

GALERIE ANDREA CARATSCH

PRESS RELEASE

DAHN/DOKOUPIL "COLLABORATIONS"

FEBRUARY 3 – APRIL 27, 2012

From February 3 to April 27, 2012, Galerie Andrea Caratsch in Zürich is exhibiting fifteen collaborations by Dahn and Dokoupil representing all work phases between 1980 and 1985.

In the late 1970s, a new generation of painters emerged, primarily in Germany, Italy and in the United States. These artists reacted vehemently to minimal and concept art and quickly attained a leading position internationally.

In 1980, Walter Dahn, Jiri Georg Dokoupil, and four of their painter friends set up a studio at Mülheimer Freiheit No. 110 in Cologne-Deutz. The members of this group were not bound by a compulsory program. The bond between the six artists was a certain shared attitude in relation to their personal and collaborative efforts. They worked jointly as well as individually. During this time, a deep friendship developed between Dahn and Dokoupil, both on a personal and an artistic level, which was expressed in the form of a host of collaborations and bodies of work between 1980 and 1985.

For Dokoupil, the time of the Mülheimer Freiheit meant "liberation from the conceptual prison, from the restraints of conceptual art." The freedom of extrication turned into the one major concept that was continuously reflected in new shapes and forms in all the works of the artists of the Mülheimer Freiheit.

In 1981, Dahn and Dokoupil left the Mülheimer Freiheit and established a new painting style that they called Central-European Painting. Their goal was to develop a style of painting that would be optimally committed to the viewer's memory. Centrally placed in every painting was an "extreme" idea and clear guidelines were defined: The sky is always blue. There is always a horizon. The stage on which this idea is proclaimed is always earth brown. The idea is illuminated either from the right or the left side and always casts a shadow. Everything superfluous is painted out of the picture.

Up until 1985, Central-European Painting was followed by other bodies of work. These were just as clearly defined, for example the Ricki painting, the Wall paintings, the African paintings or the "Wild Paintings", etc.

In his comments about the African paintings, Wilfried Dickhoff described the joint creations of Dahn and Dokoupil as follows: "What distinguishes these paintings is a sizing of congestion and construction in their extremes. Oscillating between knowledge and feeling the paintings appear as constructed emotions that mean nothing, symbolise nothing. They simply represent woes and passion. What counts is a formal presence: form and content, sorrow and passion, life and death in a single form gesture."

The gallery is open Tuesday to Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM.