame oder die Beleuchtung eines repräsentativen Gebäudes – durch den Künstler via Internet oder Mobiltelefon am Morgen, sobald er aufgestanden ist, ein- und am Abend beim Zubettgehen ausgeschaltet. In Basel ist diese Arbeit auf ein absolutes Minimum reduziert: Eine einzelne Leuchtdiode leuchtet rot aus der weissen Ausstellungswand. «Awake Asleep» ist offensichtlich eine Hommage an die «Got Up»-Serie des amerikanischen Konzeptkünstlers On Kawara, wobei Knorr das Spiel mit dem Autobiografischen radikalisiert, indem das Persönliche auf ein anonymisiertes Zeichen reduziert wird. **Pablo Müller**

→ Kunsthalle Basel, bis 15.11. www.kunsthallebasel.ch



Daniel Knorr - Digital Mirror, 2009, Interaktive Arbeit, LED Wand, Motion-Sensing-Software, Ortungskameras. © ProLitteris, Zürich. Foto: Serge Hasenböhler



Daniel Knorr - Validate Me, 2009, Interaktive Arbeit, LD-PeCo Personenzählsystem, 5 LCD Monitore, Software. © ProLitteris, Zürich. Foto: Serge Hasenböhler

ARTFORUM

OCTOBER 2010

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

OSCAR TUAZON
THE ARTIST PLACEMENT GROUP
CAREY YOUNG
GIUSEPPE PENONE



between a plastic supermarket bag (like those that appear floating inside three refrigerators in *Untitled [Fridge Trinity]*, 2004) and natural elements such as rough stones is, for the artist, “a matter of degree, not a categorical difference.”

In the two remaining spaces, Kuri installed, in his usual fashion, a fascinating scenario in which everyday objects and raw materials encounter each other in peculiar combinations, with the (absolutely successful) intention of redefining and recategorizing sculpture as a specific language. He also created for the Museion two versions of *Three Arrested Clouds*, 2010; one was hung on the wall and the other placed on the floor. The two sculptures are both based on the idea of putting two large rocks together with three balled-up stockings, where the latter seem to support the weight of the former. *Two Arrested Clouds*, 2010, also shown here, instead groups three stones on the floor with a strip of blue paper that winds about like a snake beneath them.

Column 2009–2010, 2010, which was displayed in the last space is made up of two blocks of cement, one on the floor, the other hung from the ceiling, connected by two steel rods. The sculpture's entire weight is supported by these metal elements, whose slenderness is reinforced by a large number of small sheets of paper pierced by the rods, creating what looks like some sort of flying body. In Kuri's typical manner, the sheets are invoices, receipts, and tickets collected by the artist from the time he was invited to do the show, in mid-2009, until the work for the show was completed—the economic aspect of his existence immediately transformed into art.

—Giorgio Verzotti

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

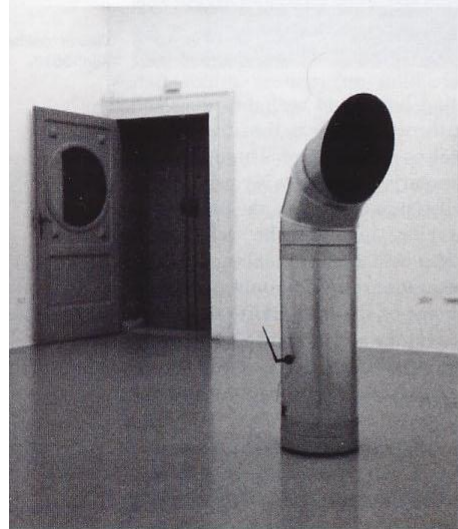
NAPLES

Daniel Knorr

GALLERIA FONTI

A metal tube, similar to the aluminum pipes used for air-conditioning, was positioned vertically in a corner of the gallery. It had the appearance of a cold, conceptual sculpture, curved at the top like a periscope, the open end covered with a screen. This was the sole object in the gallery space during Berlin-based, Romanian-born artist Daniel Knorr's exhibition “Urlo” (Scream). Visitors moved around it, examining the sculpture and inquiring as to its meaning. But it was only when the mysterious

metal object started to move that they began to comprehend its function. *Urlo*, 2010, is a home-made robot that contains a computer linked to a wireless antenna. The remote-controlled object turned around rapidly, pointed its visor toward the center of the room, and slowly made its way toward the area of the gallery with the greatest concentration of visitors. It stopped from time to time before resuming its journey, rolling about on small wheels hidden beneath its metal armor. With its controller unseen, it gave the impression of being a “living” object, a presence that scrutinized people's movements, studied gallery visitors and followed them.



