VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE



Peter Sevriens

„Kunst = Kapital“ (Art = Capital)

02.02.2022–05.02.2022

When Peter Sevriens first met Joseph Beuys in the early 80s, it was an especially high-octane encounter. Their common origins in the German/Dutch border region - Beuys born and raised in the Lower Rhine region of Germany, Sevriens from nearby Venlo in the Netherlands – may well have played a part. Mainly, however, the intensity was due to an acute sense they both had of being present in their time; an immediacy born of inquisitive openness, a playful sense of humor as well as earnest engagement with the here and now.

Responding to an invitation, artists seize the moment, conveying to each other a sense of what is behind, beneath and within things. In conversation they immediately arrive at an idea of how to address pressing issues in an artistic form. This is how Peter Sevriens' images of Joseph Beuys came to be, pictures of his practical working life, but also depictions of the artist's thoughts and ideas. Beuys gave Sevriens carte blanche for the endeavor. Early last year, in connection with our exhibition 'In Dialogue with Joseph Beuys', we were able to show the original prints of these remarkable photographs. Since then they have enjoyed frequent publication, most recently in the current edition of the highly regarded German

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monthly *brand eins*.

Peter Sevriens has now dipped into his sheer inexhaustible store of ideas and materials to develop another wonderful piece of art. With a single minimal intervention he transformed a 1908 one hundred Reichsmark bill from the German Imperial period into a complex and highly intelligent artwork. A commemorative stamp would have been a bore whereas a monetary note with Beuys' portrait in the middle is, well, bang on the money. The Wilhelminian pomp of the design becomes a jaunty, gently lewd décor, playfully garnishing the Beuys likeness. A bank note as an original printed graphic work with the self-assertion of a monetary value in its corners. No two ways about it.

As in a limited print edition, Sevriens has taken a series of 100 original historical bank notes and rendered each one a collage with the addition of a signed contact sheet photo of one of his Beuys portraits. As each bill already sports a unique serial number there was no need to number each work in the edition. The second block of 100 works with collaged portrait-medallion is conceived as a single piece measuring 115 x 175 cm.

It goes without saying that this work series correlates with Warhol's Dollar bills, and of course the 10-Mark notes and Dillinger Dollars signed/stamped/adapted by Beuys.