

Kunsthalle Wien

Annette Kelm Tomato Target 14/12 2018 – 24/3 2019

Press conference

Thursday, December 13, 2018, 10 am

Opening & Live-Set by Steven Warwick

Thursday, December 13, 2018, 7 pm

Annette Kelm's photographs show precise fractious motifs that quote the still life, object or studio photography, or the classical architecture shot, yet without ever fully complying with the conventions governing these genres. They flatten things into the plane or subject them to multiplication in series. Often captured in frontal views and in great detail, the minimal and yet visually opulent object worlds underscore their translation into the two-dimensional space of photography. Kelm's conceptual approach, the exceptional sharpness of her images, and the neutral lighting lend the scenes rendered in her works a peculiar salience. The emphasis on the factual precludes any symbolism strictly speaking, yet the cultural or ideological character with which certain objects are fraught is unmistakable. This focus on formal criteria and the eschewal of narration of any kind are also destabilized by the selective insertion of props that bear no readily recognizable relation to a picture's central object.

The exhibition at Kunsthalle Wien turns the spotlight on works in which architecture, design, or constellations of objects are revealed to be visual manifestations of complex genealogies. The Versuchsanstalt für Wasserbau und Schiffsbau in Berlin, an iconic building that houses facilities for experiments in fluid mechanics and ship engineering, appears in Kelm's photograph as an abstract architectonic volume of

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color. In the series *Friendly Tournament*, the shooting targets pitted with holes and small craters where they were struck by arrows recall Lucio Fontana's perforated canvases and offer an analysis of the interrelation between figure and ground, between three-dimensional reality and its representation, which is both intellectually astute and concise. Yet here, too, something enigmatic remains.

In these and many other works, Kelm's visual creations crystallize a fascinating paradox: the signifiers and motifs are perfectly legible, but their openness at the same time leads to manifold associations. There are traces we can pursue, references we can decode, but in the end it is the exacting photographic gaze on things that prompts us to reflect on reality and the potentials of its representation.

Curator: Nicolaus Schafhausen

Annette Kelm (b. Stuttgart, 1975) is an artist and photographer. In 2018, Kelm's work is the subject of exhibitions at the Ludwig Foundation, Aachen; the Fosun Foundation, Shanghai; Gió Marconi, Milan; and the Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York. Past solo exhibitions of Kelm's work includes; *Leaves*, Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, 2017; *Affinities*, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 2016; *Dust*, Kölischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2014; and Kunsthalle Zürich, 2009, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2009, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, 2008, and Witte de With, Rotterdam, 2008. Kelm contributed work to *New Photography* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 2013 and to *ILLUMInations*, 54th Venice Biennale, 2011.

Press release

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