

AUREL SCHEIBLER

Curt Stenvert

Raumflug durch den Götterhimmel

15 February – 17 April, 2014

Opening: Friday, 14th February, 2014



Liebebe auf den ersten Blick (G56), 1982, Oil and gold leaf on wood, 47,5 x 87,5 cm (18 7/10 x 34 2/5 in.)

Berlin – On Friday, 14th February, “Raumflug durch den Götterhimmel” opens at Aurel Scheibler. The exhibition presents paintings by the Austrian artist Curt Stenvert and is a sequel to “Vorstoß ins Niemandsland”, Stenvert’s first solo exhibition at the gallery which took place during Gallery Weekend Berlin 2013.

“Vorstoß” provided an overview of the work that Stenvert produced in the 1960s and 1970s and that consisted mainly of Object Art or ‘Assemblages’. The upcoming exhibition will highlight a very different aspect of his oeuvre: the “gold paintings”. They became Stenvert’s main focus in the 1970s and 1980s, but were in fact a continuation of a theme that occupied him since he had turned to painting in the 1940s. At that point in time, Stenvert’s fascination with movement had led him to turn from painting to movie making.

Three decades later, he rediscovered his love for the paint medium and took it up again as a vehicle to express his never-ending search for the motives and origins of mankind. The expression of movement, of sound, but also of a certain type of ‘empathy’ or connectedness between people is a clear leitmotiv in these works. They attempt to visualize the inner dynamics of the ‘things’ in space and time and the cause and effect processes they trigger. With their use of bright colors, applied to render waves emanating from figures and objects, set against a lustrous, gold leaf background, these paintings look monumental, byzantine, almost lush. Their references are no longer the constructivist and futurist theories that had shaped the early paintings, but Stenvert’s own thoughts on “bio-cybernetic art”, which he had formulated in his 1971 manifest and which placed man and his relationship to himself as well as his surroundings at the center. Stenvert’s conviction that art had an essential role to play in an individual life as well as in society remained the overarching theme of his writings and his work until the end.

“Raumflug durch den Götterhimmel” will run until 17th April.

Curt Stenvert (1920-1992) was an Austrian painter, sculptor and filmmaker who created Austria’s first avant-garde movie “Der Rabe” in 1951. “Functional Art” and connected herewith the motto “The elucidation of existence through the eye” were the intellectual cornerstones of his oeuvre. Stenvert participated in several of the major exhibitions of his time, including the 33th edition of the Venice Biennial (1966) in which he represented Austria, the seminal exhibition “Le Monde en question” (1967) which took place at the Musée d’art moderne in Paris and documenta 5 in Kassel (1972). Stenvert moved with his family to Germany in 1977 and died in Cologne on March 3, 1992.