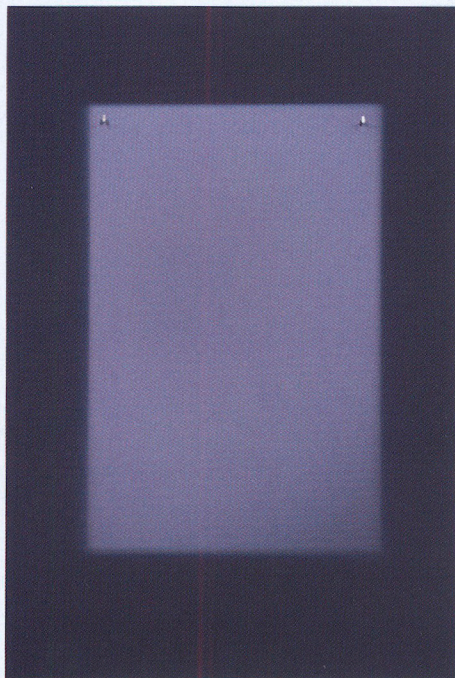


HANS-PETER FELDMANNIA

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HANS-PETER FELDMANN
LIGHT SPOT 10, 2013

Spotlight, hooks
130 x 85 cm
Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin



Since winning the Hugo Boss Prize back in 2010, Hans-Peter Feldmann – somewhat of an “artist’s artist” until then – has been drawing new attention with survey shows and solo exhibitions shown around the world almost continuously. That’s a lot of commotion for an artist who declaratively focuses on the mundane: “I am not interested in the high points of life. Only five minutes of every day are interesting. I want to show the rest, normal life.” His prolific search for the normal in “normal life” is defined most famously by collecting elements of popular visual culture and presenting them as accumulations of repetitions and variations of presentation. Intense focus, however, is not the point of these assemblages – the eye sifts and shuffles, lingering here and there on unusual curiosities. Feldmann doesn’t present an exhaustive survey on any given subject. He looks for its “average” value.

During Berlin’s Gallery Weekend, three galleries presented different central aspects of Feldmann’s practice. This provided an opportunity to explore the leading motivations of Feldmann’s artistic approach in concise, smaller scale presentation, as opposed to the extensive survey up at Hamburg’s Deichtorhallen they coincided with. At Mehdi Chouakri, hooks and carefully adjusted spots were “hung” rather closely together on the walls. To invoke a National Gallery-style hanging and its docile environment, the walls were painted

HANS-PETER FELDMANN
FRAU MIT BLAUEM AUGE, 2013

Oil on canvas, old frame



THREE BERLIN SHOWS BRING AUDIENCES CLOSER TO THE ARTIST AND HIS FASCINATION FOR THE MUNDANE

a lush blue and sombre green. Dwelling on the transient beauty of “normal life”, Feldmann reaffirms its artistic value to a dramatic albeit entertaining effect. The show – mounted by the gallerist with instructions from the artist – was allegedly a product of happenstance: the artist mistook a rectangle of light and two hooks on the wall of a gallery booth at an art fair during installation for the artwork itself. Leave it to Feldmann to procure an entire locus based on (anecdotal) confusion.

Johnen Galerie showed “Kunstaussstellung”. Here, we witnessed Feldmann’s interest in the cultural spectrum of image production, along with his disruption of concessions about value accumulation and other art market conventions. The artist, who also collects Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century paintings among many other things, commissions specific interventions to the oil-on-canvas portraits; red noses, crossed eyes, censored blackout strips. The art world staples of value and of authorship are rendered meaningless under his command, while the inclusive and accessible humour of these works

HANS-PETER FELDMANN
BOOKSHELF, 2002

Courtesy Wien Lukatsch, Berlin
Photo: Petra Graf



raises the question of why this artist has been considered “something for insiders” for so long.

Wien Lukatsch, a gallery and specialised art-book store, fittingly focused on Feldmann’s book work: an important show, as his publications have been instrumental in establishing the genre as a recognisable form of artistic practice. Here we get a glimpse into the years of Feldmann’s hiatus from the art world, when he tended a gift shop in Düsseldorf. While selling tin toys, Feldmann of course continued to collect and catalogue images. He also published a series of mail-order booklets dedicated to thimbles, the rare “Fingerhut Post”, on display here. This felt like the most intimate of the three shows, not only because photographs from the artist’s private life are also on display.

Layers of humour and subversion still preside in Feldmann’s obsessive fascination with ready-made imagery, but it is precisely the level of preoccupation that creates a sense of revealing something, of getting closer to Hans-Peter Feldmann. The devotion to his role as conduit for photography’s inherent capacity to “capture” point, isolate, reproduce, and distribute. **HP**

“KUNSTAUSSTELLUNG” IS AT JOHNEN GALERIE,
UNTIL JUNE 22 2013
WWW.JOHNENGALERIE.DE
“BÜCHER | BOOKS” IS AT BARBARA WIEN,
WILMA LUKATSCH, UNTIL JULY 20, 2013
WWW.BARBARAWIEN.DE