

RL16

Alexander Lieck

Die langen Tage

September 16 – December 18, 2021

Opening Hours Art Week:

Thu, Sept 16, 2021: 2–8 p.m.

Fri, Sept 17 und Sat, Sept 18, 2021: 12–7 p.m.

RL16 is pleased to open its 2nd floor space with a comprehensive solo exhibition by the artist Alexander Lieck (*1967 in Berlin).

Numbers look out at us from many of the walls and invite us to speculation. Sometimes quite clearly set, sometimes rather loosely positioned. We also see: canvases in strict rows, bright colors – spots and areas, printed paper. Photos, paintings on cardboard. Structures, in groups, numbered. Transparent drops, elegant white-primed funds.

They are numbers that probably don't mean anything to us and yet have a clear function in their context – for example, at a coat check or when making a phone call. Here, in one image, it is a checkroom number that remains anonymous from the Kunstverein Hannover, where Lieck exhibited in 2018 and handed in his jacket (*Wind Me Up 692/692*, 2021); and, clearly recognizable in the black-and-white photographs, the telephone number of a pawnshop: *Am Zoo* (2015). What do you do with them? Do you take them "literally", the numbers? Do you read them symbolically? Do you give them value – for art, life, the future? Or do you simply ignore them? Not to forget the cross and subtotals that can be formed ...

Painting by Numbers here becomes *Painting with Numbers* (2021): dropped slips of paper from number blocks, fixed on canvas. And yes, Duchamp had already dropped threads – meters – and preserved their respective positions. That was Dada back then: around 1913/14, the first avant-garde aesthetics of relativization, experimentation, deformation in art.

In the work *Zeitungsbogen*, pages of the FAZ feuilleton of 06.06.2020 become a display board, a document of time. As an example, one can wonder about the strangely jumbled selection of topics and texts and the accompanying illustrations and advertisements: "Fakten statt Gefühle" (Facts instead of feelings), "KOLLER. ALTE KUNST" (Koller. Ancient Art), "Weinen und Fressen zugleich, geht das?" (Crying and eating at the same time, is that possible?), "Der Tiger wird nicht müde" (The tiger does not get tired) and other headlines are written there. The 06.06.2020 was a Saturday in the pandemic summer of the last year. The newspaper was a random purchase.

The exhibition reflects in its compilation what characterizes the basic mood and working method of the artist, who studied and lived in the Netherlands for a longer period of time and whose work should rather be seen in the context of de Keyser, van Golden or Swennen than (only) of Polke or Krebber: Allowing for uncertainty ("negative capability", J. Keats) and the (more or less controlled) provocation of coincidences are approaches that often overtax us impatient people or even make us think of failure – even more so now in the pandemic. For Alexander Lieck, however, it is precisely this tightrope walk that continues to be an attraction and a sought-after test. In and with this attitude, which also has a certain inherent sustainability – a recycling of found objects and older canvases is always part of it – what he calls art is created and made visible when the right moment comes.

Die langen Tage of the summer of 2021 provided the atmospheric framework for the creation of most of the exhibits in this show – and as we all remember, these too were marked by corona, contact limitation and incidence. Alexander Lieck reacted to their vague determinability and the precarious question of what will become, if you will, with his own "number magic," which, however, does not reveal the future, but rather points us to the presence of the images.

What is your favorite number? Which number are you betting on?

Text: Barbara Buchmaier

Last exhibitions by the artist: 2020: *Japanese Hypnosis*, Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris (Solo), *The Immanent Horizon*, Kunstverein Bielefeld (Group), 2019: *An Autumn Pantomime*, Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris, 2018: *Mein Europa*, Kunstverein Hannover (Solo)