

Press release

12 August 2021

With its exhibition “NOTHINGTOSEENESS – Void/White/Silence”, the Akademie der Künste focuses on monochromy and reduction in the visual arts

15 September – 12 December 2021

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg

Press preview 14 September 2021, 11 am

In the exhibition “NOTHINGTOSEENESS – Void/White/Silence”, the Akademie der Künste shows works by 75 international artists whose work centres around monochromy, material minimalism and reduction. The title refers to a word play by John Cage, who coined the term “nothingtoseeness” as the equivalent of silence in the visual arts. The exhibition, which opens on 15 September 2021 as part of Berlin Art Week, will present paintings, photographic works, film and sound pieces, sculptures and site-specific installations.

The point of departure is white monochromy and the associated new meaning of the material surface, which caused a stir in the American and European art scenes of the 1950s and 1960s. Featured paintings from this period include works by Lucio Fontana, Raimund Girke, Jan Schoonhoven, Günther Uecker and Ellsworth Kelly, as well as one of Yves Klein’s rare copies of *Untitled White Monochrome* (M 33, 1958), and the filmic documentation of his legendary 1958 exhibition “Le Vide”, in which rather than artworks only the white walls of the Paris gallery of Iris Clert were to be seen. These early radical artistic statements are juxtaposed with contemporary works. In the entrance area, Karin Sander reacts to the white monochrome with her *Wandstück*, which she created specifically for the exhibition. In Isaac Julien’s audio-visual installation *True North* (2007), the topic of white reaches into the lonely arctic landscape. The reduction of the moving image down to the presentation of the empty strip of film is the idea behind Nam June Paik’s 1964 work *Zen for Film*, in which Paik lets an unexposed film run through a projector in an endless loop. In Rosa Barba’s new work for the Akademie exhibition from the series *White Museum*, a film projector casts a white cone of light to the outside, thereby integrating the landscape into the installation. Other site-specific installations by Maria Eichhorn, Yoko Ono (*Invisible Flags*), Thomas Rentmeister, Ulrike Draesner and Sara Masüger are on display, and Reiner Maria Matysik exhibits his *Wolkenmaschine* in the Akademie’s outside area.

One focus of the exhibition is the link to music and silence. The video documentation of the performance “4’33” with Henning Lohner and John Cage in Berlin (1990) and Pierre Huyghe’s four-part score *Silence* (1997) are based on Cage’s epoch-defining silent musical piece “4’33” and its first performance with

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pianist David Tudor in 1952. In the installation *We Buy White Albums*, Rutherford Chang shows well over 2,000 copies of the Beatles' *White Album*, designed by Richard Hamilton as a white projection surface, which here is contrasted with the black square of Prince's *Black Album*.

"NOTHINGTOSEENESS" invites the viewer to partake in a more exact, precise and intensive mode of perception. After the pandemic-related shift of art reception to the virtual realm, the original artworks can once again be experienced live. The website www.nothingtoseeness.de provides texts and information that allow for exploration of the show and its topics. Discussions, concerts, readings and film screenings will accompany the exhibition.

Featuring works by: Peter Ablinger, Absalon, Frank Badur, Mirosław Bałka, Rosa Barba, Gerhard Bohner, George Brecht, Trisha Brown, Klaus vom Bruch, Günter Brus, John Cage, Enrico Castellani, Rutherford Chang, Max Dax, Ulrike Draesner, Maria Eichhorn, Olafur Eliasson, Ulrich Erben, Ceal Floyer, Lucio Fontana, Sam Francis, Katharina Fritsch, Heinz Gappmayr, Jochen Gerz, Raimund Girke, Eugen Gomringer, Gotthard Graubner, Katharina Grosse, Hans Haacke, Marcia Hafif, David Hammons, Oskar Holweck, Stephan Huber, Alfonso Hüppi, Pierre Huyghe, Ray Johnson, Isaac Julien, Ellsworth Kelly, Per Kesselmar, Astrid Klein, Yves Klein, Harald Klingelhöller, Bernd Koberling, Christina Kubisch, Raimund Kummer, Mark Lammert, Henning Lohner, Inge Mahn, Piero Manzoni, Joseph Marioni, Sara Masüger, Reiner Maria Matysik, Bruce Nauman, Yoko Ono, Roman Opałka, David Ostrowski, Nam June Paik, Otto Piene, Thomas Rentmeister, Bridget Riley, Robert Ryman, Karin Sander, Hanns Schimansky, Michael Schirner, Gregor Schneider, Jan J. Schoonhoven, Nina Schuiki, George Segal, Qiu Shihua, Strawwalde, Mark Tobey, James Turrell, Günther Uecker, Timm Ulrichs, Lothar Wolleh

NOTHINGTOSEENESS – Void/White/Silence

15 September – 12 December 2021, Tue – Sun 11 am – 7 pm, admission € 9/6

Opening day Wednesday, 15 September, 11 am – 12 midnight, free admission

Press preview Tue, 14 September, 11 am

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin, T +49 (0)30 200 57-2000

Part of Berlin Art Week

Funded by the Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste

Media partners: Berlin Art Link, Cee Cee, Das Filter, Exberliner, Kaltblut Magazine, Mint Magazin, Monopol, Flux FM, Tip Berlin

Press photos:

https://www.adk.de/de/presse/save-downloads/2109_Nothingtoseeness/

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