

Georg Herold

Exhibition duration: August 21–September 2014

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

It is said that it takes eight years for a sturgeon to mature, eight minutes to remove caviar from its belly and eight seconds to taste it. Shrinking exponentially, those numbers tell a grotesque tale of economic and environmental decadence.

Numbers – random, consecutive, wildly escalating – also run across Georg Herold's *caviar paintings*, yet his work refuses to conform to the reductive post-Marxist equations between art and the market. If caviar suggests conspicuous consumption, in Herold's work it is also the aggregate of a Pop image and the Beuysian aura of pure material. Or it is simply the beauty of water drops and pearls, referring to the painterly aspect in art history, evoking drops and traces of oil paint and resin on canvas.

The gallery spills of caviar, affixed to canvases under varnish, meandered across the surfaces. Tight clusters of handwritten numbers provide shadowing for the eggs, rendering them pictorially illusionistic. Both languages multiply from a seed: the tiny egg, the single number.

The caviar portraits also double as signs for already-existing value, mimicking Andy Warhol's benday dots. They are a reminder that Sigmar Polke – whose hand-painted dot screens also parodied Pop art – was Herold's teacher in the 1970s. Adapting caviar to the portrait genre emphasizes that eggs, like pixels, contain information and instructions for life, though here their growth is arrested by the resin sealant.

Herold's paintings may be straightforwardly spectacular, but they are also conceptually elusive. Resembling process painting of the late 1980s – such as Ian McKeever's huge diptychs in which combinations of oil and acrylic triggered sublime chemical reactions – they subvert that model, investing material with symbolism. If caviar connotes wealth, the numbers evoke the mumble of markets as the forms they create wind like the parabolas of economic graphs.

(excerpt from: Mark Prince, "Georg Herold", Frieze Magazine, June 2011)

Georg Herold are to be found in a number of private and public collections. His work has been shown in renowned institutions such as the Museum Brandhorst, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich (2012); Kunsternes Hus, Oslo (2009); 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.

Georg Herold artist holds a professorship in Düsseldorf and lives and works in Cologne.

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