

SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY

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ULRICH HAKEL - ROMA II

We are pleased to announce Ulrich Hakel's fourth solo exhibition at SCHWARZ CONTEMPORARY.

At the Fendi headquarters in the Italian capital, there is an owl imagining what the chalky white walls of the Roman past would look like in bright colours, and at the same time at the Spanish Costa Blanca, a gigantic ice cream cone falls into the light to dark blue bay full of palm trees...

This is how the stories might start in the exhibition *Roma II*, they emerge in the interpretational space between the works, their titles, and the beholder. In his works, the artist Ulrich Hakel deals playfully with ideas and leaves a generous space for associations.

Titles like *Fendi Owl*, *Costa Blanca*, *Roma I* und *II*, *Central Park*, and *Tivoli* hint at what is very important for Hakel's artistic oeuvre: his works are based on architectural or topographical impressions that find their way into a geometrical vocabulary of colours and shapes. The works are composed with several levels and thus achieve an architectural quality. This effect is emphasised by the choice of material: due to its different weight and thickness, the cardboard used creates a sculptural effect, which is further enhanced in *Roma I* and *Roma III*, presented next to each other in the gallery's rear space, by the additional use of sheet steel, wood, and Plexiglas. Works like *Fendi Owl* literally allow us to look behind the scenes. Hakel opens up the works' surface and replaces the illusionistic representation of spatiality with an actual construction of space within the work. Furthermore, sculptural aspects like the modelling of the material and the construction of load-bearing structures are combined with painterly aspects. Some of the coloured planes in *Roma I* and *III* bear clear traces of being painted repeatedly. Here we can also see another way of dealing with spatiality. While the pure cardboards are characterised by clear structures, these relief-like works are considerably wilder. Their dynamics are clearly informed by sculpture. It almost seems as if they captured a gust of wind that has swirled up a colourful heap of different shapes.

The composition of *Roma I*, a work reminiscent of expressionism, contains not just several levels within its inherent space prescribed by the wooden construction, but it actually also penetrates the space surrounding it. In this respect, it differs from *Tivoli* or *White Pattern*, whose space is more withdrawn into the work, and closed off towards the top by a pictorial plane. In the case of *White Pattern* (in the gallery's rear space on the right), there are openings in this upper plane through which we can look into the picture. It almost seems as if we are looking at a Greek village with staggered coloured walls of houses, and an occasional glimpse of the open sea.