

Accumulation

In an audacious, downright provocative way, the current Untitled work by Felix Schramm behaves as a stage for the incoherent. Simultaneously imposing and intrinsically unstable the 'cross-form' collapses into multiple planes, constrained to 'a thing'. It is the perceptible conflict between viewing separate elements of the work and understanding it as a whole that makes the piece controversial.

One could argue that this has been a 'problem' that sculpture has always had to grapple with. Perhaps this is nothing fundamentally new, although it does reveal a formal or possibly even a structural weakness at the heart of the medium of sculpture.

This continues to be a concern despite the current condition of sculpture. At a time when art has long since dispensed with the boundaries between media and genre and now has to look for issues in the contingent space of possible relations. That to seek the essence of the sculptural or any particular media or genre would provoke a nostalgic aftertaste. Because homogeneity in form or assertion is something that sculpture structurally requires and is in this respect in a difficult situation.

Felix Schramm confronts these problems head-on by putting this 'uneasiness' into his creative work. Remembering his interventions into the architectural space, these works appear like wedged in fragments from the scene of a disaster, literally drilled into the architecture, they challenge the pristine nature of the 'white cube'. Perhaps this last point is overemphasised in the approach to his work. He does more than deconstruct art historical references or practice institutional critique. His work is a deliberately positive sculpture that wants to create its own space while claiming from the architectural space it inhabits. It seeks to break down and collapse its surroundings. Attacking the architectural space provides the stimulus and momentum for the composition of these monumental sculptures, their dimensions – a means to an end.

In spatial and architectonic terms these works are intrinsically homogeneous in form and coherent in concern, a plea for sculpture to be form and content combined.

Qua the size and proportions of the space reversed: when we interact with the 'shut in architectural ruin sculptures' the actual space we inhabit shrinks to the size of a model. To this we can add Schramm's technical abilities as an artist, his use of drywall installation and set construction: plasterboard, plaster and paste.

Yet let us, for testing purposes, abide with 'the model'. We can once more play the game of reversal, altering the circumstances of what is before us. These are things his latest works do not merely accept they are wilfully established. On the one hand these works exhibit a defiant variety that provokes us into deploring their lack of coherence. While on the other hand we are excited by parallel readings and different scales. We might encounter in the corner of the space something en miniature that Schramm had showed us before on a monumental scale, this might be a building struck by disaster the size of a dolls house. Elsewhere (in the exhibition) we find life-sized fragments of body casts. Part coloured but roughly made they reveal their materiality these pieces refer to Schramm's latest sculptural work, his analysis of the structure of the human body. Strangely gigantic they stand out of the detailed architectural model that acts here as a display device, a pedestal or vitrine.

With his latest work Felix Schramm points to the issues at the heart of the current condition of sculpture. For him the model becomes a medium and a means of portraying the problem of this condition. In this way he uses sculpture to comment on its own condition.

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