

Galleri Riis

Troels Wörsel

Mirepoix / Important paintings from the 1980's and 90's

March 8 - April 12, 2025

We are pleased to present the exhibition Troels Wörsel, *Mirepoix / Important Paintings from the 1980's and 90's*.

Troels Wörsel (1950-2018) was one of the most prolific Danish artists of his generation. With his base in Cologne, a high-level of production and frequent exhibition activity both in Scandinavia and in his adopted homeland of Germany, he became a prominent artist on the European scene during the 1980's and 90's.

The paintings in this exhibition have never been shown in Norway and present several of the themes Wörsel explored in large and small series of paintings from the period. The exhibition title *Mirepoix*, which is borrowed from one of the exhibited works, points to Wörsel's lifelong interest in gastronomy, both as a practicing home cook as well as its theoretical and technical aspects. For him, there was an allegorical connection between the work of the artist and the chef, which he described in several of his texts about painting and its conceptual possibilities and challenges.

Among the works from various series selected for this exhibition is a portrait of chef and restaurateur Pierre Troisgros, an inspirational figure for Wörsel. Further, two large wine label motifs from the late 1980s are featured; in this series one motif is superimposed on another, upside down.

*If you paint a flag after Johns, it will be a pirate flag. So that's what I did. **

The series *Flag* from 1987, where the motif is a pirate flag painted in grisaille with various tools ranging from a drill machine to the artist's fingers, is represented with two notable examples.

In *Quotation Marks*, a small series of paintings from 1989, Wörsel sampled fragments of reproductions of an earlier series of works on paper onto a large square format. The figures are layered over and almost dug into a coarse light gray surface of acrylic paints applied with bicycle tires and wooden planks.

Also included is a large work from an untitled series of paintings executed in the period 1989-93, where the artist's hands seem to push various pictorial elements around over a Mondrian-like grid, which was sampled from the cover design of Falk-Pläne, the dominant supplier of German city maps.

*Painting doesn't become more serious because it takes itself seriously. ***

Wörsel was a thoughtful and methodical artist, but his work is also filled with passion, and a great appetite for all the verbal aspects of painting, such as text and signs integrated into the picture. As a truly original artist, he was obsessed with creating and showing a world on a painted surface. This made him an artist's artist. Wörsel's deep interest and wide knowledge about topics ranging from gastronomy to bicycle racing and theoretical science, resulted in paintings that constitute a large archive of insights into the visible world. His work is never about what art should be, but always about what it can be.

We are honored to have worked with Troels Wörsel on six exhibitions spanning 1995-2017, featuring many of the artists' idiosyncratic pieces from that period. With this selection of works preceding our collaboration, we hope to broaden the appreciation of Wörsel as the exceptional and innovative painter that he was.

This exhibition has been made in collaboration with The Troels Wörsel Estate and Galleri Susanne Ottesen in Copenhagen, who is currently showing the exhibition *In Colour*, a selection of Wörsel's works from the 2000's.

*Troels Wörsel, "Recent Paintings", Gallery Susanne Ottesen, 1990

**Troels Wörsel, Notes on Painting, Fred Jahn, Munich, 1986

Troels Wörsel

Danish artist Troels Wörsel (1950 – 2018) was based in Cologne, Germany from the late 1970's, and he played an important part on the Scandinavian and European art scene until his untimely death in 2018. Wörsel was a painter concerned with the constructive problems and aspects of the medium, and of its limitless possibilities. He sampled and adapted picturemaking fragments and reintroduced them onto the paintings' surfaces. His works are characterized by various experiments in execution, ex. the application of paint with the help of an electric drill, and in compositions where taut geometric patterns incorporate both personal and found imagery.

Wörsel is represented in the collections of among others Kunstmuseum in Bonn, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Centre Pompidou in Paris and MoMA in New York. In 2002, Wörsel was the first prize winner of the Carnegie Art Award and represented Denmark at the Venice Biennial in 2007. He lived and worked in Cologne, Germany and Pietrasanta, Italy.