

## Annette Kelm

### *Domino*

Herald St is pleased to announce *Domino*, Annette Kelm's third exhibition with the gallery and her first in its Museum St location. The presentation features eight photographs, including a new body of work produced on a recent sojourn in Ireland. Vibrant and uncanny, the images continue Kelm's visual arrangements rooted in the implications and representation of objects in unlikely contexts.

Kelm's photographs embrace a so-called 'brutal' tension. They are at once considered and aleatory, planned and spontaneous, and cohesive and chaotic. Using techniques stemming from commercial and documentary photography, the artist sets up her studio with backdrops, props, and framing devices to form scenes of chance encounters. In *Fast Food*, a brass horse found in an Irish antique shop stands atop an upturned Ikea shelf, plastered with bursts of jagged cardboard sourced from a craft store. The hot dogs, milkshakes, and French fries on the duvet cover forming the background dwarf the metal figurine, dousing its regal pose in a sea of kitsch. The image's sunny palette is an aesthetic choice, but any search for symbolic resonance ultimately leads nowhere. *Kreuzberg Target* nods to earlier photographs from Kelm's oeuvre, notably the series *Friendly Tournament* (2005) and *Untitled* (2006) which depict archery targets peppered with holes, as viewed from the front and back respectively. Much has been written about these works, placing them in a canonical lineage which includes the encaustic treatment of the same subject by Jasper Johns and the opening of the void in Lucio Fontana's punctured canvases. In Kelm's most recent revival of the concentric circle motif, the target paper remains unpenetrated, with an impossible blue rose rising into the spotlight of the central yellow bullseye.

A recurring concern in Kelm's choice of objects is reproducibility. Like the medium on which they are printed, the plants, cups, toys, and fabrics presented in these photographs are, or have the capacity to be, mass-made and consumed. Even the artificially dyed flower in *Kreuzberg Target* is industrially grown, and the magnolia, water shoots, and mossy branches scavenged from the wilds of Ireland are not exempt – as Kelm points out, nature constantly repeats itself. This notion could be read as a continuation of the commercial boom in postwar Germany which led to Gerhard Richter and Sigmar Polke's *Kapitalistischer Realismus* (Capitalist realism) and eventually Andreas Gursky's dizzyingly vast supermarkets, but greater touchstones for Kelm include Cosima von Bonin, Jack Goldstein, and Marcel Duchamp. There is a surreal quality to her compositions – in one work, the petalled form of a lampshade responds to the flowers it holds, and another combines crumpled scarlet fabric left over from a portrait shoot with a wooden bird-shaped cork pressed into an empty Coca-Cola bottle which was discarded in the artist's studio building. Such arrangements recall Comte de Lautréamont's line famously adopted by André Breton: 'As beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table.'

The new pieces in the exhibition follow Kelm's *Die Bücher* (*The Books*) and *Jeans Buttons*, two recent series with rigidly unified taxonomical formats and clear historical-political intentions. In contrast, *Domino* presents photographs which are whimsical, surprising, and unsettling. The rich saturation and crisp precision of Kelm's works offer a tempting invitation to interpretation, and while there are passages of associations with their structures, any narrative remains wryly out of grasp.

Text by Émilie Streiff

## Annette Kelm

### *Domino*

**Front space**  
(Anti-clockwise)

*Cola Meise*  
2024  
Inkjet print  
59.9 x 42.5 x 4 cm / 23.6 x 16.7 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 5/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8657F

*Kreuzberg Target*  
2024  
Inkjet print  
63.9 x 81.6 x 4 cm / 25.2 x 32.1 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 1/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8652F

*Blue Bell Pattern Magnolia*  
2024  
Inkjet print  
81.6 x 61.6 x 4 cm / 32.1 x 24.3 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 1/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8654F

*Glenkeen Water Shoots*  
2024  
Inkjet print  
81.6 x 61.6 x 4 cm / 32.1 x 24.3 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 1/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8659F

**Back space**  
(Anti-clockwise)

*Fast Food*  
2024  
Inkjet print  
102.2 x 77.1 x 4 cm / 40.2 x 30.4 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 1/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8651F

*Green Domino*  
2020  
Inkjet print  
102.2 x 77.1 x 4 cm / 40.2 x 30.4 x 1.6 in, framed  
Ed. 6/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8655F

*I love London*  
2022  
Inkjet print  
142.7 x 107.7 x 4.5 cm / 56.2 x 42.4 x 1.8 in, framed  
Ed. 5/6 + 2AP  
HS20-AK8656F

*Eukalyptus*  
2021  
Archival pigment print  
100.4 x 75.3 cm / 39.5 x 29.6 in, framed  
Ed. 4/6 + 2AP  
HS17-AK7558F