

Review of the Kienzle Art Foundation's "Show 2" Twisted Standards

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The second exhibition of the Kienzle Art Foundation requires a certain amount of patience. With Emilio Prini, the former gallerist Jochen Kienzle has selected an artist who belongs to the first Arte Povera generation. Yet the public's awareness of his work is limited. Born in 1943, the action photographs and installations of the Italian artist form an exciting dialogue with works by 34-year-old Elmar Zimmermann. The latter is another artist who does not count among the art-market stars but who, thanks to his wit and somewhat cryptic ideas, advances certain Arte Povera notions, among them his elegant interventions into the exhibition space using industrial felt. Or his piece entitled "Malerlappen," rags colleagues used for painting, which Zimmermann arranges as an abstract picture covering the entire wall.

"I was never interested in name dropping but only in content," explains Kienzle. Also as a collector, he remains faithful to this creed. In his newly-created art foundation he counts on difficult or forgotten artists and on odd and obstreperous positions. "What interests me are the margins and a certain lateral thinking," states the 51-year-old descendant of an entrepreneurial family based in Baden-Württemberg.

The gallery named 'Kienzle & Gmeiner,' founded in Berlin in 1997, also opened with a Prini exhibition. After a stint on Zimmerstraße in the Berlin-Mitte district, they moved to Charlottenburg, the traditional western part of the city. "Upstream and opposed to spectacles," is how Kienzle describes the decision he made at the time. They were considered the "archaeologists among the gallerists" because they "unearthed" such forgotten artists as Anna Oppermann, Jack Goldstein, or the Italian concept artist Ketty La Rocca. Meanwhile, the gallery – Annette Gmeiner withdrew in 2003 – never seized to show such familiar positions as Imi Knoebel or Franz Erhard Walther.

Beside Jonathan Lasker, Walther makes up the collection's core. Kienzle considers his main emphasis to be painting, despite all heterogeneity, uttering that the doings of the art-market made him literally sick: "As gallerist I was always forced to justify myself. The foundation enables me to make my statements and to proof them with the aid of the collection."

Kienzle Art Foundation, Bleibtreustraße 54