

With the "Monster Grid Paintings" exhibition, Galerie Bernd Kugler presents a new collection of works by the German artist Bara. The pieces on display are based on the concept of the grid which Bara varies as a principle of visual appropriation.

Using them in a similar way to that in his previous paintings and sculptures, Bara's two-dimensional painted grids call to mind shelving or display cases. In the current exhibition however, he extends them over and beyond the canvas on to the wall so that the pictures themselves become part of a colossal matrix that sprawls out in the gallery.

Bara has augmented his paintings with real objects which, according to the artist, needed to be rediscovered and re-evaluated in the process of an assessment, such as the sets of teeth enlarged for didactic purposes. The Halloween masks, previously used by Bara as casting moulds, have now been placed directly into the picture alongside the painted squares, circles and silhouettes of concrete heads. Joining them are perfume-flacons, amateurpainting, transparencies and private photos. These are, in part, arranged on the pictures like items in a display case, in part drifting between or on the grids. Bara's main interest here lies in the expansion and variation of grids – they superimpose each other, both negatively and positively, they move upwards and downwards, they intervene in space or stagnate in the form of a diagram. In addition, the manner in which the grids touch the objects on display or are touched by them changes their proportion to one another. The result is a confusing composition that aims for a totalitarian principle. The grid, then, can be rediscovered in all areas – the Pinhead from the film "Hellraiser" is, in that sense, first and foremost a grid. And, in the same sense, the whole thing becomes a sort of artist's virtual display case or a metaphor for the Hellraiser brain. The equal-sized panels appear as screens of distorted, internalised cultural reminders. Between them, the Pac-Man hovers, an abstract figure by its very nature. It has to eat its way through dots in a labyrinth, while at the same time avoiding monsters. If it eats a "power pellet", it gains the temporary ability to pursue the monsters itself. Once all the dots have been eaten, the player moves up to the next level.

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