

Philipp Timischl - Connaisseur du conflit / Connoisseur of conflict

May 4 – June 15, 2021

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English to German by LAYR

The connoisseur, that character excelling in the field of taste, presiding over the proper use of words and things, the one who is revered as much as feared in European salons, has disappeared from the stage. However, it is specifically this figure with a tight collar and dry verve - with the power to cut through the fog of manners - separating the “do“ from the “don’t“ that Philipp Timischl presents in this exhibition. But he is more of a litterateur than a metaphysician, more of a socialite than an academic, more of an artist than a scientist. He plays with the unspeakable part of the social clockwork through six appearances in the form of video-sculptures. Tic-Tac Tic-Tac...

The art exhibition is a social arena of which the vernissage is the climax. Stumbling voices, harsh judgments, the medical light of the gallery sparing no misstep. As usual with Timischl, this social ritual where one laughs at the top of one’s lungs to signify one’s belonging is staged at the threshold of a space whose outer membrane is as invisible as it is repulsive. *Try not to laugh (Dog fails)* and *Try not to laugh (Humans fail / Stupidity at its best)* are the Cerberus of this game that underlines the cruel part of laughter. Embellished with two sly-eyed beasts, these two works overlook the abyss of highly viral fail videos – Some felines are happy to see others fall.

This choreography is ruptured once again with *A man of importance, a man of affairs*. Taken from the English series *Agatha Christie’s Poirot*, the play dramatizes the sacrosanct conflict between the knowing and the holding, the intellectual and financial capital. These two gentlemen by *Egalité & Egalité*, a work dramatizing the famous sculpture of the Marianne by Léopold Morice, located on the Place de la République in Paris, which has become the privileged place of social struggles. Rendered as a duplicate by the artist, this work is an ironic commentary on a country obsessed with the idea of reifying its ideals into allegories to the point of transforming the capital into the Las Vegas Strip of monuments.

Every century has the icon it deserves, and it is now the turn of the Madonna from Calabaras, her crown styled by Chris Appleton to become our contemporary emblem. *Kim and Courtney FIGHT Over Work Ethic* features a sequence from the reality show *Keeping up with the Kardashians*, the new millennium vaudeville that canonized Kim. It is topped with a faux fur panel on which the title of the piece is tagged in agitprop PETA manner. Timischl made John Baldessari’s famous motto “I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art“ his own. Because no matter how well our Emily in Paris tries to navigate the european bohemia, a part of his soul will always oscillate between West Hollywood and the Steiermark. Even deeper still, he

ratifies a pop modernism celebrating the a priori unnatural marriage between the culture of entertainment and that, sacerdotal, of modernism. Our Clement Greenberg in TMZ sauce, restages the epic formalist quest for flatness, infused with pop calibrated for iPhones. *Yung Eilish / Billie Lean* is the proof. Combining the face of baby pop star Billie Eilish with baby rapper Yung Lean, this piece seems to enshrine mass-indie culture or the way late capitalism manufactures singularity, on an industrial scale.

The connoisseur, a figure of modernity related to the flâneur, is plunged here into the brackish waters of a culture no longer obeying the verticality of high and low. In this exhibition, he acquires a fractal dimension borrowing from both the urban rhythm of advertising screens and the cultural versatility of a Netflix catalog. From Poirot to Kim via Billie, Timischl is a master at organizing the conflict between forms, class habits, and his muses. A science of war which uses visual hyperstimulation, softs enucleations vis-a-vis the inopportune scrolling, an anthropology of the eye in short, which takes the risk of neurasthenia.