

SOPHIE REINHOLD

HALLE

BEWUSSTE VERNACHLÄSSIGUNG

IST AUCH KEINE LÖSUNG

(DELIBERATE NEGLIGENCE IS NOT THE ANSWER EITHER)

FÜR

06.10.–24.11.2024

The first retrospective solo exhibition of Berlin artist Sophie Reinhold at the Halle für Kunst Lüneburg brings together paintings and sculptures from the last fifteen years—from the end of Reinhold's studies at the Kunsthochschule Weißensee to the artist's first paintings using marble powder and other newly produced works.

Reinhold's early object works, shown here for the first time, already reveal what drives the artist's practice: the fact that the production of surfaces is fundamentally a three-dimensional process and leads to the fabrication of false realities. For example, the transparent surface of an empty found picture frame with a passe-partout, which Reinhold wrapped with plastic foil and then painted with proliferating gestures of color, seems to deceive the central perspective of the viewer's gaze (*Ohne Titel (you saved me)*, 2010). We are also tricked by a free-standing sculpture in the middle of the exhibition space that looks like a historic school blackboard from the nineteenth century with a marble-plastered surface. Originally an easel of the kind that the young aspiring painter would be familiar with from the hallowed schools of the classical art canon, Reinhold took it apart and reassembled it in a new form in order to confront painting as an institution with ironic self-will.

Illustrating how escaping into authoritarianism can also protect us from the fear of freedom, as Erich Fromm once described it, a more recent painting using bitumen and marble powder, (*Paragraph (SS)*, 2022), demands our obedience like a sign. Here, the constructed authoritarian visual statement of an oversized double "S"—a "section sign" and a symbol of order representing the business of lawyers and civil servants—promises a thriving democratic rule of law while intermittently threatening to morph into a totalitarian insignia.

Similar to Reinhold's early sculptures, these jute canvases reworked with bitumen and marble powder that have become her trademark challenge the constancy of a single perception—the principle of mimesis as an instrument of "popular" populisms—while exposing one or two beautiful muses of epistemic thinking in the process (*untitled (November 23)*, 2023/24). Initially covered with several layers of ground marble and pigments using a trowel and the artist's hands, the surfaces here are sculpturally built up, removed, and finally polished with sandpaper by another hand (thanks to Kurt Reinhold and Johan Meister). What remains are the artist's subjective traces: cracks, brush marks, faux pas,

scribbles, and ciphers that have etched themselves into the skin of the painting like scars of age (*Träum Weiter III*, 2023).

The recurring form of a spiral is also inscribed in Reinhold's surfaces like a scar, a lasting reminiscence. A spiral painting on wheels, for example, imitates (and satirizes) the cliché of a "painting in space" that can potentially be moved from A to B (*Spirale II (Malerei im Raum)*, 2015). In the style of graffiti, a term originally used to describe inscriptions carved into stone in antiquity, Reinhold allows this illegal form of aesthetic vandalism against the exquisite taste of the masses to flourish in her painting below "normal" viewing height. The spiral shape and the artist's signature are not carved into the surface of the image or painted onto it, but are the result of paint sprayed away by air pressure. It becomes clear here that for Reinhold, the studio was and always is a place where art is a primitive need for action rather than an end product, a place where banal activity and failed experiments, indeed the sometimes shameful (but by all means humorous) search for art, can become part of art itself.

What appears to be a makeshift and hastily cobbled together wooden ladder leading into the unknown on one wall is in fact a frame for the concrete structure pierced by steel rods right next to it. In the white cube, this represents the modernist ideal of an image, while incidentally exuding a touch of romanticism towards dilapidated *Plattenbau* concrete tower blocks (*untitled (could have been poetic)*, 2012). Here, Reinhold removes the hierarchy and materiality of the otherwise highly interdependent decorative ensemble of the image and its supporting frame. Instead of hanging on the wall and being "supported," it stands on its own two feet:

"Identity is always an open, complex and unfinished game—always »under construction« (in Europe as much as in the Middle East, Africa or the Caribbean). It always moves into the future by a symbolic detour through the past."

