

Press Release



GERHARD HOEHME „restlessness grows“. Works 1955 - 1989

13 September 2009 to 10 January 2010

MKM Museum Küppersmühle
für Moderne Kunst
Philosophenweg 55
47051 Duisburg (Innenhafen)
www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de
Telefon 02 03 / 30 19 48 -11/-12/-13
Telefax 02 03 / 30 19 48 -21
office@museum-kueppersmuehle.de

To mark the 50th anniversary of documenta 2 (1959), which elevated abstraction to a “universal language”, Gerhard Hoehme (1920-1989), one of the show’s contributors, is now to be honoured with three exhibitions in Duisburg and Düsseldorf: In a major retrospective, the Museum Küppersmühle (Duisburg) is granting a fascinating insight into the artist’s key creative processes; The Wilhelm Lehmbruck-Museum (Duisburg) is presenting a selection of Hoehme’s sculptured pictures from his own collection; and the Düsseldorf kunst palast museum is mounting a large-scale exhibition of Hoehme’s paper works from the Gerhard and Margarete Hoehme Foundation, augmented by drawings and printings from its own collection. At the same time, Hoehme’s collected writings are now finally scheduled for publication in a project launched jointly by Prof. Gottfried Boehm (Basel) and the Hoehme Foundation.

In his highly distinctive and multilayered oeuvre, Gerhard Hoehme constantly strove to redefine and push the boundaries of the image and of the pictorial space. With his paintings and sculptures, drawings and installations, he made a decisive contribution to the international art scene in the second half of the 20th century. A critical observer and commentator who – largely unbeknown - authored theoretical treatises and essays, Hoehme sought from the outset to engage the viewer in dialogue. And consequently, “picture contacts” and “Relationen” are key terms in understanding this artist.

Together with Peter Brüning, Winfred Gaul, K.O. Götz, Bernard Schultze, Emil Schumacher and others, Gerhard Hoehme was one of the leading protagonists of Germany’s Informel movement. With his “shaped canvasses”, collage-like bark paintings and subtle “letter paintings”, he gave fresh and important impetus to the gestural painting of the 1950s and early 1960s. Hoehme explored the material properties of his painting media and embarked on new avenues in the traditional format of the panel painting. Even at an early stage, he conceived of the picture as an

Contact:

Tina Franke
Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. +++ Viktoriastr. 26 +++ 53173 Bonn
Fon 0228-934 55 12 +++ Fax 0228-934 55 20 +++ t.franke@stiftungskunst.de
Information and Images: www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de/presse

open, energised field which extends into its surrounding space. However, to the present day, this creative phase has tended to eclipse the importance of his subsequent, surprisingly experimental work. This developed logically from the Informel movement's pictorial concept and arose during his longstanding engagement as professor at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art where he taught from 1960-1984. Sigmar Polke and Chris Reinecke were among his first students. In the mid-60s Hoehme began increasingly to experiment with non-artistic materials. He turned pattern sheets or Damask tablecloths into picture backdrops, worked with industrial materials, such as metal foils and coloured polythene string. (Hoehme: "The string is the sculptural form of Heraclitean thought."). His so-called "string sculptures" were an important source of inspiration to the American artist Eva Hesse during the mid-60s.

Hoehme's oeuvre – neither categorically painting nor object – is the materialisation of the "hybrid" form. His entire output centres on the forging of relationships – between the image, the observer and the space, between the material and the spiritual world. Even when he subsequently returns to the more classical panel, contacts and connections manifest themselves - often tangibly, in the form of coloured plastic strings attached to the painting. Against the background of the Zeitgeist of the 1980s (catchwords: "hunger for images"; young, wild, neo-expressive painting), one becomes keenly aware of how tenaciously Hoehme evolved his concepts over the years. Which may perhaps explain why his work is now being rediscovered by a younger generation of collectors.

(text: Susanne Rennert, Curator)

Sponsored by **KUNSTSTIFTUNG  NRW**



Willis
Insurance Brokers

Duration: 13 September 2009 – 10 January 2010
Openings: Saturday, September 12th, 2009, 7 p.m. Museum Küppersmühle / 5 p.m. Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum / 12.00 a.m. museum kunst palast

Contact:

Tina Franke
Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. +++ Viktoriastr. 26 +++ 53173 Bonn
Fon 0228-934 55 12 +++ Fax 0228-934 55 20 +++ t.franke@stiftungkunst.de
Information and Images: www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de/presse