

Daniela Zeilinger

Polkadots

27 January – 9 March 2024

"I love all dots. I am married to many dots. I want all dots to be happy. The dots are my brothers. I am also a dot." - Sigmar Polke

In Daniela Zeilinger's (born 1976 in Linz, Austria) working method, media and material-reflective processes intertwine to create images that always raise the question of the conditions of their own mode of representation. Experimental work processes and a variety of media transformations are central to her work. Using collage and montage techniques that interweave analogue material and digital images, she creates pictures that reveal themselves as complex layers questioning the preconditions of photographic and painted representation. At thresholds between analog and digital photography as well as painting and drawing, the artist refers in the exhibition „Polkadots“ to the simple dot as a starting motif and the highest concentration of formal expression.

Zeilinger's working method deals with processes of transformation and the indeterminacy of pictorially representative systems. In the exhibited works, the artist uses a varying grid of painted dots on paper as her starting material. Photographed and transferred to a digital display, it then becomes the basis for a collage. On the surface of the screen, the image, now presented in pixels, meets the analog original. The resulting arrangement of original image and reproduced image serves the artist as a motif, which is fixed in a photographic negative using an analog medium-format camera. A glass plate - the glazing of the work - is then exposed, which becomes the transparent carrier of the original motif material. In direct contact with the baryta paper, a photogram is created that inverts the preceding image content and testifies to the imprint and trace character of the photographic process. The literal, analog-digital layering of the medial units of image and effigy generates in their duality a motivic entanglement that opens up a new image category in the representation of image and reproduction. The back and forth of medial states, which makes it increasingly difficult to differentiate between what is "still an image" and what is "already a reproduction", leads to a kind of equalisation of these qualities.

Zeilinger's works raise the urgent question of the extent to which a sharp distinction between the opposing media categories is at all profitable or even still possible. Especially in the 21st century images seem to be characterised precisely by this indeterminability of confused interweavings. The continuous entanglement of medial states declares grain, pixel and dot to be ontologically equal pictorial means. Despite the apparently medial differences they thus belong to one and the same system of representation. The assemblage of the individual pictorial units, already interwoven by their respective conditions of origin, creates an artifact that points beyond the photographic.

ELEKTROHALLE RHOMBERG

In the tendency to dissolve the two-dimensional surface of the photographic and thereby dematerialize it, the viewer looks at and through the layers of multidimensional pictorial worlds. This status, object-like in its spatial expansion, describes a post-photographic total body, more than the simple image. Daniela Zeilinger uses the media indeterminacy transfigured by the process as a tool that welds image and images of second degree into a new, lyrical whole – reconciles them with each other.

- Niklas Koschel