

GALERIE NÄCHST ST. STEPHAN

ROSEMARIE SCHWARZWÄLDER

GÜNTER UMBERG

FELD 2

28 APR – 30 JUL 2022

Opening: Thursday, April 28, 2022, 6 pm

Domgasse 6, 1010 Vienna

Günter Umberg's paintings are not limited by format. In his exhibition *FELD 2* (FIELD 2), he links architecture, space, and picture in a situation that highlights and makes palpable the main theme of his oeuvre: The relationship between the work and its beholders. It is this particular relationship through which the picture comes into existence in the first place. Although autonomous, the work is not independent of the site; rather, it is positioned in close relation to beholders through the spatial context.

As in previous shows at the Städtische Galerie im Städelschloss in Frankfurt, the Secession in Vienna, and the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, Umberg has constructed a spatial situation in our gallery on Domgasse that consists of a three-dimensional architectural structure that seems to intervene in the gallery space. Created as a sculptural object that we can walk around and that is not a picture support in the traditional sense, it structures the gallery into individual areas. The resulting spaces, sight lines, and vertical and horizontal structures guide our gaze and movements. They impact the length of time we reflect and integrate the dimensions of temporality, closeness, and distance in Umberg's overall artistic concept. Shaped like a letter L, the spatial intervention consists of high partitions that separate two works – a photograph and a monochrome painting – positioned on either side of the gallery. While this prevents us from looking at both works at the same time, or the works from interacting with one another, new and unexpected perspectives arise that enrich our engagement with them.

The exhibited works reflect Umberg's idea of a network of relations in which even the monochrome painting exists only in physical experience and perception. If we choose one of the two entryways created by the partitions, we encounter a photograph that refers to a heterogeneous, three-dimensional structure both formally and thematically: The picture shows the spectacular room installation *Ein Bilderhaus* (A Picture House), which the artist created in 2004 for Art Basel Unlimited. Through his idiosyncratic, large wood construction, which creates rooms, passageways, and structures but does not present an autonomous artwork in the traditional sense, Umberg navigates themes such as appearance, presence, absence, memory, expectations, and fantasy.

FELD 2 transforms the gallery into a field of experience, into an "architecture-cum-picture-cum-painting" that, as an overall spatial construction, functions for Umberg as a picture support and metaphor for his idea of what is a picture.

GÜNTER UMBERG was born in Bonn, Germany, in 1942. He lives and works in Cologne, Germany, and Corberon, France.

Selected exhibitions: 2015 Bernard Frize - Günter Umberg, Fondation Fernet-Branca, St. Louis, France; 2009 Museum für Lackkunst, Münster, Germany; 2006-2007 Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland; 2006 Städtische Galerie, Karlsruhe, Germany; 2005 Fred Thieler Preis für Malerei, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany; 2000 Body of Painting, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; 1998 Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium; 1997 Busch-Reisinger Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; 1993 Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany; 1992 Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf, Germany; 1991 Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, Germany; 1990 Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, Germany; 1986 P.S.1, Long Island, New York; 1985 Städtische Galerie im Städelschloss, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Solo exhibitions at the Galerie nächst St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwälder, Vienna, in 2015, 2008, 1998 and 1993; In 2018 Umberg participated in the group show *Just So Stories* and in 1999 he arranged the group exhibition „Der Künstler als Kurator“ ("The Artist as Curator").

Selected museum collections: Argauer Kunstmuseum, Aarau, Switzerland; Busch-Reisinger-Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; FNAC, Paris, France; Fonds municipal d'art contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland; Frac Bourgogne, Dijon, France; MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble, France; Musée d'art contemporain, Lyon, France; Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf, Germany; Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen, Germany; Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany; San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, California; Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Germany; Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe, Germany; Staatliches Museum, Schwerin, Germany; Städtische Galerie, Würzburg, Germany; Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany; Valencia Arte Contemporáneo, Valencia.