

HELMUT DORNER

The Table — The Waves — Seestück
2/13–3/21/2009

In the exhibition “The Table — The Waves — Seestück”, Helmut Dorner for the first time shows an artwork based on graphics, which integrates drawing in a painterly context and both visually and thematically addresses space as the subject matter of his work. His basic material is Mark Z. Danielewski’s book “House of Leaves”.

For the work “The Table — The Waves — Seestück”, the artist created around 1,500 colour drawings in a total of fortyfive of these books over a longer period of time. Drawing around and framing paragraphs with colour pencils as well as partially cut or folded book pages form the basis of his approach. In variegated letterings, which are in part implemented in a calligraphic manner, Dorner uses characters, wordings or entire sentences to generate a kind of onomatopoeia that captures fragments of thought as a multilingual language. Augmented by elements of drawing with in part blurred, condensed or removed colour pigments, the combination of text and image gives rise to a cartographic composition navigating the viewer through the text landscape predetermined by the book.

Using colour and language, Dorner retraces imaginary spaces that as psychological interiors constitute an own, detached space within the book’s given space of action. Fleeting fragments of thought, localised on the pages, exteriorise the inner view of the artist within the frame of the book’s graphical architecture. Dorner thus constructs an image architecture that translates, visualises, captures, and archives imaginary interstices in the form of graphics. His graphical notations remain as a trace and leave behind a patina created by the artist in the serially recurring structure of the printed book.

It is less the sculptural character of the books than the drawings arranged to a picture surface that are decisive when viewing the work. The book pages opened next to each other on tables and arranged to a picture panel form a sort of mosaic that through the recombination of individual views contains a multitude of representational modes. In this manner, the artist generates painterly

aphorisms that can be read as a commentary on his painting, but they also persist as autonomous picture configurations.

Helmut Dorner’s oil and varnish painting can thus be considered as the point of reference that visually surrounds and embeds the graphic works in the exhibition space.

The corporeality and the physical-haptic presence of paint are the concrete subject matter in Dorner’s painting. While the pastose surface of his oil paintings refracts and captures the light shining on the picture, the silhouette of the colour substance is at the fore in his varnish paintings. The translucent quality of the picture medium – a flat box made of Plexiglas – casts shadows of Dorner’s precisely dripped varnish painting on the wall behind the picture body, thus making it appear in a multidimensional view. Here, paint is grasped not only as material but above all as matter which attains the characteristic of an object through the process of the artist’s intentional movements.

In Helmut Dorner’s paintings and drawings, space and light form a substance supported by dynamism that individually shapes the respective picture body. Giving shape to a specific situation, colour and form consist as an ephemeral emulsion which, however, becomes fixed in the artist’s pictures as the imprint of a mental topography, remaining there as a memento.

Christina Irrgang

GALERIE IRIS KADEL

Hirschstraße 45
76133 Karlsruhe ;
Germany

Telephone 1 ; 0049(0)721.467 28 01
Telephone 2 ; 0049(0)721.909 16 72
Fax ; 0049(0)721.467 28 00
E-Mail ; info@iris-kadel.de
www.iris-kadel.de