Daniel Knorr, *Urlo* (Scream), 2010, steel, motors, ironics, remote operator, 67 x 13 3/4 x 23 3/4", stallation view.

One could detect the same curiosity in the public that observed this alien element. Peering beyond the protective screen, visitors could discern a small webcam and microphone, and a small antenna on the robot's side. Rather than a self-contained sculpture, this object was in fact an interface, with the function of letting others know what was happening in the gallery. The goal was, in fact, to create a virtual community connected to a website, which was active for the duration of the exhibition. During the hours when the gallery was open, anyone could connect online and visit the exhibition through the robot's eyes. It was possible to listen in on conversations of people in the gallery and observe their movements—though not to pilot the robot or to know who was guiding its movements. And this is where the underlying theme of the work comes into play: an investigation of the extremely subtle boundaries between information and control, between dialogue and incommunicability, between identity and anonymity—factors that are an integral part of the world of the Internet. Visitors could interact with the robot but only if the person controlling it, who remained anonymous, offered this possibility.

Knorr's research addresses extreme social themes, from relationships between people in the virtual world to the relationship between citizen and public institution, as in the case of the four works exhibited in the gallery office, which depict four trams in the city of Bucharest. These works document a 2007 project titled *Trams and Institutions*, in which Knorr modified the exteriors of city trams, decorating them with colors and symbols of the most important Romanian institutions: the Orthodox Church, the Red Cross, the army, and the police. The cosmetic interventions on public transport probed citizens' reactions to the symbols of religion, health, war, and control. The destabilizing gesture was a research tool that indirectly suggested which institutions the public would be willing to trust, and which they would reject.

—Filippo Romeo

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

MADRID

Adriana Lestido

CASA DE AMÉRICA

“*Amores difíciles*” (Hard Loves), a retrospective comprising 162 images by Argentine artist Adriana Lestido, shows one possible evolution of the work of a professional photographer in these times. Lestido trained as a photojournalist, and for many years she worked for newspapers and photography departments of news agencies. Owing to the success of her first several series—e.g., “*Hospital infante juvenil*” (Children's Hospital), 1986–89, and “*Madres adolescentes*” (Teenage Mothers), 1989–90—she made a name for herself in the Argentine photography scene. The primary concern of those series, as well as of “*Mujeres presas*” (Women Prisoners), 1991–93, was to describe Argentine social reality by examining specific subjects; the work's status as journalism also reflected that end. These are straightforwardly documentary records of people and situations.

A comparison of Lestido's photographs from those early years and her more recent work reveals that her main themes have remained constant. The focus on children and their relationships with their mothers is evident throughout her production, as is the overwhelming presence of women. Indeed, but for a few isolated exceptions in recent series, her work is marked by the absence of men. But if the content of Lestido's work has not changed much, its form has, most certainly due to a growing awareness of herself as an author and an artist. This is particularly evident in one of the more recent series in this exhibition: “*El Amor*” (Love), 1992–2004, makes use of more abstract visual elements,

Die Kunst des Qualms

Eine Glaskabine für Raucher stellt Daniel Knorr mitten im Museum auf. Er will damit die Macht des Staates kritisieren.

