

GIOVANNI HUBER

Metamorphoses of garbage

Recycling has been a crucial topic in Giovanni Huber's work all along – both as an environmental concern coming to fruition and as an artistic concept. Thus, garbage does not only occur as real waste of our throwaway society but also as the rejects of a mass media flood of visual stimuli in which the point is to trace the right and important pictures. Therefore, the new series fits in seamlessly with former works and still surprises with an entirely new approach. It also starts with the search for pictures but then leads to unexpected results via a protracted transformation process.

The initial point are pictures of garbage, first mainly building rubble and electronic scrap the cut-out of which must be precisely determined as it already sets the final composition. The picture is now entered into the computer and edited, mainly strongly enlarged which leads to a quite wanted pictorial unsharpness. It is then printed on canvas with a plotter – in four parts due to the large format. They are then meticulously and patiently painted over with acrylic and finally joined together again to one single picture. An extraordinary challenge for an artist who otherwise likes to work with lively gestures.

With this picture, however, the transformation of the initial picture is by no means finished yet. It can be painted a second or third time – after the colors of the computer templates have been replaced by freely chosen other ones. There is something like a natural metamorphosis about it indeed, the way a picture – like an animal or a plant – always stays the same and yet completely changes its appearance. And if photorealistic painting as such tends to be surreal, here the artist's characteristic distinctiveness to reconcile the seemingly incompatible into a suspenseful synthesis brings about new aspects.

Waste set to be disposed of as quickly as possible becomes the topic of painting exercised in the careful style of the old masters and thus becomes something that remains. Something that can be only ugly by definition, presents itself in unexpected aesthetics, sublimated and yet clearly recognizable in its original materiality through its color change: pure painting but as such also a call to trace forgotten and despised beauty in the daily world of appearances that surrounds us.

Martin Kraft