

TANJA POL GALERIE

Hella Gerlach & Kalin Lindena

12/01/12 - 03/03/12

In this double exhibition, Hella Gerlach and Kalin Lindena, both born in 1977, show three-dimensional works that deal in particular ways with the concept of sculpture, situational work, and performative practice.

Hella Gerlach works in traditional sculptural materials such as wood, clay, and porcelain, to which she applies a variety of coatings, including car paint. The Munich show features “rooms-in-space,” which are sewn together out of pieces of dyed nettle cloth. These floating corporeal objects have pockets and double walls containing handy clay and porcelain objects, that refer to various parts of the human body. Viewers can imagine what the objects might be like, and they may take them out and handle them under the supervision of gallery employees. In a kind of self-experiment, the recipient is invited to make a performative gesture. The ceramic objects are manifestly fragile; taking them out of the pockets of the smooth, yet unstable, hanging cloth structures should, ideally, instigate a process of sensitization. Regardless of the visitor’s mood, removing the objects and observing them is a contemplative act. Kalin Lindena’s large photograms on the walls depict silhouettes of life-sized, anthropomorphous sculptures treated with a mordant and oil paint; taken together with her sculptural figurines, which have a flat, silhouetted appearance, Lindena’s pieces create a contrast to Gerlach’s three-dimensional fabric structures. At the same time, they underscore the function of the exhibition space as a place where the visitor walks around, observing things. Lindena’s sculptures, whose shadows are also projected onto the photograms, are titled “Statisten” (“extras”), figures she used as dancers in her films “Gehtanz I-III”. Shown with Gerlach’s three-dimensional constructs and sculptures, they take on new roles in the exhibition.

Both artists share an affinity to particular materials and a kind of poetics that emphasizes the performative and situational. All of the works—Gerlach’s sculptures and objects, and Lindena’s photograms and sculptures—address the human proportions. The arrangement in the space, which contains numerous objects, requires the viewer to walk around; there is an endless variety of perspectives and prospects, including the view through the semi-transparent fabric. This is the first time the two artists are showing together. Immediately, upon first glance, their works seem to have certain points in common, yet the exchange and the affinities between the works do not simply boil down to formal congruities, such as circles or globe shapes, which are clearly present in the work of both artists. Taken as a whole, the works complement each other to create an immediate sense of unity, while working together to produce a palpable, profound, mutual understanding of each other.