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OLAF QUANTIUS
orten
9/13–11/31/2009

with FEHLING & PEIZ

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We are delighted to announce that our gallery will present Olaf Quantius' fourth solo exhibition titled orten. The German verb "orten" [to localize, fix a position] designates an act: the attempt to localize a distant point. In this situation, the as yet invisible place exists solely in one's subjective imagination during the process of localization. "Orten" also means the search for a distinct point of reference, the actual quality of which initially remains a fleeting and vague image – until one arrives there. In Olaf Quantius' series orten, however, arrival is pending. When looking at his abstract painting, which is partially permeated by figurative elements such as fragments of a hut or suggested landscape details, one finds oneself in an ongoing process of localizing that which is depicted on the canvas. What is at issue here, as has similarly been in his earlier series Ott nang (2003) or the nomad paintings (since 2007), is the search for a definition of the individual feeling of security and cultural identity. While in Ott nang, fragmentary pieces of furniture referred to the desire to ensconce oneself in reality, in the nomad paintings, various types of architecture clearly mark the wish for localization. However, while the housings in the nomad paintings appeared to be "in limbo" on the matt silver ground, the motional surface of the poured acrylic backgrounds of the new series orten suggests points of reference: "[...] the assumption [...] that 'alterity' beyond one's reach exists, lends our basic existence its pulse of non-fulfilment. We are creatures with a great thirst. Bent on returning to a place we have never known." (Georg Steiner). The hut recurs as an architectural form. Due to its features, it stands for a merely temporary localization, and, for Olaf Quantius in his series orten, it is just as abstract as other formal fragments. The abstract painting on dark-green felting-wool blankets in the series pointedly refers to the permanent localization of a potentiality of subjectively feeling safe

and secure. The material itself tells of a "warming envelopment", and the covering, as a minimal architectural object, defines a place which, however, seems to volatilize due to the blotches painted on it. For Olaf Quantius, what counts in this moment is "to interrupt the prevailing principle of progression by meditating on emptiness."

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Within this "emptiness", the limited design object Stuhlhockerbank [Chair-Stool-Bench] by the designers Fehling & Peiz now localize the viewer in the exhibition space. Once seated, one determines one's own position in regard to both Olaf Quantius' painting, in which one attempts to "localize a place", and the other exhibition visitors. The design of the individual models of the Stuhlhockerbank tells the story of a fictitious encounter, which again becomes a reality through the new use of the seating accommodation. Depending on how the backrests and seats are adjusted, one starts positioning oneself in regard to the surroundings and the other seated persons. The chairs, which were merged to a bench, make reference to chair models found in German pubs in the 1960s. The solid oak wood jointed together and oiled to form the Stuhlhockerbank also conveys the history of traditional handicraft. Alienating these elements in a targeted way effects an analytical self-localization within the reference system of cultural and social identity. Determining one's own position in regard to something or someone else can be experienced in the process of use, for each model of the Stuhlhockerbank defines at least two seating possibilities. Hence, in the gallery's current exhibition situation, the Stuhlhockerbank of Fehling & Peiz "mediate" a conversation with both one's vis-à-vis and the works of Olaf Quantius.

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Biographies:

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OLAF QUANTIUS (1971) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe. He lives and works in Berlin.

Exhibitions (Selection):

2008: backdraft, Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, CH (G) / „Von Assig bis Zipp“, Sammlung FRISCH, Halle am Wasser, Berlin, DE (G) / „...aus einem malerischen Land“, HangART - 7, Salzburg, AT (G) / Mensch-Raum-Landschaft, Willy Brandt-Haus, Berlin, DE (G) / „Les Chaperons“, Galerie Kuttner Siebert, Berlin, DE (S)

2007: Regionale 8, Kunsthalle Basel, CH (G) / Musée des Beaux-Arts / Villa Steinbach, Mulhouse, FR (G) / „Beyond the Country“, Lewis Glucksman Gallery University College, Cork, IE (G)

2006: Floating Forms – Abstract Art Now“, Wilhelm-Hack-Museum, Ludwigshafen, DE (G) / Deutsche Bundesbanksammlung, Frankfurt a. M., DE (S).

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FEHLING & PEIZ studied at the Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung in Karlsruhe. They live and work in Karlsruhe.

Stuhlhockerbank is part of the following collections:

Marta Herford Museums, DE;
Arp Museum am Bahnhof Rolandeck, DE.

Currently exhibited at:

Experimentadesign, Lissabon, PT; gezeigt.

Exhibitions (Selection):

2009: „Ich, Johanna Ey“ im Stadtmuseum, Düsseldorf, DE; Salone Internazionale del Mobile / Zona Tortona in Mailand, IT; „Nature en Kit“ in mudac, Lausanne, CH.
2008: „2nd biennale for social design“ in Utrecht, NL, „Design + Emotion“ in Museum beim Markt, Karlsruhe, DE, „Singletown (Droog und Kesselskramer)“, Architektur Biennale in Venedig

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