

MAI 36 GALERIE

Christian Lindow

curated by Fabrice Stroun

Opening: Thursday, March 9, 2017, 6 to 8 p.m.
Exhibition: March 10 – April 15, 2017
Hours: Tues-Fri 11 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., Sat 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mai 36 Galerie is delighted to present the first exhibition of Christian Lindow and to announce the representation of the Estate of Christian Lindow. Fabrice Stroun was invited to curate the exhibition.

To exhibit Christian Lindow's work today, more than a quarter of a century after his passing away at the age of 45, compels us to reconsider the aesthetic categories with which we have framed the 1980s. Born in Altenburg-Thüringen in East Germany, Lindow settled in Bern at the end of the 1960s. After exhibiting geometric sculptures and conceptual photographs, he began to paint in an illustrative style. Before long, his paint thickened, became more gestural, and his motifs became indistinguishable from brisk, broad brushstrokes that characterize the overall architecture of his paintings. While the artist's output from 1977 onward seems to fall squarely within the then-dominant currents of Germanic Neo-Expressionism, Lindow's paintings sever the association we have come to take for granted between, on the one hand, the discernible intensity and speed of their execution and, on the other, the expression of the artist's subjectivity.

The vast majority of his paintings feature a single, central motif: a fish on a plate, a mountain, a beach, a curtain, a facade, a bowl of fruit. Selected for their ubiquitous quality, they appear to us as readymade images. And even when he selects subjects that come from his immediate surroundings, such as his own recent figurative wooden sculptures, or his wife's face, the quality (or lack thereof) of his reproductive treatment suggests an already mediated origin. The fact that Lindow worked in series, produced numerous 'versions' of many of his paintings, down to seemingly accidental drips (in the manner of Robert Rauschenberg's *Factum I and II*), further accentuates this quality of artificiality, and underscores the fact that questions surrounding the nature of images, their reproduction and circulation, are at the heart of his practice.

Lindow's oeuvre stands as a paradox: for all its apparent physicality and expressiveness, its numerous self-imposed restraints – be it its limited chromatic range or its almost rationed choice of subjects – produces a form without effects. Even if Christian Lindow's practice could not have emerged in any other era than the late 1970s, when the status of the image was profoundly modified by its accelerated circulation, it is not emblematic of his generation. It remains singular and uncomfortable. Devoid of lyricism, processual, rugged rather than buoyant, this oeuvre, that so clearly delineates the body of painting, also marks the limits of representation.

(Text: Fabrice Stroun)

The work of Christian Lindow (1945 - 1990) has been widely exhibited since the 1980s. His first major exhibition was at Kunsthalle Bern in 1982, followed, in 1983, by Le Consortium, Dijon. In 1988 he had another show at Kunsthalle Bern. Following his premature death in 1990, a retrospective exhibition was shown at FRAC Bourgogne, and in 1995 a touring exhibition was hosted by Kunstmuseum Winterthur and Musée de La Chaux de Fonds. After a long time of absence, the show held in 2015 at Le Consortium, Dijon drew the deserved attention back to the oeuvre of Christian Lindow.

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Please contact us if you require any visual material (office@mai36.com).

We look forward to seeing you at the gallery and thank you for your interest.

Mai 36 Galerie

Victor Gisler

March 2017