

Proposal for a Discotheque - Christoph Meier in Kiosk, Ghent, Belgium

Christoph Meier's work includes very clear minimalist connotations and elements informed by his background as an architect. His sculptures, taken directly from the studio situation, play with the idea of the specific object using the vocabulary of formalist decisions, where everyday objects are taken out of their context. By using color, form and materiality as tools to compose a sculpture, these objects are re-contextualised in a self-referential way and turn into pure formalistic gestures.

In *Proposal for a Discotheque*, exhibited at Kiosk in Ghent, Belgium, Christoph sets out to question his role and the authority of the artist towards the viewer and her/his perception of the artwork beyond the pure formalistic gesture. Meier defines *Proposal for a Discotheque* as a performative sculpture. In the glass pavilion *Kiosk*, he places ten medical IV-Stands on castors, each one dipped into color according to the CMYK system, cyan, magenta, yellow, black, white and three stands with each a fluorescent tube in black light, cool white and warm white. The Stands do not have a fixed position, due to the castors they can be moved around freely by visitors in the space of Kiosk.

The title functions as the extension of the work's meaning implying the ephemeral moment of performance in a social space - the discotheque. Where night mingles unfulfilled expectations relations in a social network are readjusted constantly. Interaction becomes the fundamental element, the DJ the provider of a framework, an environment, where visitors become the main protagonists.

Unlike Meier's hitherto existing work in which he clearly formulates the composition and its visual outcome to determine how the artwork is looked at, yet leaving space for a very personal interpretation, in *Proposal for a Discotheque* the artist's role is seemingly focused on that of a host, providing aesthetic structures to its public and now, not only leaving space for interpretation but also a responsibility to re-arrange the sculpture according to the visitor's taste, allowing her/him to take over ownership, and, if just for a small period of time, to interfere in the authorial act of art-production.

Meier's sculpture thus can be compared with what Dorothea von Hantelmann writes in the analysis on Daniel Buren's work in her book "How to do things with art" (diaphenes, Zürich Berlin 2007) .

*"Das Verhältnis von (künstlerischer) Selbstbestimmung und (kontextueller) Fremdbestimmtheit steht im Zentrum aller Arbeiten. (...) den Wechsel zum Situationsgestalter (...)"*¹⁾

Christoph Meier also tries to fathom artistic self-determination and heteronomy, where he frames situations without intending to dictate its visual outcome/composition but simultaneously setting its mode of construction by providing structure not as a facilitator, as mentioned earlier, but still and almost as (art) maker.

With *Proposal for a Discotheque* therefore he is interested in the idea of disposing a still controlled and overlooked aesthetic responsibility to the viewer rather than in the idea of an authoritarian gesture, allowing the beholder to derive a very personal conclusion while actively engaging and interfering in this process.

*"Jede Arbeit (...) ist in Wirklichkeit das Ergebnis einer bisweilen beachtlichen Zahl von Interaktionen. Von Interferenzen. Die große Schönheit eines Werkes liegt zweifellos darin, daß alle Interaktionen, die es ermöglicht haben, im vollendeten Werk weiterhin sichtbar sind, so daß sie es zu einem anfälligen und offenen Werk machen, ohne doch das Gleichgewicht zu brechen."*²⁾

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¹⁾ cf. Hantelmann, Dorothea von: How to do things with Art , p. 80; diaphenes, Zürich-Berlin, 2007

²⁾ Daniel Buren after Hantelmann, Dorothea von: How to do things with Art , p. 80; diaphenes, Zürich-Berlin, 2007