

Martina Klein
Paralell Connected

23 July –
24 September, 2022

In her monochrome works Martina Klein (*1962 in Trier, Germany) explores painting to the depth of its foundations. The effects of colour, materials and the perception of viewers in space are the starting point of her artistic work. Her painterly approach follows in the footsteps of so-called “analytical” conceptual painting, but she develops a distinctive formal language that is completely her own. Strictly monochrome surfaces project into the exhibition space due to the unconventional structural placement of her canvases. Other works bend because of their L-shaped supports and are mounted on the wall or freely anywhere in the space. They become paintings that shape space and correspond with each other. Often these are site-specific installations with variable forms and arrangements. In these changing contexts Martina Klein examines the interrelationships between the converging roles of viewer, art work and artist.

In her latest group of works, parallel connected, she provokes the fundamental question of the function of a work of art. By combining painting and utilitarian object she connects contrary realities, thereby changing the way we relate to and view the art work. The works consist of her familiar L-shaped monochrome surfaces, but with the wooden supporting structure extended beyond its original function to form a shelf unit. For the duration of the exhibition, these shelves will be used to display excerpts from the publication *_gelb_Korrelation erhitzt*. Martina Klein thus on the one hand references her previous work and on the other hand suggests possible ways of interacting with her work. While the use of the wooden construction is easy to read, the painted surface compels the question of the use of painting.

Martina Klein certainly does not wish to transcend painting with her work, but rather searches for coherent possibilities of investigating the medium. She begins with paint as a material, referring not just to its abstract appearance but also its physical properties and sensual qualities. The application of paint on canvas is layered and characterised by a precise regularity, producing a maximum radiance of colour. Besides the intense coloration of her work, Martina Klein’s interventions in the handling of supporting structures and their innovative placement in space place an expanded focus on the multifaceted components on which a painting is based. Unobtrusively, her artistic work references developments in art history and reflects the concept of art itself.

Martina Klein studied art history and philosophy at the University of Trier for a year before moving to the University of Fine Arts in Kassel in 1983. She has lived and worked in Düsseldorf since 1989. Her work has been the subject of numerous solo and group exhibitions.