Daniel Knorr, 43, Künstler mit Wahlheimat Berlin, wird sich viele Feinde machen in Bremen. Er ist vorgeschlagen für den Kunstpreis der Böttcherstraße und führt mit seiner Installation das Rauchen im Museum ein. Wie das gehen soll? „Ganz einfach“, sagt Knorr, „mitten in einem Sammlungsraum wird eine Raucherkabine aus Glas aufgestellt, zu der ein Schilderleitsystem den Weg weist.“ Und darin können die Besucher dann rauchen, während andere Besucher sie dabei beobachten. Ganz wie im Flughafen. Aber weil es sich hier um Kunst handelt, hat Rauchen im Museum natürlich Bedeutung. Es sei die „Materialisierung einer aktuellen Biopolitik“, sagt Knorr. Und das heißt: Trennung von Rauchern und Nichtrauchern, Stigmatisierung, Kontrolle, Entmündigung statt Selbstbestimmung. „Das Ziel der Arbeit ist es, die Beziehung zwischen dem Staat und seinen Bürgern offenzulegen“, sagt Knorr. Indem er etwa das Rauchen in einer Kunstgalerie als kulturell definierte, weil ein Museum „als höchste Repräsentation eines Staates“ gilt, „man denke nur an die Länderpavillons in Venedig“. Knorr hat sich natürlich mit dem Rauchen beschäftigt.

„Im Nationalsozialismus durften deutsche Frauen nicht rauchen, das war ‚rassedegenerierend‘“, sagt Knorr. Und er weiß viel über den früher blühenden Tabakhandel in Bremen oder das noch aktive Bremer Tabak-Collegium männlicher Wirtschaftsbosse. Eine Chance, dort eingeladen zu werden, hat Knorr aber nicht: Er ist Nichtraucher.

INGEBORG WIENOWSKI

Ausstellungen im September

BIELEFELD

Kiki Smith, Selon Smith, Tony Smith. Kunsthalle. 23.9.–25.11., www.kunsthalle-bielefeld.de

Frühe architektonische Modelle aus den fünfziger Jahren und spätere kleine Skulpturen des US-amerikanischen Architekten, Bildhauers und Malers Tony Smith zusammen mit den figurativen Objekten Zeichnungen und Architekturgrafiken seiner Tochter Kiki und Selon.

DÜSSELDORF

Andreas Gursky. Museum Kunstpalast. 23.9.–13.12.2013, www.mkp.de

Gezeigt werden die neuesten monumentalen Arbeiten des Düsseldorfer Fotografen aus seiner aktuellen Schaffensperiode, die ergänzt werden durch Fotografien der vergangenen Jahre.

HAMBURG

Manuel Graf, Vier-Iwan-Projekt. Kunstverein. 15.9.–2.12., www.kunstverein.de

Graf, 34, setzt sich mit der dezentrierten Architektur der Vier-Iwan-Moschee auseinander. Bei diesem Bautypus löst sich der Mittelpunkt der Anlage in einer Zerstreuung auf. Gezeigt werden drei Filme zum Verhältnis Mensch, Körper, Architektur.

HANNOVER

Monica Bonvicini, Desire Desiese Devise – Zeichnungen. Sammlung Falckenberg. 7.9.–18.11., www.sammlung-falckenberg.de

Bekannt wurde die in Berlin lebende Italienerin mit ihren großen, provokanten Installationen. Aber seit den Achtzigern entstanden auch Zeichnungen, Collagen, Skizzen und Texte, die bereits im Museum Abteiberg gezeigt wurden.

Highlights



Obsessionen.
R.B. Kitaj (1932 bis 2007).
Berlin, Jüdisches Museum.
21.9.–27.12.2013,
www.jmbm.de



Frank Stella.
Werke 1958–2012.
Wolfsburg, Kunstmuseum.
8.9.–20.12.2013, www.kunstmuseum-wolfsburg.de

Der US-Amerikaner Stella ist einer der letzten lebenden Heroen der US-amerikanischen Malerei der fünfziger Jahre. Stella begann als gerade 20-jähriger seine Karriere in New York mit minimalistischen „Black Paintings“, verließ dann aber die Zweidimensionalität des Bildes mit großen und farbig räumlichen Aluminiumreliefs, die immer opulenter und bunter wurden. Das Museum zeigt diese Entwicklung „vom Minimalismus zum ‚Maximalismus‘“ mit 70 Werken.

