# DOWN TO THE VERY LAST DETAIL

JAN HOET

*“What we see of things are those things”*

Fernando Pessoa

Various divergent considerations prompted me to devise the exhibition (Z)art for the ABRART gallery in Mohringen. One of them was my own personal view of Stuttgart, which I got to know forty years ago as a city of museums with constructivist and later also monochrome tendencies.
Yet it wasn’t just these abstract motives which induced me to carry out this project. Karin Abt-Staubinger, who is stepping outside the ossified structures of socially prescribed norms and taking untrodden paths with her bold new gallery concept, was for me perhaps the most important reason to work on this exhibition.
In (z)art I have attempted to offer the new gallery ABTART a far-reaching thematic and conceptual reorientation with an exhibitian of works by international contemporary artists. A selected piece by Willi Bauwmeister and items associated with Stuttgart’s famous Weisenhof Estate form indirect historical reference points for the artists I have included in this exhibition. This juxposition illustrates once again just how close contemporary currents are to the historically established elements from the era of modernism. By examining the history of works of art which have entered popular consciousness, young artists are progressively constructing a new history. A continuous subtle exchange, a dialectical connection exists between the two _ between past and future. But unlike the striving for aesthetic universality in constructivism and concrete art or minimalism’s claim to objectivity, nowadays the personal expression of artists and consequently their sense of (their own) vulnerability are increasingly shining through. Back in the 1970s, Beuys declared that self-determination had become a central concept in the age of individuation, resulting in the intensified subjectivation of art. This also explains the calculated mistakes deliberately included, which in the works of most of the artists featured in this exhibition carefully undermine the absolutist with great precision and lead to an intensely individual form of expression.
(Z)art can also be viewed as a countermovement to contemporary tendencies: deliateness putting up gentle resistance to the prevailing vogue of making exhibitions spectacular. Against the background of people blowing their own trompet in today’s art, and in view of the global crisis affecting us all, (Z)art is endeavouring to find new ways. To eliminate any misunderstandings right from the start: the artists themselves are not directly responding to the crisis or even illustrating in their works. Such an interpretation is possible - but by no means obligatory - merely from the combination of works in this exhibition.
What is important to me is searching for directions and movements, for works of art which in this context speak a similarly restrained language, and which manage to discreetly get their message across by delicately touching the senses instead of extrovertly making a splash. Despite all their differences, the works selected and compared definitely have at least one thing in common: they are works which could only have attained their final form in the intimacy of a studio - outlined by the mental thought process and guided by the pronounced sense of touch of the creative hand of each artist.
The Greek word ‘poein’ appears apt to me in this connection,denoting not only creative composition, aesthetic setting and the handmade but also poetry. We comprehend delicateness in art in a similar way to a blind person exploring their surroundings by

touch. Unlike the loud, provocative, atavistic works of art primarily intended to activate and stimulate the viewer's curiosity and to fuel puzzlement, the art on display at the exhibition (Z)art invites visitors to reverently concentrate on the detail from which it arose and to turn their attention to the delicate act of creation. The intention is to induce a state of contemplation and to encourage visitors to internalise what they have seen. The works ambiavently reveal themselves in a manner which is succinct and simultaneously easily remembered - but also transitory. Yet what remains of the appearance of what has been seen is the impressions.

Contribution of Jan Hoet  for the catalogue (Z)art .
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The  catalogue is available by gallery AbtArt: info@abtart.com

Artists
Katinka Bock
Michal Bundy
Alberto Garutti
Adam Gillam
Manfred Hoinka
Caroline McCarthy
Ulrich Meister
Helen Mirra
Martin Schwenk
Wim Starkenburg
Kim Tae-Kyun
Thousand Pictures
Jens Wolf