

Zucker

*Certain art forms in which purity – or refinement – prevails, whether material, conceptual, minimalist, productive or event-based, can be considered the art of the residual Idea. Not because it is residual, it arouses less, on the contrary, an infinite desire for meaning and the presentation of meaning.*

Jean-Luc Nancy. The trace of Art

Felix Kiessling navigates different interests and disciplines, inventing both his own tradition and visual language in a body of work that has no apparent linearity. He draws on references ranging from Bauhaus to Fred Sandback's minimalist vocabulary, in research that crosses neuroscience, psychology, politics and philosophy. When we look closely at his work, we see solemn reflections on what is all-too-human – that which resists in times of extreme artificiality, dreams of immortality and the standardisation of life.

The works presented — *Arbeit* (2025), *Du* (2025), *Sitzgelegenheiten* (2025), *Mono Bench* (2025), *Tisch* (2025) and *Handlauf* (2025) — question the body as a porous medium of affections. The objects subtly point to a critique of the hedonistic and consumerist culture that pushes us into lives of isolation and emotional poverty, while we seek excesses that fill some part of our enormous existential voids.

Kiessling perceives life and reality as chemical reactions burning in the midst of the frozen universe. In *Arbeit*, his thinking finds humanity and care in the process of corrosion of industrial aluminium plates by fatty acids from the sweat of himself his wife and son:

“I concentrated and chemically processed my sweat and the sweat of my family (me dreaming feverishly, Marietta cycling, my son sleeping/developing his brain) all reality is in this endogenous bodily concentrate. In some works, I dipped fabric and threw it over aluminium plates (creating chaotic figures); in others, I applied it over time and a lighter, blurred and less defined figure emerged.”

In these almost scientific experiments, the reaction of sweat on aluminium produces a surprising abstract image that records the chemical process and the passage of time. The impersonality of the inanimate, pragmatic plate, in contrast to the warm affection and care in the gesture that collects the sweat of loved ones, confronts disparate and complementary feelings in the same piece: candour and strangeness, warmth and coldness, delicacy and brutality, memory and presence, the artificial and the organic. The same questions also underpin *Du*, a mirror that reflects more the interior of warm, changeable bodies than the surface. Like *Arbeit*, this work thinks of art no longer as a producer of images, but as a marker of experience and transmutation.

The artist observes that, unlike exhibitions with more theatrical environments, *Zucker* is a raw installation that comments on reality without being dogmatic. It is a very personal show without a clearly constructed narrative, as it is not about meaning, but about seeing.

The works *Sitzgelegenheiten*, *Mono Bench* and *Tisch* created with Frederik Fialin, make up an unconventional living room. The first sculpture was created on a concrete structure of a Berlin public bench designed in the 1960s. The second chair, based on the same principles, reduces the materiality and offers response to its 1960's counterpart. Both invite use and touch, exposing the marks of tactile exploration. In this sense, Kiessling hopes that people will interact with the raw aluminium work, instead of looking at it in a hierarchical structure.

*Zucker's* works speak of a society obsessed with unrealistic standards of physical perfection, hygiene and fantasy smells. The artificiality of hard, perennial materials clashes with the finitude of the organic body and the truth of its sebaceous secretions. In a way, as the artist reflects, these works are a little embarrassing because they are more personal than any image could be. Because they are so direct, immediate, unfiltered, raw and human.

Daniela Labra