Die erste Retrospektive nach dem Tod Kitajs gibt mit 130 Gemälden, Pastellen und Zeichnungen sowie privaten Aufzeichnungen erstmals Einblick in Kitajs Werk vor dem Hintergrund seines Lebens in der Diaspora. Kitaj, der als Wegbereiter der „London School“ einen entscheidenden Beitrag zum Aufbruch der Kunst aus der Abstraktion leistete, reflektierte seine jüdische Identität in seinen Bildern und verstand sich als Diasporist, der „in zwei oder mehr Gesellschaften zugleich“ malte.



Installation
Raucherbox:
Entmündigung
statt Selbst-
bestimmung

Albert Watson – Visions Feat. Cotton Made in Africa. Deichtorhallen. 14.9.–6.12.2013, www.deichtorhallen.de

Im Mittelpunkt der Retrospektive stehen die 2011 aufgenommenen Fotos Watsons vom Leben der Kleinbauern in Benin, die mit der Initiative „Cotton Made in Africa“ verbunden sind. Dazu kommen Sharpshoots beispielsweise von Mick Jagger, Alfred Hitchcock und Jack Nicholson und frühes, nie ausgestelltes Vintage- und Polaroidmaterial, Kontaktbogen und Entwurfskizzen.

HANNOVER

Anthony Cragg. Kestnergesellschaft. 14.9.–4.11., www.kestnergesellschaft.de

Noch nie gezeigte Skulpturen des britischen Bildhauers werden zusammen mit frühen Werken ausgestellt, dazu Zeichnungen und Grafiken. Die Schau zeigt die Hinwendung Craggs zu den jetzigen organischen und molekularen Formen.

KÖLN

Co-Mix. Art Spiegelman. Eine Retrospektive von Comics, Zeichnungen und übrigem Gekritzelt. Museum Ludwig. 22.9.–6.12.2013, www.museum-ludwig.de

Die Überblickschau zeigt erste Arbeiten des Comiczeichners und Pulitzer-Preisträgers Art Spiegelman für die Kaugummiindustrie, Skizzen und vollständig ausgearbeitete Bilderfolgen, Illustrationen und Titelzeichnungen für den „New Yorker“. Und natürlich die vollständigen Zeichnungen von „Maus“, dem Comic, mit dem Spiegelman das Schicksal seiner Eltern, polnischer Juden, erzählt.

MECHELEN/BELGIEN

Newtopia: The State of Human Rights. Kulturzentrum, im Stadtraum und in Brüssel. 1.9.–10.12., www.newtopia.be

Erste große Ausstellung zu den Menschenrechten, zu der 70 internationale Künstler eingeladen sind, auch aus Ländern, in denen deren Wahrung ein umstrittenes Thema ist. Gezeigt werden zum Ali Ferzat (Syrien), Fotos beispielsweise von David Goldblatt (Südafrika) und Ziyad Gafiq (Bosnien/Herzegowina), Videos wie die des Polen Krzysztof Wodiczko und ein Mural des Ägypters Ganzeer. Eine Satelliten-Ausstellung im ING Kultur Zentrum in Brüssel bespielt der Chilene Alfredo Jaar.

WIEN

Körper als Protest. Albertina. 5.9.–2.12., www.albertina.at

Fotos des menschlichen Körpers gelten oft als radikaler visueller Protest gegen gesellschaftliche, politische und künstlerische Normen. Die Themen sind: Selbstzensur, Feminismus, Body Language oder Vergänglichkeit von Künstlern wie Hannah Wilke, Bruce Nauman und Robert Mapplethorpe.

ZÜRICH

Wolfgang Tillmans / Helen Marten. Kunsthalle. 1.9.–4.11., www.kunsthalle-zurich.ch

Tillmans zeigt in einer großen Schau ganz neue Fotos und experimentelle Präsentationformen. Die junge britische Künstlerin Helen Marten bestreitet ihre erste Einzelschau in einer öffentlichen Institution mit Installationen, Videos, Skulpturen und Objekten.

