

Harald Klingelhöller

January 12 – February 29, 2008

The Nelson-Freeman gallery is pleased to present a new exhibition of the German artist Harald Klingelhöller. A student of Klaus Rinke at the Düsseldorf School of Fine Arts in the 1970s, Harald Klingelhöller constantly questions the very idea of sculpture. His works relate to the structure and materialization of language. He turns words into a dialogue between works of art and space. The Serralves Museum in Porto devoted a major retrospective to him last summer. He has also been commissioned to carry out several public projects in Germany, including « Why Pop » in Wuppertal, as well as several private orders, in particular in France.

For this new exhibition at the gallery, the artist has chosen to present a series begun in 2005 : the « Cabinets Versions ». Here, the term « cabinet » designates a piece of furniture : made of plaster or aluminum, these works, hanging from the wall, are placed on mental bases, and feature half-opened drawers. These drawers evoke the number and length of the words composing the title of each object : « Häuser zwischen Häusern zwischen vergessenen Häusern » (Buildings between buildings between forgotten buildings) or « Räume hinter Räumen hinter erzählten Räumen » (Spaces behind spaces behind narrated spaces). The titles chosen by Harald Klingelhöller describe complex mental operations. They encourage the observer to reflect upon the link between the physical appearance of the sculpture and the mental image that it proposes. The words are repeated in each title (house, space, sea...), thus forcing us to imagine another space. The purity of these objects in their shape, construction but also smooth appearance suggests a form of timelessness.

The sculpture on the floor is presented for the first time. It is made up of three superposed lacquered steel plates, and represents the projected shadow of a work created in 1992 : « 'Hier' als ein Abstand (Here as a distance) ». The title of the 2007 sculpture was changed only to add « Schattenversion » (« shadow version »). The sculpture becomes abstract in the same way as a shadow, and introduces a play of opposition in space.

Harald Klingelhöller pursues his conceptual work focused on language. Language disappears and is replaced by a drawer that embodies words. The drawers are not entirely shut, but they are essential as their absence would create a void just as if they had been closed, which would have changed their relationship to space. The perception of the work is thus based on a balance between the frame, the shape of the cabinet, but also the position of the drawers.