

PRESS RELEASE

Jörg Immendorff
organized collaboratively with Michael Werner Gallery
October 4 – December 7, 2013

Hannah Hoffman Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of early works and *Lidl* by the late German artist Jörg Immendorff, organized collaboratively with Michael Werner Gallery. This historical exhibition is a rare opportunity to see an important body of work that marked the beginning of Immendorff's artistic itinerary.

Perhaps most essentially Immendorff's work of this moment was driven by a determination to make art that was humanely useful in some basic way. At 18 he was admitted to the Düsseldorf Academy of Art studying stage design under Teo Otto until in 1964 he changed over to the class of Joseph Beuys prompted by Beuys's words of "the freedom of man through art" and "the consciousness-shaping power of art." Immendorff's work of the 1960's encompassed a broad repertoire of art making ranging from playfully anarchic conceptual paintings, a series of "baby-art", as well as a happenings, political actions, and works executed under the title *Lidl*.

Lidl, named after the alleged sound of a baby's rattle, used regressive conduct as a form of cultural protest, and incorporated the occasional participation of different members of the international art world including Joseph Beuys, James Lee Byars, Marcel Broodthaers, Per Kirkeby, etc.

"*Lidl*", in the words of Arthur Danto, "managed to do what Happenings were supposed to have done, namely, make something happen. It was not merely an episode in art history but helped shape the political reality of its time. Immendorff was arrested when he paraded in front of the parliament building in Bonn, dragging by his leg a block painted in the black, red, and gold of the German flag and with the word *LIDL* written on it. The *Lidl-Raum*, in Düsseldorf, as the center of such *Lidl* activities as teach-ins, was finally considered sufficiently threatening to authority to be cleared out by the police in 1969."

Political issues and the role of the individual in society and in history were important themes for the artist throughout his career. The *Café Deutschland* series, which Immendorff began in the late seventies and continued for several years, addressed questions around German identity and world history. The series met with great critical acclaim and was featured in the artist's first major museum exhibition, at Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, and later at Documenta VII, in 1982.

Exhibitions of Immendorff's work have traveled throughout Europe, Asia and the United States, and include major one-person exhibitions at Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Municipal Museum, The Hague; Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Kunstmuseum, Bonn; Kunsthalle Düsseldorf; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; and The Arts Club of Chicago, to name a few. The artist received the Order of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany in 1998. He lived and worked in Düsseldorf until his death in 2007.