(Stuart Hall)

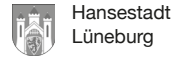
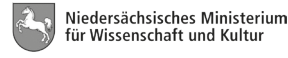
Most of these early works by Reinhold internalize the incessant artistic pursuit against all dogmatic "isms" and movements ahead, strictly against, or beyond them. In fact, Reinhold's quest seems like rather an "off-modern" digression (Svetlana Boym), following

missed opportunities and untrodden paths like a spiral, improvising, speculating, and exploring the ruins, echoes, residues, and shadows of factual realities instead of distorting them. Reinhold's "off" is about life with difference, life as a construction site that may never fully arrive in Western modernity (not an unpopular accusation against "others" and the "Ossi"). This is an "off" that reflects the abnormal, even "irregular" movements of history, its post/fascist, post/socialist, and post/colonial legacies, which were cut out of the dominant versions of the unification fairy tale of the return to "German normality" and the tradition of poets and thinkers—including the losers of modernization. The question is, who actually wants to arrive in political modernity, which is "less an engine of tolerance than of conquest" (Mahmood Mamdani)?

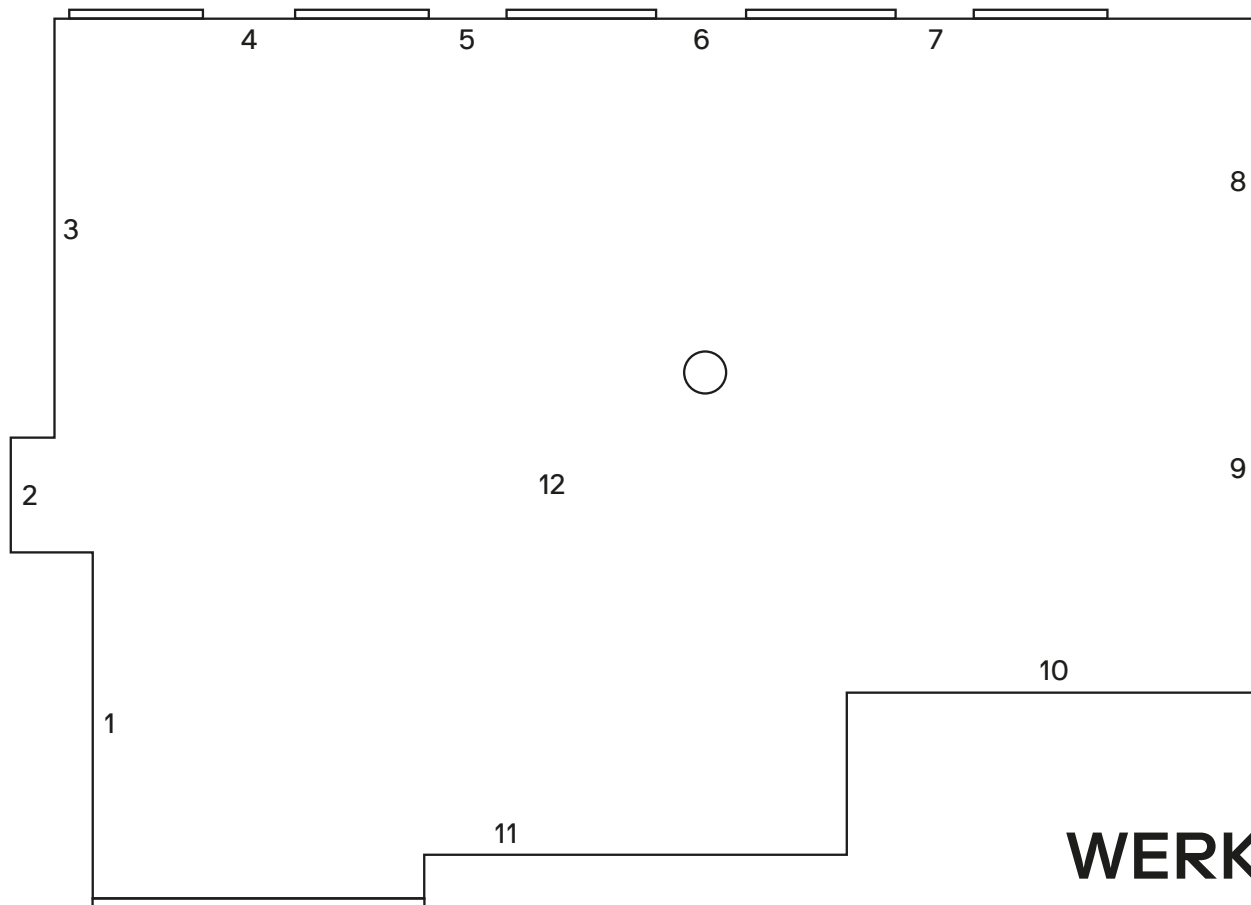
Ultimately, all of Reinhold's works gathered here are not only united by the question of what a picture is, but also, more importantly, the question of how to read an image beyond looking as an act of taking possession. Anthropomorphic letters on a painting on jute read "M-o-n-e-y" (*MONEY III*, 2021). Somewhere between typography and illustrative depictions of humans, like those by Peter Flötner from the heyday of the Renaissance, for example, they metamorphose on the wall into incredibly complex half-truths: "Capital is smarter, money is the wall." Meanwhile, Reinhold's painting on the other side of the exhibition space counters: *Wer will schon dreckiges Silber erben (Who wants to inherit dirty silver*, 2020). From the dynamic perspective of "dysposition" (Didi-Huberman), Reinhold's works undermine higher forms of representation, the propagandistic efficacy of images, and their iconographic truisms. What remains for us viewers to look at are not pictorial representations of commodified, fetishized surfaces, but rather processes of image formation, indeed the performance and phantomization of an image that looks back in all its perceptible forms, layers, narratives, and temporalities. The melting emblem of a little devil in Reinhold's very first painting using ground marble (*portrait of an unknown*, 2011) literally looks back and calls for a different way of looking—a way of looking without boundaries, which goes beyond all over-representation, beyond external attributions, beyond projected images of the enemy, indeed beyond blindness, to the dark side of enlightenment, to its shameful parts, and is willing at some point to recognize what is under-represented in the image. After all, deliberate neglect is not the answer either.

