

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

**Press Release - Clemens Tissi, AZ 1670
September 13 - October 26, 2013**

»As we move around that space [the gallery], looking at the walls, avoiding things on the floor, we become aware that the gallery also contains a wandering phantom frequently mentioned in avant-garde dispatches - the spectator.«

Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube*

Clemens Tissi deals with the reciprocal relations of hiding and seeking in his exhibition *AZ 1670*. Hiding does not necessarily make things invisible, it can also suggest what is hidden and bring it into evidence. Tissi, on the one hand, subverts the architecture of the gallery and, on the other, brings into play works by five artists represented by SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY.

The exhibition title refers to an event, where the participants appeared to be ignorant - unlike Tissi - of the dialectic power of hiding things. In January 2013, Alitalia flight AZ 1670 had difficulties to land at Rome Fiumicino airport. After several bounces, the plane came to a final stop slightly off the runway. During the night, the damaged plane was painted over in white - to the point where the Alitalia logo and livery were no longer visible. The image of the white-washed plane made the news round the world and the not-to-be-seen Alitalia logo revealed even more embarrassingly the origin of the airliner.

Tissi's show *AZ 1670* consists of two elements: firstly, the gallery space has been shrunk. Tissi eliminated one room by closing its entrance with a fully plastered wall. There are two monitors in front of the vanished room, one serves as a black pedestal for the second one. A film can be seen on the top screen that shows scenes from the last months that took place in the now hidden room. Tissi captured scenes from the daily gallery life in this room, such as openings, conversations with collectors, cleaning sessions, et cetera.

As in the case of the white-washed crashed plane, here, the original gallery room gains special interest by the fact that it has been hidden, or rather overlaid. This room loses its ordinary significance as part of the gallery

space and its subversion, revealed through the film, renders it an autonomous piece of work.

The second part of the exhibition consists of five grey, wall-mounted architectural boxes, that, at first sight, are simply objects. By taking a closer look, the boxes hide works of art as if conserved in an archive. The works hung inside the boxes have thus gained their own individual space. Initially, the beholder only grasps the grey surface of the hanging boxes. One makes out traces of a paintbrush, rendering the boxes almost like monochrome paintings. The visitor can free the hidden works by opening the boxes, carefully pushing an opening mechanism. The canvases by each artist can then be contemplated next to the monochromatic surface of Tissi's boxes.

The beholder is challenged, like in *Process Art*. Only through the manipulation of the boxes, that is through an action, the art work becomes visible again. Similar to Tissi's first intervention where an entire room vanishes, here, single works vanish - a vanishing that not only is reversed but it results into enhanced visibility. The works are not immediately retraceable in the gallery space - as it usually happens - but they have to be found.

The question that may be suggested is whether an art work actually needs to be visible or physically present or if the simple knowledge of its presence somewhere might be sufficient. This thought leads us to Lawrence Weiner's statement regarding *Minimal Art*: »1. The artist may construct the work, 2. The work may be fabricated, 3. The work need not be built«. Tissi does not deny as radically as Weiner every physical form, but through his fabricated objects the art works reappear into our visual field.

Text: Clemens von Lucius

The opening reception will be on Thursday, 13 September 2013, 6 to 8 pm.

For further information, please contact the gallery:
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