VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE

Van der Grinten Galerie
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Wolfgang Flad „*now*“

13.04. - 01.06.2013

Opening: Friday, 12 April 2013, 12 to 8 pm

From 13 April to 6 June, Van der Grinten Galerie is showing new works by the Berlin artist, Wolfgang Flad, born 1974. The exhibition is also the first presentation of his works in Cologne.

Wolfgang Flad has these past years become known above all for his sculptures: biomorphic configurations that seem like a flow of organic growth frozen in place. The use of construction wood and papier maché is calculated: modest and yet very concrete materials. Shredded art-theoretical texts and sketches elucidate his constant engagement with art history and its current discourse. The organic forms and the sculptures' paint-treated surfaces stand in an extreme contrast to the geometrical, glossily lacquered pedestals on which they repose and with which they enter into an unusual collaboration. They are distinguished by the clarity and impact of their formal perfection and redeem Modernism's promise not to repeat the known but to incorporate the new. They render the present moment—the now—perceptible.

In contrast to these filigreed skeletal sculptures—several of which are shown on the gallery's upper floor together with new aluminum wallpieces—Wolfgang Flad has created a large-scale, vertically soaring sculpture for the main room, which in solidity and volume represents a new step in his sculptural work and goes beyond the human dimensions of his previous compositions. Its impact is gigantic and erupts into the room from floor to ceiling. Resembling a trunk entwined in the stranglehold of a climbing vine and with a morbidly eroded surface, it appears to have been felled and its cut plane given a mirroring surface. The sculpture's different aspects stand in maximum contrast to one another.

In addition, Flad himself confronts his works with current and ongoing discourses that he conducts on the relationship between design, use and content, knowing full well that the resulting postulate stimulates the freshness of his ideas. When we enter into his world of thought, we constantly encounter a central problem: depicting dynamism statically. And indeed, the circumstance itself and the gesture of genesis, growth and decline are rediscovered in slow motion, or even at a standstill, in the structures, the biomorphic forms, and the surfaces. This becomes specifically clear in the freestanding sculptures and in the environments. Their forms invade space and displace volume, as well as allow a see-through look onto a background that becomes caught up in the work's vortex. In the end, it is the artist's sensitivity in the treatment of his materials and in the way he combines them that make up the mastery and the uniqueness of his oeuvre.

Wolfgang Flad's works are represented, among other places, in the following public collections: Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland; Centraal Museum, Utrecht, the Netherlands.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Cologne publisher, Stefan Schuelke Fine Books, will issue the first comprehensive monograph of Wolfgang Flad's work. It will be presented on April 19th (during Art Cologne) at 7 pm in our gallery rooms. In addition, the Van der Grinten Galerie is presenting a subscription edition (24 copies of catalogue + multiple, each at € 385,- including VAT)