



# Wardrobing

## Mitchel Cumming

### Dec 18, 2022 – Jan 8, 2023

Clockwise from entry

*Stoffbild (wine/yellow), 2022*

two T-Shirts purchased from Uniqlo Carousel, displayed for the duration of the exhibition, before being returned for a full refund in line with the company's change of mind policy.

*Stoffbild (black/orange), 2022*

two T-Shirts purchased from Uniqlo Carousel, displayed for the duration of the exhibition, before being returned for a full refund in line with the company's change of mind policy.

*Stoffbild (red/blue), 2022*

two T-Shirts purchased from Uniqlo Carousel, displayed for the duration of the exhibition, before being returned for a full refund in line with the company's change of mind policy.

With special thanks to David Atwood, Shannon Lyons and Tim Woodward.



## **Wardrobing\*: Three Temporarymades for Palermo**

I've long felt that Duchamp's readymades - the nominal conversion of functional objects into works of art - were not simply intended as a challenge to the definition of the aesthetic, but sought to remind us of the constructed nature of *all* conceptual categories. Things in themselves do not have essential properties or qualities that make them fit (or unfit) for admission into this or that innate class. Rather, those classes are built - partitioned - in service of a particular ordering of the world. To think then that, once nominated, the readymade should have to remain an artwork in perpetuity seems anathema to the radical challenge to taxonomies implied by the original gesture itself.

As a de/nomination of the readymade, the temporarymade involves a form of catch-and-release that doesn't imagine the aesthetic as an endpoint, but rather a transitory moment in the life of an object. As a work, the temporarymade is only complete when its object is relinquished: given the opportunity to move again between categories (or beyond them).

From a pragmatic perspective, the temporarymade is also a proposition for a financially sustainable material arts practice. By exploiting loopholes in - or testing the conceptual limits of - the returns policies of large retailers, these technically unused goods (what is a readymade if not an object robbed of its utility?) can be returned, and the artist reimbursed.

Mitchel Cumming  
December 2022

\* “Wardrobing” is a term used to describe a form of soft retail fraud in which shoppers will purchase an item of clothing (often something they can't really afford), wear it once (to a special event, for a photoshoot, etc) and then return it.