



Media Information

INSTALLATION OF INSTALLATIONS

Jonathan Monk is known for his witty appropriation of art history, his re-staging of conceptual and minimalist art works, his critique of both the exhibition circus and the aesthetic category of originality. Exhibit Model Four is an installation of photo-papers, depicting his works in different exhibition contexts. Site-specifically modified, it has been shown before in Muttentz, Copenhagen, and Montreal. For its fourth iteration, at KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst he combined it with works by fellow artists, the “invited guests”. The artist book resumes this approach conceptually.

Bielefeld/Berlin, February 6, 2020 – It might at first seem as if Jonathan Monk’s (*1969) show at KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst was a disappointment, since it did not feature a single original work by the English conceptual artist. Instead, all of the walls were covered with photographs of the installations he has done for other exhibitions over the last two decades. In these photos, various spaces and times, perspectives and dimensions, zoomed-in details and zoomed-out wide angles, are seamlessly interwoven. Is this a purely documentary show designed for insiders who want to mutually reaffirm each other in their knowledge about the chronology and strategies of the artist’s shows?

“Budget constraints helped force the project into a specific direction. I took the opportunity to make an exhibition using pictures of other exhibitions, thus creating—hopefully—something new from something old or older,” said Monk about his conceptual approach.

Anyone who is not familiar with the work of the English conceptual artist is immediately immersed in a confusing experience of space; the clever organization of the black-and-white images covering the wall creates illusionistic trompe l’oeil effects, challenging our perception to the utmost. Monk says:

“How and why one installation connects to another is carefully coordinated randomness. Certain images work well next to others, but this might not have anything to do with what is being represented. I look at the photographs and decide how connections can be made—a seamlessly unhurried view from one space to the next. If a perfect connecting point can be found, then the virtual exhibition can continue. The edge of a wall meets the side of a door meets a crack in the floor or the edge of a painting.”

This “wallpaper” initially re-structured the space so that the real and the photographed spaces seemed to sometimes meld. In addition, the works pictured were strikingly recontextualized through surprising juxtapositions and dimensional shifts. The closer we looked, the deeper we dove into an intellectual puzzle whose theme was modern art’s claim to originality and how it is exhibited in an era when it is all subject to digital reproduction.

On top of this multilayered network Monk added his “invited guests”—real works by various artists from his private collection, hung in an associative manner—giving the whole show yet another layer. From Sol LeWitt, Ian Wilson, and Bas Jan Ader, to Alighiero Boetti, Martin Kippenberger, and Rosemarie Trockel, the “invited guests” opened up—with each other and in conjunction with the “wallpaper” of photos—a nearly infinite weave of formal and contextual relationships.

Exhibit Model Four – Plus Invited Guests at the KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst in Berlin was the fourth, expanded version of a concept for a retrospective exhibition that had already been seen at the

Kunsthaus Baselland, the Galerie Nicolai Wallner in Copenhagen, and at VOX in Montreal. And the concept will be continued, because Monk sees it as “an endless accompaniment to my work practice.”

The newly released artist’s book *Exhibit Model Four – Plus Invited Guests* adds yet another layer: “It hopefully stops the project moving forward, just long enough to focus, before it melts into another space.” At the same time, the publication is an integral component of the exhibition series: “Once it exists, it’s possible for me to move forwards,” Monk is convinced. And so it remains intriguing.



Jonathan Monk | Exhibit Model Four – plus invited guests

ISBN 978-3-7356-0650-1

18 × 27 cm

92 Pages, 37 colored and 12 b/w illustrations

Softcover

Languages: German, English

Editor

Andreas Fiedler / KINDL – Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst

Text

Andreas Fiedler, Magdalena Mai, Dorothea Zwirner

Design

Karsten Heller, DiG Studio, Berlin

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PRESS CONTACT

Sara Buschmann

PR & Marketing

+49 (0)521-95 00 814

sara.buschmann@kerberverlag.com