

## Thomas Rentmeister, Elbisbach

07/09/19 - 26/10/19

Opening 7 September 2019 17.00 - 19.00 hrs

At Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Singel 372, 1016 AH Amsterdam



Image: Thomas Rentmeister, *Elbisbach double decker cot*, 2018, partially lacquered steel, plastic, fabric, cardboard, wood, approx. 151 x 255 x 162 cm. Photo: Bernd Borchardt

*Elbisbach* is Thomas Rentmeister's fifth solo exhibition in the gallery since his first exhibition in 1999, the initial year of Ellen de Bruijne PROJECTS.

The title refers to a forgotten village in Germany, close to Leipzig where oblivion has struck, but an abandoned building with leftover goods seems to tell a completely different story.

Thomas Rentmeister (Reken, Germany, 1964) uses everyday objects - or references to these objects - to construct and build up his work, with a persistent need to find the Minimalist conditions in them. He often incorporates unconventional materials such as heaps of grained coffee or Nutella traces. Rentmeister works with refrigerators with baby cream or blocks of paper tissues; he uses pots and pans with concrete columns in it, and smooth polished polyester with references to 60-ties furniture.

With a manic precision, and a feeling for the abstract shape in everyday commodities, the artist creates space-filling, objectified everydayness, which gave him the name "dirty Minimalist".

For his new exhibition in the gallery, Thomas Rentmeister went to the town Elbisbach, located in former East Germany, where he was invited to an abandoned domain, which had been an orphanage in the past. Already triggered by its potential, and looking for references to an objectivated and abstract past in the leftover goods, the artist strolled into a part of the estate that was used as refugee camp until 2017.

It seems as if Rentmeister had to investigate a cold case; the artist has consistently reproduced the refugee's housing into a room-filling installation in the gallery, accompanied with 22 photographs. It is like we are looking at deep frozen time.

*Over the last years, Rentmeister had solo-shows at Kunstverein Ruhr, Essen, and Project Space | Spare Room, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University, School of Art), Melbourne, 2019, CNTRM WRNHS, Berlin, 2018, KuK. Kunst- und Kulturzentrum der StädteRegion Aachen, Monschau (with Bjørn Melhus), Hammelehle und Ahrens Gallery, Cologne, SALOON, Brussels, Universitäts- und Marktkirche Paderborn, 2017, Kunstverein Wolfenbüttel, studio im HOCHHAUS, Berlin (with Ingo Gerken), 2016, Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst, 2015, HDLU (Meštrović Pavilion), Zagreb, 2014, Food Lab No. 1, Contemporary Food Lab Berlin, 2013, Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, and Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Perth, Australia, 2012, Kunstmuseum Bonn, 2011, Kunstverein Viernheim, and Kunstverein Wilhelmshöhe e.V., Ettlingen, 2010, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, 2008, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 2007, Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund, 2006, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2005, Kunsthalle Nürnberg, 2003, Villa Merkel, Galerien der Stadt Esslingen, 2001, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2001.*