

Manfred Pernice

FONTI

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By Giulia Pollicita ✉

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View of "Manfred Pernice: >meinFeld<," 2024. Photo: Amedeo Benestante

After more than a decade, German artist Manfred Pernice is back in Naples with "*>meinFeld<*" (My Field), his third solo show at Galleria Fonti. The title is a play on the English "minefield," meant to position the exhibition as a metaphorical combat zone. In this familiar yet obfuscating context, Pernice presents a continuation of his trademark "*Dosen*" (Cans) series—a group of sculptures based on the shape of tin cans—alongside a gathering of trapezoidal boxes all titled with first names such as *Giovanni*, *Hugo*, and *Regina*, each skeptically saluting us at the entrance.

Viewers must gradually adjust to the dim lighting upon entering the gallery's double-arched space. The windows are covered as if to block out the potential dangers of the outside world. Pernice's typically multihued "*Dosen*" works are reduced to dull shades of ocher, white, and burgundy, except for a smattering of fuchsia dots adorning *Marino*, 2024, in the entry hall. The cylindrical sculptures sit at uneasy angles, each topped with a fuse-like rod as if to resemble sticks of dynamite. Meanwhile, the trapezoid pieces look akin to bunkers or armored tanks. Small details and particulars punctuate the rooms, such as empty plastic water bottles in some corners, leftover tape upon the walls, and stains of ocher *pentimenti* that introduce entropy into the space.

While violent conflicts unfold beyond the walls of pristine institutions, artists work with, and against, the established architecture of power to critically engage its structural failings. In this way, one can interpret Pernice's dissonant ensemble as a battle against the dictatorship of the white cube that suggests how exhibitions today cannot fully insulate themselves from external realities.