

AYŞE ERKMEN *Unlikely*

29. Oktober 2016 – 14. Januar 2017

Ayşe Erkmen's oeuvre is distinguished by formal clarity and conceptual intricacy. Her formally reduced, minimalist works are based on precise observations of social realities. We're pleased to be able to present the artist's first solo show at the Barbara Gross Galerie, *Unlikely*. For the exhibition Erkmen has created new works incorporating various discourses on the impact and significance of color and material.

4for8see (2016) is a group of sculptures made of rolled metal leftovers, which play with the psychology of colors used in graphic and product design. The reduced, elegant-looking objects are lacquered in a greenish-brown hue reminiscent of nature, perhaps of the landscape backgrounds of classical European paintings. In fact, it's Pantone color 448C, *Opaque Couché*, allegedly the "ugliest color in the world," according to a survey conducted by a market research institute. Printed on cigarette packages, it's supposed to reduce their consumption. Here, the artist uses color as a kind of readymade, by drawing attention to its hidden meanings. The objects' metal plates come from the refuse produced during the creation of artworks made in a metal workshop in Berlin. In Erkmen's sculptures the discarded material and the negatively connoted color unite to create something new that opens up space for utterly different associations.

The piece *all available* (2016) consists of a number of monochromatic colored panels hanging closely together in the gallery's skylight room. If one were to look at the paintings outside of the context of Erkmen's oeuvre, they could be mistaken for color field paintings that rely solely on the emotional impact of color and material, free of any social references. For the artist, however, the aesthetic qualities of each hue are not crucial. On the contrary, Erkmen simply attempts to make use of all of the paint colors produced by various manufacturers, and all of the colors are of the same importance. The title, *all available*, refers to the easy availability and ubiquity of colors, but can also be interpreted as a playful attack on the commodity status of art, especially of painting.

In a certain way, Erkmen's work retreats from the art market: her pieces don't share a typical, signatory aesthetic that allows them to be instantly recognized. Each form emerges out of its contextual meaning and site-specific situation. The artist herself recedes out of sight, behind her work. Her attitude is humorously reflected in *Turuncu/orange* (2006), a self-portrait made out of orange clothing labels with the name of the artist woven into them like a brand name.

Ayşe Erkmen, born in Istanbul, Turkey, splits her time between Istanbul and Berlin. In 2011 she represented Turkey at the 54th Venice Biennial. In 2017 she will have an exhibition with Mona Hatoum at the Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig and has been invited to participate in Skulptur Projekte Münster.

Solo shows (selected): S.M.A.K., Ghent, 2015; The Barbican, London, 2013; Bregenzer Kunstverein, 2011; Witte de With, Rotterdam, 2010; Kunstverein Freiburg, 2009; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, 2008; K 21, Düsseldorf, 2008; Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, 2004; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main, 2004; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 2004; Wiener Secession, 2002.