

Absolut
Sanna Helena Berger
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Shahin Zarinbal, Berlin

Absolut is a new series of works through which Berger presents antithetical artistic positions to her standard practice where pure white, symbolising *the institutional*, is contrasted with lived-in hues and shades of white, proposing the colour as both material and discourse.

This work consists of three formal absolute gestures - readymade, *unreadymade* and object. A divergent act through which Berger highlights her auto-didactic approach to the artistic practice as continuous learning and an absolute dedication to a reflexive principle of critique, by inverting her come-to-be aesthetics with the obverse *look* – which is after all a synonym for reflection – within her artistic language.

The three works hold within them a duality, legible both as sculpture and theory which stems from Berger's own heutagogical understanding and exploration of art and theory applying her 'unschooled' eye to the process as a whole.

Thus we are left with statements as well as questions? We encounter immediacy and levels of legibility beyond its acute aesthetic. Whilst she does not shy away from the possibility of an audience reading of the works as; shelf, sofa and books, Berger intends, by means of displaying these existing banalities, to show the work as a sculptural syllabus for her always ongoing studies.

The readymade-cum-monolith stands with its back to the front, negating the viewer's first impression and reveals itself to be only when rounding its corner.

The said is as much as the unsaid.

There is no intended front and there is no intended back, there is only the intended presence of an astute, absolute found object, both an archetype and an anomaly. The unreadymade velvet covered square floorpiece abstracts its reworked material purpose, becoming instead a frame opposing normalized conditions of display where Berger plays with her theme of *sans motif*. An absence becomes a square central poem, since that which it frames is after all that which is not on show.

The size-specific pedestal, built from material which references what we often find in Berger's practice, melanin, holds a volume of literary tomes where gaps within the grid show themselves as a clear presence through their clear absence, the discursive specificity of the aesthetic circumstance of the time in which we work, the environment within which we work and the voice we're afforded as a tool.

In the backroom which is the front room, in an accidental but flirted with Asher-ambience a triptych should have hung, made for the specific experience of entering through the gallery backroom, in which traditionally works are kept hidden from the general public and shown only to collectors and other v.i.p's.

This work was supposed to be shown to all and coupled with a performative gesture of the gallerist opening the work at visitor's request. White gloves would have been adorned to touch the genuine velvet covered triptych and would have been what *is* inside, open, visible but also what it *is* outside, closed and hidden, a box. A Schrödinger's cat kind of thought experiment could be entertained when the motif is removed from the triptych.

Because unless opened, inside it, contained, would be its ecclesiastical potential, albeit as an unknown iconographic promise, or aura, determined by the history of art's proof that triptychs most often depicted a religious motif or brimmed with religious allegories and symbolism. And since the unknown often has more potential for affect than the known, our Schrödinger's cat box-cum-cupboard allegory could imply that the closed triptych means god is dead, and/or alive within it.

However because of an issue with production, this work was never completed to the standard it needed to be and so it was left out the show but present as intention and proof that artworks do not always turn out, through circumstance, as you might have liked.