

intentionally vague spray-painted gestures. The particular beauty of this piece—as always in Winkler’s work—lay in the pronounced lightness and expansiveness of the composition. With the elegance of surprising, precise combinations, she avoided any suspicion of overkill. Finally, a separate room held a film set constructed by both artists, in which Panhans’s latest video, *Sorry*, 2010, was filmed—it premiered at the show’s closing on October 3.

—Jens Asthoff

Translated from German by Oliver E. Dryfuss.

GLÜCKSTADT, GERMANY

Annette Kisling

PALAIS FÜR AKTUELLE KUNST/KUNSTVEREIN GLÜCKSTADT

Annette Kisling trains her photographic gaze on unspectacular, quotidian surroundings. Often she treats architectural subjects—row houses, housing developments, or allotment gardens—occasionally also taking up other, less clearly definable traces of civilization, such as traffic signs, fences, or furniture, any of which the camera may inspect in close-up, or at a distance as empty signifiers in the landscape. She has also made some nature studies—pictures of overgrown parks or grassy dunes—but her cityscapes in particular bear such a distinct mark of human presence that one often has to look at them for some time to realize that there are never any people visible in them.



Annette Kisling, *Garten*, 2004 (detail), eighteen piezo pigment prints, each 11 3/4 x 7 1/8".

In her recent exhibition “*Partie*,” the Berlin-based artist showed photographs from ten series dating from 2004 to 2010. Their sober black and white might at first lead one to think that Kisling is a documentarian. But it is precisely the serial nature of her imagery, the repetition of what is only apparently always the same, that allows her to create a subtle fictionality: In her astute observation of differences amid their similarities, objects show themselves in their ungraspability. In this gentle insistence on a multiplicity of varying views lies the quiet beauty of attentive observation. For example, in the thirteen-part series “*Lines*,” 2009, Kisling frames high-voltage power lines without their masts in such a way that they inscribe sometimes parallel, sometimes crisscrossing patterns on the sky. In the warm and differentiated tonality of her piezo pigment prints (Kisling consistently uses this process), the artist calibrates the pictures to give an impression that lies halfway between the graphic and the three-dimensional. Sometimes it is simply a flash of sunshine hitting one of the cables and thus signaling the roundness that marks it as an object. The faintly streaked but otherwise cloudless sky adds to the ambiguity of this minimally defined pictorial space.

The framing of the image is a specific part of Kisling’s compositional strategy. Architecture is often tilted into the frame so compactly

that it confronts the viewer as a succinctly tiered surface. This is the case with the series “*Hoogstraat/Tag*” (Hoogstraat/Day), 2005, from which Kisling showed three images. But even in her nature studies she often frames the images in such a way that naturalistic depth of field is lost, creating a facadelike impenetrability. In *Dünenpark 6* (Dune Park 6), 2004, for instance, we see weedy vegetation growing on dunes beneath a homogenous sky disseminating neutral daylight. The foreground and background appear to be layered one atop the other. The way the motif is anchored in the frame disorients the eye and flattens the image. Kisling applied this stylistic strategy of overlapping image layers quite differently in *Garten* (Garden), 2004: In the foreground of each of the eighteen images that make up this work is an ice-covered river and behind it a lawn, a hedge with a garden gate, a cottage with bare, wintry vegetation, and above it a pale sky. These neighboring allotment gardens in Holland were all photographed frontally on a snowless winter’s day. The serial arrangement creates a sort of panorama without a center, and the repetitive layering of the pictorial elements drives these spatially extensive images back up into the realm of the surface.

—Jens Asthoff

Translated from German by Oliver E. Dryfuss.

MILAN

Sean Shanahan

FABBRI C.A. CONTEMPORARY ART

For years Sean Shanahan’s work has been based on monochrome applications of oil paint on MDF surfaces; its most important characteristics are the color and the format of the support. The color is always the end result of various tones being mixed until a particular and unique shade is attained. This “individualization” of the work through laborious chromatic research contrasts with the choice of standard formats. The depth of each work—in the case of five paintings in this exhibition, four centimeters, or 1 5/8 inches—is always cited in its caption, along with its height and width since, due to the beveling of their edges, the paintings appear as objects and often seem to float above the wall rather than being affixed to it. But in these new works, Shanahan heightened the tension inherent in his painting in order to emphasize its relationship with the surrounding space. Divided, as usual, into large and small formats, the works on view were made in the studio but were so perfectly calibrated with the gallery’s proportions that they seemed site-specific. The diptych *Untitled*, 2009, introduced a virtual dynamism into the space due to the noncanonical placement of the two elements (of different shades of green), one low down, touching both the floor and the edge of a door that led to a second room, the other hung in normal fashion on the wall, but also close to the door.

View of “Sean Shanahan,” 2010.

