

Georg Herold

Opening reception: May 8, 6 – 8 pm
Exhibition duration: May 8 – June 22, 2013

Gerhardsen Gerner Oslo is pleased to announce its first exhibition with German artist Georg Herold (b. 1947).

At the age of thirty Georg Herold may have been exposed to his strongest influences during his studies at Hochschule der Bildenden Künste in Hamburg under Sigmar Polke and Franz Erhard Walther in the late 1970s.

He found the point for his starting work in Hamburg. When violence escalated in West Germany in the German Autumn of 1977, Herold presented his first work "Präsentation der ersten Latte" (Presentation of the first lath) at the academy in Hamburg. The roof laths as the material and content undermined all expectations of either aesthetically or politically interpretable art.

Herold's technique of setting traps is perhaps inconceivable without the "art punk" once cultivated jointly with Albert and Markus Oehlen, Werner Büttner and Martin Kippenberger nor without Duchamp's linguistic compositions including sexuality as a metaphor.

Apart from roof laths and caviar beads that typify Herold's work, he has repeatedly used bricks, thread, buttons and nails as well as tea strainers, handbags, nylon tights and carpets.

In addition to sculptures and paintings, Herold's extensive oeuvre also includes installations and video works. His varied body of works refers laconically to art history, which he quotes in an ironic and striking manner, so that unexpected new perspectives emerge.

For his show at Gerhardsen Gerner Oslo, Georg Herold presents a group of wooden sculptures, all „untitled“, roof laths nailed together on delicate iron bars that form a pictorial figuration at second glance; a large bronze sculpture alongside a selection of the so called brick-paintings and caviar-pictures.

Standing in front of the large scale sculpture in the main exhibition room, one can sense the original simple elements of roof laths once screwed together that now form a skinny human body made of bronze. The figure has a twisted and sexualised posture as if having fallen down and having its left arm being caught underneath its torso.

This is contrasted with a selection of caviar-pictures which visualize portraits of Wolfgang Pauli, Ernst Bloch and Bertrand Russell by numbering the fish eggs. Since 1989, Herold has been using caviar in his pictures as a visual material for the production of both figurative and abstract paintings, frequently numbering the seemingly countless individual grain of caviar.

The canvases entitled *Rumsfeld* (2004), *Red Square* (2005) and *Platz des himmlischen Friedens* (2005) look like they might collapse under its heavy burden of red bricks and yet challenge the conventions of painting. Appearing as motifs of a composition which seem to deny gravity, they become alien to their original use to build homes for the petite bourgeoisie. By the use of such 'poor' materials in conjunction with wit, irony and humor, Herold is playing with the viewer's perception both in content and form.

Georg Herold once summed up: "My choice of materials is not subject to any conscious aesthetic criteria. The materials must merely be able to absorb and transport my ideas. I do not use materials that speak their own language as a matter of principle. That's why I look for raw, dumb materials that don't pose any questions."

Works by the artist are to be found in a number of private and public collections. His work has been shown in important institutions such as the Museum Brandhorst, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich (2012); Kunstneres Hus, Oslo (2009; with Mark Handforth and Urs Fischer); Kunstverein Heilbronn (2010); Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2009, 1997, 1991); Ludwig Museum, Cologne (2007); the South London Gallery (2007); Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent (2007); Tate Liverpool (2004) and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2001) among others.

The artist holds a professorship in Düsseldorf and lives and works in Cologne.

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