



Urs Frei
07.03. - 13.06.20

The current exhibition at Galerie Mark Müller invites you to visit Urs Frei's studio. It seems as if the artist has unceremoniously moved his workplace to the gallery rooms. Like an experimental arrangement, the works present an inventory of the most recent works in Urs Frei's processual oeuvre.

The entire room serves as an exhibition setting, from the walls, floor and ceiling to the large window façade, with which the exhibition spills from the inside out. Oval works on paper draw the gaze from outside into the room. The elliptical gap in the middle of the picture allows views from both sides. This two-sidedness is also inherent in the artist's works. A classical division of the picture carrier into top and bottom or front and back only results from the spatial and contextual positioning and can change accordingly. In this way the artist questions conventional views of art and at the same time opens up multiple readings of his works.

In addition to works on paper, canvas and wood, Urs Frei has also brought objects and carpets with him. The latter serve as a pad for his work, on which he places the image carrier and paints them directly with acrylic paint. Originating from a necessity to avoid the paper carrier sticking to the floor or tearing due to the application of paint, the staffage now comes to the fore as an independent work. In the same way as the canvases, the former base shows traces of paint, sometimes allowing forms to emerge clearly outlined, sometimes more hazily. There are no limits to Urs Frei's handling of materials. Existing works are dismantled and reassembled, enriched with found objects and covered with acrylic paint. Especially Frei's objects transfer the colour into the sculptural context, the division of genres dissolves. Cut up paint cans are also included in Frei's wall objects, as are wooden strips, wire and iron rods, metal buckets and packaging material. The core of Urs Frei's collecting, however, is not the accumulation of things. Rather, he is interested in possible combinations, connections and correlations of the individual elements to form a whole. Already Duchamp said: "The real artist is the collector". Urs Frei's presentation shows a collecting artist who is not afraid to recombine what has already been produced, to discard what is already there and to constantly allow new connections.

The exuberant abundance of objects, flat paintings and sculptural interventions give visitors a glimpse of the artist's studio. For a short time, the works seem to have found their place before Urs Frei's creative process begins anew.

Barbara Ruf