

»Correspondences« | Exhibition at Hattingen Municipal Museum, September 2021Thomas Koch – in dialog with Marie-France Goerens | Alex Klein | Karl Kriebel | Tonneke Sengers | Guido Zehetbauer-Salzer

Karl Kriebel

CONTEMPLATIVE CONSOLIDATION

Lines and spaces – consolidated and connected. Interlocking layers woven to form a whole, the sense of interlocking with depth. Karl Kriebel's works develop abstract architectures, built in two dimensions to create multidimensionality. They form a spatial construct so tangible that observers feel as if they are stepping inside. The classic coordinate system of length, width and height disintegrates, there is a hint of space and volume, traces that the observer can follow – only to lose them again in an ambiguity that contrasts with the clarity of his works. Vertical, horizontal lines. Few diagonals, nothing subordinate to the construction, and yet the hints are there. Different narratives and options within the boundaries of set markers. Not a single superfluous line in a seemingly complex artistic system. Reduced to the essentials.

Paper strips of varying sizes and shapes bearing his inimitable signature point to previous creative stages, to experiments and decisions. Constructions rejected, redone and reconnected. Weighed up until the right solution has been found. Each line, each space, determines the next. A network of dependences that penetrates into the space.

The line dominates the layers constructed on a collage base – two-dimensional on paper, wood, aluminum and canvas or three-dimensional in the form of abstract objects. Initially, what supports the construct, or the actual volume of the objects – whether they are solid or hollow, the type of material – is not a pressing question, is not relevant. The space exists of its own accord. It is created by the compactness of the lines, just as these lines themselves define this space by the distance that separates them. The colored surfaces are an accessory, sometimes more clearly defined and more intense in their color, sometimes becoming more transparent. Making way for the line. Blurring the clear edges of the paper, they support the line as the unifying element. Graphical language, geometric style. Architectural section drawings, floor plans. Karl Kriebel's familiarity with visual and form language transposed into his own unique draftsmanship is immediately evident – while still leaving room for interpretation. Visual information that defies immediate decoding. In his pictorial work it is the surfaces that line up three dimensionally in the foreground. If the linear space constellations were to be built – would these be their images? Areas of color, layered, overlapping. The cut edges of the paper accentuate these constructions, in the background there are structures that hint at other narratives, ceding to the calm, colored surfaces.

Stillness lies within Karl Kriebel's works, he leads gently through the multi-layered compositions, the observer's gaze travels over the depths of the space constructed by the artist. Clarity invites the observer to linger in a unique atmospheric intensity.

in: Exhib-cat "Correspondences – Exhibition at Hattingen Municipal Museum"; publisher Stadt Hattingen/Municipal Museum; 2021; p. 40-42