

Herbert Zangs

Less is More

29 September — 17 November 2018

Private View:
Friday 28 September, 6-9pm

Blain|Southern Berlin
Potsdamer Straße 77-87
(Mercator Höfe)
10785 Berlin



Herbert Zangs, *Rechenzeichen*, 1978
Courtesy the artist and Blain|Southern
Photo: Trevor Good

Blain|Southern is pleased to announce *Less is More* by Herbert Zangs (1924- 2003 Krefeld, Germany). The exhibition features a number of signature works by the artist including *Folding Reliefs*, *Mathematical Signs Collages (PlusMinus)* and a group of his celebrated monochromatic *Whitenings*; all of which demonstrate the artists commitment to an improvised, informal artistic process.

A student of the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where he studied under Otto Pankok and was friends with fellow student Joseph Beuys, his artistic career began in 50's Germany, where the impact of the war and the effects of austerity found artists in various fields engaged in finding new ways of expression. Renowned for his uncompromising nature, he never formally associated himself with any artistic movement however, his use of monochrome and serial structures could be seen as a precursor to the Zero movement, which emphasised art that was purely about the material and not the artist's hand.

Zangs began working with found materials and objects early on, using cardboard, paper, wood and jute bags to create collages which often featured white paint applied onto their surfaces. Flying over a country devastated by war and blanketed in snow during pilot training is said to have affected him deeply, and this is reflected in both the subdued colour and structure of his *Whitening* paintings. In *Strukturelles Farbre relief* (1978) – and throughout the series, bright white paint fresh from the tube was eschewed in favour of left-over colour or masonry paint. The intention was not to turn the object into something more beautiful but rather highlight the materiality and structure of an object.

Another key aspect of his practice was the incorporation of mathematical symbols, "x", "+" and "-". He used them in different ways, sometimes appearing prominently in the form of collage or cut-outs of wood as in *Rechenstück* (1950). The symbols function as a geometric and aesthetic repertoire of forms and appear throughout his oeuvre. They can be seen as mere forms, or, on a meta level, the mathematical signs stand for order and logic – a paradoxical element of his practice given his nonconformity.

Other reoccurring motifs in Zangs' work are the folding relief and the grid. *The Grid* has a special significance in that the artist was interested in its sculptural aspect along with what the grid represents - a rigid, inflexible system, against which the innovative Zangs fought and rebelled against his whole life.

Notes to Editors

The exhibition runs concurrent to Ali Banisadr *The World Upside Down*.

About the artist

Herbert Zangs (b. Krefeld, Germany, 1924-2003)

Solo exhibitions include: *Herbert Zangs-Gemälde*, Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, Krefeld, DE (1950); *Herbert Zangs-Paintings and Drawings*, New Vision Centre Gallery, London, UK (1957); *Dibujos de Herbert Zangs*, Galeria Chica de la Casa del Lago, Mexico City, MX (1968); *Neue Arbeiten*, Center Art Gallery, New York, US (1969); *Paintings by Herbert Zangs*, Centennial Centre of Science and Technology, Toronto, CA (1969); *Herbert Zangs*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, DE (1974); *Herbert Zangs- Verweibungen*, Mannheimer Kunstverein, Mannheim, DE (1978); *Herbert Zangs- Verweibungen*, Museum Wiesbaden, Wiesbaden, DE (1978); Auckland Gallery, Auckland, NZ (1985); *Herbert Zangs- Arbeiten 1952-1962*, Sprengel Museum, Hannover, DE (1985); *Herbert Zangs-oeuvres 1952-1959*, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, FR (1995); *Zangs-Retrospektive*, Museum für Neue Kunst, Freiburg, DE (1998); *Zangs-Retrospektive*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, DE (1998); *Herbert Zangs- in memoriam*, Krefelder Kunstverein, Krefeld, DE (2003); *Die Weißungen- Herbert Zangs (1924-2003)*, Goethe-Institut, French Cultural Center (2006) Izmir, TR; *Accrochage Herbert Zangs from 1953 to 1954*, Atelier du Musée Zadkine, Paris, FR (2007).

Group exhibitions: *Avantgarde 1961*, Städt. Museum, Trier, DE (1961); *International Exhibition of Contemporary Painting and Sculpture*, Carnegie Institute, Department of Fine Arts, Pittsburgh, US (1961); *Herbert Zangs-Kurt Link- Werke der beiden in Oostende mit dem "Prix d'Europe" ausgezeichneten Künstler*, Stiftung Museum Kunstpalaat (former Kunstmuseum in Ehrenhof), Düsseldorf, DE (1963); *Sammlung Cremer*, Kunsthalle Tübingen and Kunstverein, Frankfurt, DE (1972/73); *Documenta 6*, Kassel, DE (1977); *The Book of the Art of Artists Books*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran, IR (1978); *Fluxus und Nouveaux Réalistes*, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, DE (1995); *L'empreinte*, Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, FR (1997); *Joseph Beuys/ Herbert Zangs: Die Fünfziger Jahre*, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz, LI (2007).

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an expanding roster of international artists and is the exclusive representative of the estates of Lynn Chadwick and Avigdor Arikha.

Recent exhibitions include *Doodle & Disegno*, Moshekwa Langa, Edward Kienholz, Frank Thiel, Liliane Tomasko, Wim Wenders, Marius Bercea, Rachel Howard, Michael Joo and Avigdor Arikha.

Gallery information

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