

Judith Hopf

*A sudden walk*

opening may 17th

kaufmann repetto is glad to announce *A Sudden Walk*, the first solo show of Judith Hopf at the gallery.

Judith Hopf's work debuted, in the early nineties, as an ever-changing process. The frequent collaboration with other artists, the invasion on non-institutional spaces, as well as the mingling between art and social action, between learning and teaching, describe an attitude of extreme openness, indicating the artist's will to re-found, from time to time, the premises of her own work. By relying on a wide range of medium including videos, installations, performances, sculptures and graphics, Judith Hopf analyzes the contradictions of contemporary life through humor, caricature and an attitude that is both playful and subversive.

In *The Sudden Walk*, the brief novel by Franz Kafka which has inspired the title of the show, the simple decision of taking an unforeseen stroll, evading from the trap of ordinary domestic routines, opens an horizon of freedom and emancipation of the individual.

Starting from this perspective, in the two main spaces of the gallery Judith Hopf presents two similar but not equal scenarios, each one showing several objects appearing as duplicates, but actually slightly diverging from their own homologous, therefore sparking off a process of subjectification that corresponds to the liberating discover of one's own alterity.

Constriction and freedom are the two extremes between which the exhibited objects are positioned: according to the different perspective from which they are observed, the glass structures may look either like cages or aerial minimal sculptures. The tiger, which is both prey and predator, seems to be evading while at the same time entrapped within an impossible square. The small tables, through a minimal intervention, become animated characters that stroll around the exhibition spaces. Strong of their ambivalent nature, all the works appear at the same time comical and threatening, like the bright-colored whip hung on the wall; or just like power, when associated to foolishness.

The constant humanization of the object, characterizing most of Judith Hopf's works, subverts any existing hierarchy, while at the same time, quoting Henri Bergson's essay *Laughter*, reminds us that "There is nothing comical besides what is properly human".

In the video *Zählen!*, a group of clown-bourgeois make fun of an horse while challenging him to do a series of subtractions, strong of their anthropocentric convictions, that are promptly eradicated by the animal, which turns out to be able to make calculation. In this video the artist appears to be siding with the horse, as his guardian and faithful companion.

Judith Hopf's work constantly reminds us how foolishness represents an integral part of human nature: but it is this very inclusive attitude, where the sublime pairs with what's absurd and ridiculous, that enables the artist to create new spaces of debate and autonomy.