

Krinzinger Projekte

curated by_Harald Falckenberg

Verkauf in Nebenräumen (Sales in the Side Rooms)

This exhibition is dedicated to what is apparently an endangered species: the label. As if by magic, labels or tags are vanishing into thin air on a global scale. Allegedly, the artists don't want them and, naturally, the curators don't want them at all. Nothing should distract from pure art and its noble presentation. Be it at last year's Sigmar Polke retrospective at the MoMA, this year's solo and group shows in Zurich's Limmatstrasse, or current exhibitions at galleries in Hamburg—no matter how discreetly the label may be attached—no reference to the artist, year of production, techniques used, or their provenance should be added. The visitors are left with—more or less—comprehensive brochures and mostly insubstantial, hectographed leaflets including sketches of the hanging. They may flick through this material on their tour of the exhibition and calibrate the room plans—provided they wish to do so. Oftentimes at gallery exhibitions, even these auxiliary means are absent. It is but through dialogue with the gallerist that the various work phases and the context of the works displayed should be revealed—provided the visitors wish to have such conversations.

This patronizing approach may seem irritating and downright annoying to competent audiences who want to form their own opinions. But all of this goes just too well with contemporary market strategies of seduction, where advertising for cars is not based on automotive figures such as horsepower, safety factors, or the capacity of the interior and luggage spaces, but on the dream of driving and traveling as a symbol of freedom; or where air travelers, who just want to reach their departure gates, are led through a landscape of luxury fashion and design shops boasting extensive promotional posters and videos—to name but two examples.

The modernist notion of art as a critical antipode to what is considered true, good, and beautiful increasingly gives way to postmodern whateverism, and art has long since become an integral part of this consumerist dream factory. Market strategists of the global art market determine business, and curators everywhere have grasped their opportunity for presenting art as aura, fascination, and utopia.

Give us the chance to understand contemporary art as a way of resistance and as an authority for contemplation—and let us keep the labels with their points of reference, both open and hidden, to these contexts. This is a plea, and this exhibition is dedicated to the label. Instead of artworks without labels, labels without artworks are exhibited in the Krinzinger gallery showrooms. Should there be any prospective buyers, they may contact the gallery staff. Sales take place in the side rooms.