

I

an accompanying commentary
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even though the title seems rather plain and the many empty walls do not seem very accessible at first glance, I [roman numeral one] is a very personal, almost emotional exhibition – and that on several levels. the works by darren bader, daniel gustav cramer, cerith wyn evans, florence jung, mikko kuorinki, yann sérandour and constantin thun are intent on being an attitude, or rather a gesture. no explicit reading is predefined; and the fact that in this text one is formulated only reinforces what I [roman numeral one] aims at – namely, to trigger processes of thought that reach into the private sphere, into one’s own emotional world. for which the works, through their form that is sometimes reduced to invisibility, offer enough space.

so does florence jung’s *mathias sander exhibition’s floor plan*, a reminder of her action at the bielefelder kunstverein, which invited her to create a solo exhibition after the completion of the planned floor renovation. whereupon she elevated the executing carpenter mathias sander and his team to the actual artists; her contribution was now to direct the focus on their performance, which is soberly described in terms of its framework conditions. jung herself only appears at the margins and on closer inspection, deliberately eliminating herself from the equation that she had specifically set up.

constantin thun also takes a step back behind his work, but leads the visitor’s gaze in parallel to his own; to what is often overlooked, to objects that he has found by chance and that surround everyone but often not getting due appreciation. for himself, he achieves this in the case of *intuition*, and *choice*, through a closely guided re-production of the radiator claddings – important objects for the atmosphere of the historic rooms at strausberger platz, which thun himself knows well and which are part of his everyday life. not only does thun thus succeed in re-evaluating the (greater) value of the objects for the visitors, among other things by emphasizing their artistry, but this process of “approximation” is also an essential component in the reconciliation of his own with supposedly different realities of life.

daniel gustav cramer’s *light of the day*, one of the most romantic works in I [roman numeral one], relies on a similar, equally far-reaching, almost metaphysical approach. he declares the natural light that fills the exhibition space to be a work of art and manifests this in the new edition of his publication *light of the day*, 2021. thus, cramer’s contribution joins a group of works whose vehemence must not only be evaluated completely subjectively, but whose expression can neither be static nor uniform. like thun, cramer processes personal perception in this way and invites us to do the same along the rules he has set – and thus to follow his poetry.

yann sérandour also works with seemingly empty pages that are nevertheless filled with content: with *one week* he refers to *march 1969* by seth siegelaub. the latter organized an exhibition with 31 artists and then created a calendar with as many pages. at least that was the idea – seven of the artists contacted did not get back to him (namely: carl andre, michael asher, dan flavin, on kawara, sol lewitt, bruce nauman, ed rasha). instead of looking for substitutes, however, siegelaub left the respective exhibition days and pages blank – a gesture that sérandour takes up and which he gives even more weight by taking it out of its actual frame, by exposing it. while those blank pages are certainly irritating when browsing through *march 1969*, sérandour's instruction manages to devote the full focus and any thoughts to them. why didn't asher, lewitt and co. answer? is a sharp commentary hidden behind the non-commentary? whoever approaches *one week* can't help but fill those pages before the inner eye, often striving to remain in the respective style of the actual authors.

in a different, because more unconscious way does *koi stencil for bandit* by cerith wyn evans work, which is probably the most expanding piece in I [roman numeral one]: by means of an elaborate stencil showing that specific fish, the traditional perfume *bandit* by the house of robert piguet from 1944 is applied to the wall during installation. but this step, and with it the image of the breeding carp, which is considered a status symbol and luxury good in many places, remains hidden from the visitors. it is, as such, a tool. will the mere association, which can be taken from the title of the work alone, be enough to imagine a koi in front of the inner eye? to evoke beauty, or rather pleasingness? this question arises above all in relation to the intense, emancipated scent of *bandit*, which, incidentally, was hurled onto the paris catwalk like allied bombs by masked models resembling de-individualized soldiers at its first presentation. It is obvious that this discrepancy is only reserved exclusively for those who know *koi stencil for bandit* in its entirety or who are aware of its status as a work of art. nevertheless, the work functions even without any information; it does not require a conscious act to perceive it and to carry it along. one can rarely shut oneself off from smells and the memories associated with them; they take hold, even if they diminish in the course of time due to their materiality.

explicit practical participation, on the other hand, is demanded by darren bader's [*white*] *towel*. for it is not the originally purchased object that manifests the form of the work; it is the manifestation of an idea. the title and accompanying instructions to the buyer are decisive:

the work is a new** white*** bath**** towel. the towel can be used by its owner however s/he chooses, although it's recommended the towel be worn at times. the towel can be replaced at any time, although it's recommended it be used for some time before being replaced. the work is never more than one towel at a time.

*a white towel of a certain size will be provided with the purchase of the work. it's recommended this towel be the one used for some time. after that, replacements**** can be used, the size of which can vary from the original towel provided.

**new meaning unused and unwashed. new being new for a finite moment only, the work will remain the work even after this finite moment has likely ended. if a towel is replaced, it needn't be replaced with a new towel.

***i.e., entirely white.

****pool towels are ok too.

*****it's highly recommended replacements be of a quality that isn't especially good (much like the first new white towel that is/was the work).

what is elementary is that it continues to be an object of everyday use, which gains value precisely because of this and constantly reactivates itself. certainly, the knowledge of the market or artistic value of an object as well as the mere predicate "work of art" changes the way we deal with it and also the sense of space. but it is precisely these mechanisms that bader plays with mischievously; for ultimately *[white] towel* is and remains what it is: a white towel.

while bader's *[white] towel* negates, even perverts its pure production value, it preserves its actual use. the exact opposite of this is pursued by mikko kuorinki: *a field book of the stars* is a book that irritates because it is rendered useless in the strictest sense of the word. for it is now a doorstop; no longer a carrier of thoughts, but, in an almost lapidary gesture, purely a means of use. while the title promises the rational development of an almost intangible boundlessness, it cannot be read. and on top of that, it is increasingly wearing out. but what remains when the work has consumed its own purpose? when its original form has been lost?