

# KÖNIG GALERIE

## ANSELM REYLE | EIGHT MILES HIGH

APRIL 29 – JUNE 4, 2017

ST. AGNES | NAVE

OPENING: APRIL 28, 6-9 PM

In the large gallery inside the former church (ST. AGNES | NAVE), Anselm Reyle (b. 1970) presents his first show at KÖNIG GALERIE featuring new works on over 4000 sq ft. The Berlin-based artist primarily works in painting, installation art, and sculpture; his work has been honored with solo exhibitions at Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Kunsthalle Zürich, and the Arken Museum of Modern Art, Denmark. Reyle has also taught at the University of Fine Arts of Hamburg (HFBK) since 2009. In 2014, his temporary withdrawal from the art world caused a stir. For St. Agnes, the artist conceived a space-grabbing installation with hanging kinetic sculptures and new paintings.

Impressive in their strong physical presence and yet playfully mobile, three hanging sculptures by Anselm Reyle shimmer in the nave of St. Agnes – a rhombus, a circle, and a square. The starting point for the new series of sculptures are geometric wind ornaments made out of metal, such as those found at the arts and crafts markets. Reyle reduces the shapes of these filigree pendants to their basic components and enlarges them, so that the objects take on room-filling proportions. The different surfaces of the wind spinners emphasize their materiality. Thus, the square is machined with gestural rounded motions, while the circle only shows traces of the production process. The rhombus is roughly sculpted - here, Reyle refers to a gestural finish by the American sculptor David Smith, which quickly found its way into sub and popular culture. What later mutated into a cliché is here recontextualized as an element of the formal language of abstract expressionism.

The seemingly technical structure uses a motor to rotate the piece on its own axis, thus taking up on the lightness and mobility of the original decorative objects. Rotating with hypnotic effect the ensemble is reminiscent of Op Art and stands in the tradition of kinetic art, in which movement is an integral part of the work. A dynamic, wave-like motion can be seen in the angular constructions of the square and rhombus; in the circular form the cut out circles appear to move on multiple axes. Together with light and shadow, the cool, silvery color of the sculptures expands into a whole spectrum of nuances and is set in contrast to the brutalist rawness of the space. With the circle and square, Reyle chooses the most basic of all forms, which have great significance both in art history as well as in philosophy, religion and science. The circle can be a symbol for the wheel, a wreath or the serpent biting into its own tail. At the same time, it stands for complexity, balance

ST. AGNES  
ALEXANDRINENSTR. 118-121  
D-10969 BERLIN

T+49.30.261030 80  
F+49.30.261030 80  
INFO@KOENIGGALERIE.COM

OPENING HOURS  
TUE-SUN 11-18 H  
KOENIGGALERIE.COM

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and infinity. The generous dimensions of St. Agnes are used in their height as well as for their sacral character.

The use of found objects is a constant in Reyle's work. Here he often consciously moves into areas where art and creativity are promoted as leisure activities. Reyle acknowledges those moments of astonishment and fascination – in the case of wind ornaments, the interplay of light, material and form – pauses for thought, and tries to capture the essence of these things. Through the targeted emphasis of formal aspects, the object character of the found elements is brought to the fore. In addition to this, references to the art-historical canon are produced and some unexpected parallels are revealed. Reyle's interest is precisely that moment when design decisions from what is commonly referred to as kitsch arise from the formal language of modernity and so-called high culture is led astray.

Parallel to the hanging sculptures, Anselm Reyle presents two new types of paintings. On the untitled works from the series *Zen Paintings*, a raked pattern draws over the canvas in uniform tracks. The elevations of the lines produced with modelling paste shine in different metallic hues. In some cases, geometric shapes are covered with several strips of high-gloss chrome foil and the surrounding areas have been refined as if with a kind of silver leaf. In contrast to the expressive gestures of abstract painting, this is a reduced, controlled and almost meditative form of line. The pattern continuously dissolves, especially towards the edges. Emptiness and density are held in a dynamic balance.

For the also untitled *Metal Scrap Paintings*, Reyle arranges different forms of metal shavings and other scraps on a black surface that is sealed with a transparent acrylic glass box. The sometimes high-gloss and extremely filigree spirals made of aluminum, steel and other metals are transformed into a subtly three-dimensional drawing, which depending on the viewer's perspective lies between raw materiality, unreal depth of field and digital picture noise.