

The Laughter of Thoughts

Jokes reside in the gap of a potential misunderstanding. They force an interruption in the daily grind and a shift to a kind of fast lane. They open a rift in the tremendous and dance with taboo.

When Roman Pfeffer arranges two hotplates mounted on pedestals facing each other into a still life, photographs it, and calls it "Wärmetauscher" (heat exchanger), he uses nothing but known things. However, the anarthrous "Wärmetauscher" is just as well a title for both hotplates - or for the air in-between - as for both hotplates and the air in-between. Roman Pfeffer makes slight changes to reality - he changes the horizontal of the plates. Photographed in profile they could also double as sophisticated hifi equipment. But this wouldn't necessarily diminish the magic of the shifted dimension - what is heat exchange? "Wärmetauscher" cunningly balances on the inclination to recognise living

beings. The symmetry of the composition communicates like a mirror image. Warm air is just as invisible as cold air. Thus we must believe that there is warmth because the title of the work claims so. And suddenly we are confronted with the choice to ask ourselves whether the heat exchange between the hotplates might be pleasant or if the fire brigade should come. Whether we are observing a sweaty sauna scenario or if what's happening here is tender hotplate poetry.

Other works show bisected chandeliers, clinched pedestal skin crumbs, curly staves, groomed and meta-botanised house plants, and true-to-scale dimensional translations. Often the modification is so inconspicuous that one oversees it at first. Roman Pfeffer's work does not tell rambunctious jokes, vulgar jokes, politically questionable minority jokes. They are tender jokes - and this is not a typical sort.

Charles Nebelthau

Heat Exchanger, 2011





Pedestal Surface 120x30x30cm M 2:1, 2011



Half Light, 2011



*Cultivated Decorative
Plant (Oak), 2012*



*Cultivated Decorative
Plant (Maple), 2012*