The exhibition is curated by Elisa R. Linn.

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KUNST



WERKLISTE LIST OF WORKS

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| <p>1 <i>MONEY III</i>, 2021
Öl auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Oil and marble powder on jute
110 × 120 cm</p> | <p>8 <i>the end of here and now</i>, 2024
Öl, Marmor­mehl, pigmentiertes Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Oil, marble powder and pigmented marble powder on jute
150 × 180 cm</p> |
| <p>2 <i>Spirale II (Malerei im Raum)</i>, 2015
Öl auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute, Rollen / Oil on marble powder on jute, wheels
100 × 85 cm</p> | <p>9 <i>Träum Weiter III</i>, 2023
Graphit auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Graphite on marble powder on jute
220 × 170 cm</p> |
| <p>3 <i>Wer will schon dreckiges Silber erben</i>, 2020
Öl auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Oil on marble powder on jute
180 × 200 cm</p> | <p>10 <i>untitled (could have been poetic)</i>, 2012
Holzrahmen, Beton, Stahlstangen / Wooden frame, concrete, steel rods
160 × 43 cm; 200 × 42 cm</p> |
| <p>4 <i>portrait of an unknown</i>, 2011
Öl auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Oil on marble powder on jute
40 × 50 cm</p> | <p>11 <i>Ohne Titel</i>, 2010
Öl auf transparenter Folie, Rahmen (gefundenes Objekt), gebogene MDF-Platte / Oil on transparent foil, frame (found object), curved MDF plate
47 × 57 × 50 cm</p> |
| <p>5 <i>Ohne Titel (you saved me)</i>, 2010
Öl auf transparenter Folie, Rahmen (gefundenes Objekt) / Oil on transparent foil, frame (found object)
50 × 60 cm</p> | <p>12 <i>untitled</i>, 2010/11
Öl auf Holz / Oil on wood
191.5 × 60 cm</p> |
| <p>6 <i>Paragraph (SS)</i>, 2022
Bitumen auf Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Bitumen on marble powder on jute
220 × 190 cm</p> | <p>Während der Eröffnung wird eine Playlist mit 47 Songs gespielt, die von Sophie Reinhold zusammengestellt wurde.</p> |
| <p>7 <i>untitled (November 23)</i>, 2023/24
Öl auf Bitumen, Marmor­mehl auf Jute / Oil on bitumen, marble powder on jute
40 × 50 cm</p> | <p>A playlist with 47 songs put together by Sophie Reinhold will be playing during the opening.</p> |