WEITERLAUFENDE AUSSTELLUNGEN

Mythos Olympia. Martin-Gropius-Bau Berlin. bis 7.12.2013; Afrika, hin und zurück. Museum Folkwang Essen. bis 21.10.; Manifesta 9. Kolumne, Gorki/Belgien. bis 30.9.; documenta (13). Kassel, Friedrichsplatz und anderswo. bis 16.9.; 1912 – Mission Moderne. Wallraf-Richartz-Museum Köln. bis 30.12.; Tino Sehgal. Tate Modern London. bis 28.10.; Architekturbieniale. Giardini Venedig. bis 25.11.



View of "Daniel Knorr," 2013.

Daniel Knorr

KAYNE GRIFFIN CORCORAN

Daniel Knorr's Los Angeles debut was so conceptually tidy and neatly packaged as to seem pat, yet it opened onto divergent readings. The show's fourteen brightly colored, polyurethane wall reliefs, titled "Depression Elevations," 2013–, were cast from potholes in the streets of L.A. (with one piece molded from the cobblestones of Berlin, where Knorr is based). In addition, the artist roamed the city's famously carcentric urban sprawl to collect all kinds of litter—from disposable floss toothpicks to license plates to snack bags—which he then had pressed between the pages of two hundred unique artists' books, constituting the ninth edition of his *Carte de Artiste* publication series, 2007–, which documents the places where he has exhibited.

"Depression": Potholes are signs of breakdown, decomposition, damaged property, economic downturn, neglect, being in the pits or in a slump—in sum, they represent the collaborative if unwitting wear and tear of civic infrastructure over time and on a mass scale. No two potholes are alike: The shapes of their depressions are uniquely irregular, even if they are all similarly rounded and stretched oblong by tires in motion. "Elevations": Knorr's cast reliefs of the potholes' empty spaces are transformed, by their bright colors and translucent plasticity, into cheerful uppers, or mood enhancers that are intoxicating in their extravagant artificiality, like visual pills to be popped.

More than one thing about these works is lip-smacking and oral. (Doesn't a pothole also suggest an open mouth, another thing to get stuck in?) Mounted with their craggy, bulging underbellies touching the wall, the casts presented a smooth, flat upside to the viewer that was shiny, slick, and wet-looking, as though it had been licked. Knorr's colors are those of Jolly Ranchers, Life Savers, Slurpees, slushies, and Mountain Dew, with their chemically concocted flavors: Take your pick of cherry, blueberry, tropical mango, grape, or lime. Syrupy sweet but also acidic and toxic, these works made me pucker and melt at the same time. Of course, this was also a site-specific choice of material on the artist's part: Resin, with its glassy surfaces and pellucid hardness, plays off the region's celebrated history of using such industrial materials in aeronautic-, automobile-, and surf-related design, which made possible the space-age, sucked-lozenge aesthetic of Finish Fetish sculptors from John McCracken and Craig Kauffman to Peter Alexander and Helen Pashgian.

This was Knorr's most decorative and overtly object-oriented body of work yet—so hyperbolically candied and delectably gaudy as to seem a genuine parody of blue-chip decadence. The show's only colorless cast, positioned at the gallery's entrance as the project's starting point, had an understated, almost frigid elegance in comparison with the rest, while the flecks of dirt stuck in its backside made the piece approximate a discarded chunk of faux ice on a film set. In contrast, the project's end point was lush and garish, vivid and painterly with infectious exuberance: One canvaslike, rectangular panel swirled with inky clouds of indigo; another polychromatic piece overlapped the primaries to form a loose color wheel. A hot-pink cast recalled Michael Asher's early use of molded Plexiglas in that same electric hue (*Untitled*, ca. 1967), connecting to a local precedent in which material and form married Minimalism,

Conceptualism, and Pop. Across the room, a large piece in dark purple alluded weirdly to amethysts, geodes, and new age crystals. Knorr's sculptures gesture to opposite poles of West Coast culture. What he poured into and pulled out of the streets of Los Angeles ultimately became petrified into glossy pieces of eye candy in the gallery, as if he had funneled the stuff of good and bad taste together into these puddles, solidifying them into a show of complex and conflicted appeal.

—Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer

