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EXHIBITION

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MANFRED PERNICE

fiat(lux)

DECEMBER 6TH 2013 - FEBRUARY 23RD 2014

INSTITUT
D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes

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The IAC presents *fiat(lux)*, the largest solo exhibition in France to date by German artist Manfred Pernice. Over fifty artworks showing the breadth and scope of his oeuvre have been brought together, some of which were produced especially for the exhibition. The title of the exhibition, *fiat(lux)*, evokes the work *FIAT*, an initial version of which was created in 1997. Since then, the work has been combined in various ways. At the IAC, the visitor literally traverses this monumental sculpture from the first room, following the genesis of an evolving work that guides us towards a set of artworks representing over twenty years of work. Since the 1990s, Manfred Pernice has developed sculptural and installation work based on an accumulation of budget materials (chipboard, concrete, bricks, metal etc.) combined with found objects and texts, drawings, photographs or, more recently, archive videos, that is often biographical in nature or linked to an historical context.

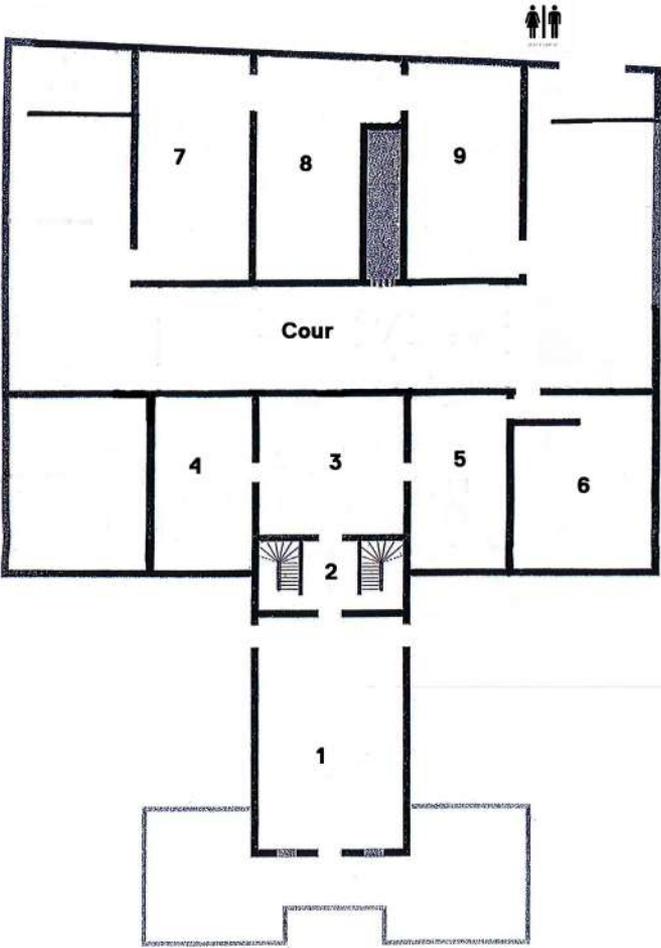
Manfred Pernice (re)assembles these «familiar» materials, which thus lose all of their functionality, in what he describes as a kind of «canning» of objects and space.

Drawing on our collective subconscious, he tests the resistance of objects over time – what is remembered and what is forgotten.

Broaching both urban design and architecture, networks of commodities and economic processes, history and psychoanalysis, the works and environments of Manfred Pernice often have a precarious and incomplete character and evoke thoroughfares or storage sites that may be either physical or mental. Manfred Pernice transposes these constructions to various scales, whether they are monumental as for the *FIAT* work, or on a smaller scale for the *Kassetten*. These mnemonic sculptures question the relationship between model and reality, becoming reflections of our society and our history.

Manfred Pernice was born in 1963 in Hildesheim (Germany). He lives and works in Berlin. He has presented many solo exhibitions (*To the Public*, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany, 2013; *Brei*, S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium, 2011; *Witte de With*, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, 2012; *Migrateurs*, Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1998) and has participated in many collective exhibitions (*Les Prairies*, Biennale de Rennes, 2012; *Rehabilitation*, Wiels, Brussels, Belgium, 2010; *Pragmatismus & Romantismus*, Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard, Paris, 2009; Venice Biennales in 2003 and 2001, Biennale de Lyon in 1997).

Exhibition rooms



- | | | | |
|------|---|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Fiat V</i> | 5 | <i>von der Stange
fog</i> |
| 2 | <i>Cassettes</i> | 6 | <i>untitled
clip compilation</i> |
| 3 | <i>Untitled(cassette ; 2 parties)
Interdependance I
Independance
Evaluation</i> | 7 | <i>Sonderausstellung (living
platform)</i> |
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room 1

Fiat V, 2008

As an introduction to his exhibition *fiat(lux)*, Manfred Pernice's imposing work entitled *Fiat* occupies IAC's first exhibition space. First created in 1997 and exhibited for the first time in 1999 at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, *Fiat* is an installation that has constantly evolved and mutated. In this exhibition, *Fiat V* is an expansive construction work, like a platform the viewer climbs over to reach the following exhibition spaces and works, emphasizing how the artist wants viewers to actively participate in his work. *Fiat lux* is a Latin expression in the third verse of the Book of Genesis. They are the first words spoken by God as he created heaven and earth, translated as "Let there be light". This imperative, even performative expression clearly indicates the act of creation. *Fiat* is also a reference to the Italian automaker, more specifically the Lingotto factory, opened in 1922, which has a rooftop test track for testing new models. This unusual and impressive architecture made such an impact on Manfred Pernice that it inspired him to install a kitchen on the "rooftop" on the first version of his sculpture. As his *Fiat* installation evolved, he gradually abandoned this idea, preferring a more conceptual form in which he invites viewers to experience his platform installation by temporarily participating in the work.

Manfred Pernice considers architecture as a vector to understand a city's inhabitants and its past. It illustrates people's habits

and their perception of the world. In this sense, he approaches the subject almost from a sociological point of view. Drawing from his own past, he bases his works on Berlin and its inhabitants, following Germany's reunification in 1990, which led to the city's transformation, modifying people's apprehension of urban space. Through his works, the artist questions the way in which architecture reflects history and can shape mentalities. He observes his environment, endeavouring to highlight its contradictions, interstitial spaces and the phenomenon of its outskirts as though to establish a classification or taxonomy. To underline how we consider our living spaces and to incite viewers into "a recollection process", the artist reoccupies exhibition spaces by punctuating the visit with architectural evocations.

room 2

cassette 12, 2013
cassette 13, 2013
cassette 14, 2013
cassette 15, 2013
cassette 16, 2013
cassette 17, 2013
cassette 2, 2013
cassette 6, 2013
cassette 8, 2013
cassette 9, 2013
cassette 11, 2013
cassette 3, 2013
cassette 7, 2013
cassette 10, 2013
cassette, 2013
cassette, 2013
cassette, 2013
cassette, 2013
cassette, 2013

Pernice assembles different types of graphical documents within his “display boxes” (cassettes): urban maps, photocopies, newspaper cuttings, photos. To avoid the viewer having only one viewpoint, they can be hung up in any which way, and as the documents inside aren’t fixed, they randomly fall down over each other, muddling our interpretation. Although Pernice uses paper documents, he doesn’t limit himself to a two-dimensional approach and his hanging system gives his “display boxes” a sculptural component.

room 3

Sans titre (cassette; 2 parties), 2013
Interdependance I, 2013
Independance, 2013
Evaluation, 2013

As a continuation of the “display boxes” in the previous room, Pernice presents four wooden boxes (*Kassetten*) installed on the floor. The interior of each box or container has been scrupulously organized: they have been split into zones of different depths and contain several disparate objects, each one having been chosen by the artist for a particular reason (its origin, its past). The objects are everyday objects, domestic objects, packaging, debris and waste and the one thing they all have in common is that they’ve already been used. With these works, the artist refers to the *Merz* pictures by Kurt Schwitters.

These *Kassetten* installations, titled *Independence*, *Interdependence I* and *Evaluation* seem to underline the particular vibrations between the different elements that compose the sculptures.

room 4

with Martin Städeli :

***Rino*, 2011**

... ***RINO 4*, 2011**

... ***RINO 2*, 2011**

... ***RINO 7*, 2011**

... ***RINO 5*, 2011**

... ***RINO 6*, 2011**

***Progress I*, *RINO 15*, 2011**

***Progression II*, *RINO 16*, 2011**

of Martin Städeli :

***Sitzend 20, blau...*, 2000-2011**
[*Assis 20, bleu*]

Originally created for a joint exhibition with the artists Manfred Pernice and Martin Städeli at the Mai 36 Gallery in Zurich in 2011, *Rino* refers to the Italian sculptor Marino Marini (1901-1980), considered one of the major artists who represented “classical modernism¹”. As in *Fiat*, where the Lingotto factory was the trigger element, the figure of Marini along with the Florentin Museum named after him were starting points for Pernice and Städeli to explore notions of abstraction and figurative art. Marino Marini functions as a symbolical figure through which Pernice recurrently explores such questions. Pernice considers the multiple possibilities for presenting works at The Marini Museum (pedestals, shelves, stands...) as a formal installation, which Pernice experiments with to create his sculptures. Consequently, the *Rino*

works can take on many forms and Pernice has chosen to install these works in such a way they create a dialogue in the same room. Visually very different (shelves, a large circular pedestal, benches...), the multiple versions of *Rino* are often large forms (often simple geometric volumes stacked on top of one another) on which other smaller volumes are installed. In his works, Pernice also combines constructions he has created himself as well as ready-made objects (some have belonged to him) but he doesn't follow a hierarchical organization: Whatever their size or origin, they all become an integral piece of the sculpture, surpassing the notion of a traditional presentation of an art work on a stand. To quote the artist, this “muddle” of references, both personal and impersonal, is a characteristic aspect of Pernice's work. His “skilful negligence” underlines the “craftsmanship” aspect of his works and adds strength to the modest materials he uses.

¹ This movement was still attached to the representation of objects at a time when artists were moving towards abstraction, thus continuing to legitimize figurative art as artistic creation.

room 5

fog, 2012

von der Stange 8, 2011

von der Stange 3, 2011

von der Stange 2, 2011

von der Stange 1, 2011

von der Stange 5, 2011

von der Stange 6, 2011

Sans titre, 2012

Initially conceived as a group or a “set” of ten works, all of the same dimensions, to be exhibited together, *von der Stange* has taken on different forms over the course of the artist’s different exhibitions. At IAC, Manfred Pernice presents a new variation composed of six elements (all with the same title) into which he inserts new works. These sculptures are installed in such a way that the viewer is kept at a distance and “prevented” from completely walking all the way around them. The German expression “von der Stange” describes merchandise that is mediocre, products that are “ready-made” or run-of-the-mill confined to stock or outlet stores. A storage zone, protected by wire mesh and a metal chain is actually installed in the exhibition room. The handwritten letter that comes with the installation gives clues as to the owner of the storage zone and the mysterious contents of the containers, which are still in their packaging.

room 6

clip selection, 2003

This film is composed of 8 short sequence shots interspersed with brief snippets of information of where and when they were shot. Each one of these sequences is like a sample, a specimen, notes jotted down, a snapshot of the artist’s world. In turn, the camera explores abandoned public places, living spaces or even television archive footage about motorway infrastructures. As the artist explores these different places, he focalizes on the texture of wet concrete, on a detail of a mosaic on a wall, on the headlights of a truck, on volumes in the urban environment (a sculpture in a square, a fountain, different pieces of furniture). He draws up a kind of inventory, a collection of “material”, which he later reinvests in his sculptures.

courtyard

Erschöpfung, 2004
Sans titre, 2004
Sans titre (de « hässliche Luise »), 2004
Bassin de F. Heckert (détail), 2005
exscape 4, 2006
exscape 9, 2006
4.7, 1, 2007
Schneefeld, 2007
Sans titre, 1998-2008
Bell II, 1-14 (08) (Johannes Brahms Museum), 1998
Bell II, 1-14 (n°4+5), 1998
Viaduct, 1992
Apart 5.3, 2009
Apart 5.4, 2009
Blumentopf, 2009
franz. I, 2009
Haken, 2005
Aufbau, 2010
Sans titre, 2010
Flamingo, 2010
10 jahre NEU, 2005
expo, 2008
Haldensleben Sat. 1, 2010

The gallery owner Alexander Schröder has been a curator of Manfred Pernice and worked in close collaboration with him, choosing several of his works to compose this “selected collection”. He has conceived this layout to exhibit the pieces specifically in the courtyard space. Created over a period of 21 years, these sculptures portray a panorama of the artist’s production, but here they are not displayed in chronological order. In contrast to the way the works are presented in the previous exhibition rooms, the “airier, uncluttered” presentation means the viewer may pay more attention to each piece and view each sculpture differently. Re-adopting a more classical style of presentation, the courtyard bring to mind a large gallery (in the architectural sense of the word²), establishing a different temporality and encouraging viewers to stroll around.

² Before becoming a covered shopping arcade, the word “gallery” was originally a long covered narrow room, richly decorated used as a walkway or reception room.

room 7

Sonderausstellung : « living platform », 2009

[Exposition exceptionnelle/spéciale :
« plateforme vivante »]

This work was a turning point for Manfred Pernice. *Sonderausstellung* marks the beginning of a new approach in his creation process taking the form of an “exhibition in an exhibition”. It creates a certain harmony between the works produced at different times of the artist’s career. Pernice presents an environment (partitions, flooring, carpet) and the viewer is invited to enter into the installation, as in the previous Fiat installation. Certain elements of the installation (carpet on the floor, a radio playing, pieces of furniture, decorative objects) lead us intuitively to think of a domestic interior.

room 8

Tiefengarage, 2008

The title is a portmanteau word imagined by the artist, taking the word “Garage” and adding on the adjective “tiefen”, which means “deep”. He is clearly referring to “depth psychology”, or “analytical psychology”, a school of psychology originating in the ideas of the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung³ at the turn of the 20th century. The esthetical qualities of this room (the floor is unusual in the sense it is lower than the other rooms at IAC) brings to mind underground car parks and signage (painted posts, lines on the ground, colour codes). The different volumes echo back to structural elements of pieces of furniture. The images displayed on the walls are old works by a student who lived in West Berlin in the 1960s and was studying Czechoslovakian art. Through its title and composition, Tiefengarage evokes a place that is difficult to reach and could, metaphorically, be our unconscious.

³ Unlike the psychoanalytic school of Freud, analytical psychology theorized by Jung investigates the unconscious and the “soul”, developing an individual’s psyche. He considered an individual’s psyche as being composed of elements from one’s personal life as well as representations evoking myths and universal symbols, so that psychotherapy linked to analytical psychology is structured around the patient and aims to develop the symbolic personification of the Self. Jung based his theory in the concept of the objective psyche and established his theory by developing concepts such as the “collective unconscious” and the “archetypal approach”.

room 9

Dosentreff: Inst.ansicht, 2000-2013

The sculptures presented in this room are cylindrical volumes, truncated columns made from wood or plywood that Pernice has titled *Dosen* (Cans). This name refers to the “canning” process and conveys the idea of how individuals are conditioned (in the literal and figurative sense) through their culture, education and society in which they live. This work is partly inspired by the psychoanalyst Bert Hellinger’s “Aufstellung” therapy⁴ where each “Can” is inspired by and represents a real person, either living or deceased, and whose life was deeply affected by major historical events that happened in Germany during the 20th century. Through *Dosen*, Manfred Pernice metaphorically reunites these “people” and posthumously rewrites some of history’s missed opportunities.

⁴ This German therapy is based on role play within the family circle (the people may still be alive or deceased). It aims to provoke confrontations which may help resolve conflicts.

PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

MANFRED PERNICE

fiat(lux)

Exhibition from December 6th 2013 to February 23rd 2014

OPENING HOURS

Wednesday to Sunday from 1 pm to 7 pm

Free guided visits (in French, english on demand)

on Saturdays and Sundays at 4 pm or by appointment

ACCESS

Bus C3 (stop : Institut d'art contemporain)

Bus C9 (stop : Ferrandière)

Bus C16 (stop : Alsace)

Métro ligne A (stop : République)

Station vélo'v (bicycles) 1 minute on foot

The Institut d'art contemporain is 10 minutes from Lyon Part-Dieu railway station.

PRICES

·full price : 4 € · reduced price : 2,50 €

DOCUMENTATION CENTER

by appointment

BOOKSHOP

specialised in contemporary art

open during exhibition opening hours

NEXT EVENTS

Friday, February 7th at 12h30 and 13h : Visite sur le pouce

A quick visit at lunch time

Sunday, January 26th at 3PM : Family Sunday

Family visit followed by a teatime snack. From 5 years old.

Simultaneously with the exhibition and in partnership with the IAC, Manfred Pernice's works are presented at art3 in Valence.

MANFRED PERNICE ideacasa / From Decembre 4th 2013 to February 22nd 2014

The Institut d'art contemporain receives aid from the Ministry of Culture and Communication (DRAC Rhône-Alpes), Rhône-Alpes Regional Council and the city of Villeurbanne.

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