



BERLINISCHE GALERIE

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KUNST, FOTOGRAFIE UND ARCHITEKTUR
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Berlinische Galerie presents the exhibition Henning Bohl: From the Collection of the Berlinische Galerie

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Henning Bohl: Doppelte Katzen, 2003, (c) Henning Bohl, Foto: Kai-Annett Becker

Works by Henning Bohl rarely stand alone. They are usually clustered around a common theme to create arrangements. Literary snippets and extracts from artistic biographies are so inextricably combined with stylistic quotes and cited motifs that they are hard to disentangle. To this inexhaustible reservoir of existing forms Henning Bohl adds that minimal touch of his own, generating new, surprising elements and consciously defying any overhasty decoding or clear-cut attributions. The paintings, collages and staged objects in this exhibition were made between 2003 and 2006. They constitute a body of work that has been held in the Berlinische Galerie collection since 2011 and is now being shown for the first time in this form, conceived together with the artist.

The basic material is the modern age itself and its efforts to merge life with art. Experiments with the silhouette as a medium recall Matisse, but there are also hints here of Japanese Kabuki theatre with its expressive devices and design elements. In *Toward a Coffee Table Book*, a Mike Kelley edition of the magazine "Texte zur Kunst" prompts him to include triangular Ikea tables, and in the exhibition space these become Constructivist partitions. The work *Kubistische Tagesdecke 5* revolves around a patchwork quilt sewn by Sonia Delaunay for her baby son in 1911 and now in the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The quilt was partly reminiscent of the patchworks handcrafted by Ukrainian peasant women in her birthplace, but it can also be read as a Cubist picture. Henning Bohl's "counterpane pictures" make similar use of leftovers. Fragments of paper lying around the studio were turned into jigsaw images, and again the technique is a reference to Matisse and his silhouettes.



Cubism, which dissolves the traditional picture space and replaces it with simultaneous perspectives, is the trigger for Henning Bohl's red-and-green 3D works. Onto this fragmentation of space initiated by classical modernism he tacks an extension of the picture space into the third dimension, first tried in the 1950s with red-and-green 3D images. To create an impression of depth, two pictures must be taken from different perspectives or positions. That is the effect apparently sought by the work *Anni 3*. Henning Bohl found the original for this motif in an exhibition of private photos by Joseph Albers, who in 1923 photographed his wife Anni Albers lying on the sofa from two slightly altered perspectives and then stuck the pictures next to each other on card as in collage.

Out of these found fragments, references and allusions, Henning Bohl forges multi-layered visual worlds, but he leaves it to his visitors to apply explanatory models of their own to make "sense" of them. The personal ways in which we understand or fail to understand these references ultimately determines how we unlock potential new constructions of meaning, the directions we pursue and the complexity we take on board.

Henning Bohl was born in Oldenburg in 1975. From 1997 to 2000 he studied at the Kunsthochschule in Kassel (School of Art and Design Kassel) and from 2000 to 2004 under Thomas Bayrle at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main.