

Nachwirkung

Nachwirkung is the title of my new work for the Kunsthalle Bremen. *Nachwirkung* creates a space in the three rooms of the Grand Gallery and points to a certain senselessness. In this work and with this work every certainty will vanish. This does not mean that there is no meaning or that I am working with nonsense. Rather, there is too much meaning, too much endless meaning and that too much is full of meaning. Everyone – today – wants to do something ‘meaningful’! *Nachwirkung* is not a cheap promise of meaning. It will be a work at the edge of the precipice of senselessness. I want to create a work at the edge of sensefulness, that takes on a simple and easy form in the face of this abyss and instability. This is why I use ruins as a motif.

I have been working for several years with the motif of ruins and the aesthetic of destruction. I am interested in the fact that every ruin – from ruins of ancient temples to those of bankrupt industrial companies – tells us something, it can and will tell us something else. The motif of the ‘ruin’ and the aesthetic of destruction also interest me because the conditions of ‘abandonment’, ‘destruction’, of being ‘unused’, ‘no longer needed’ or even ‘never finished’ appear as universal and timeless (e.g. the ruins of the ancient Greek theater in Taormina in Sicily, the ruins of Salvador Allende’s unfinished hospital project in Santiago, the ruins of factories in Detroit, the ruins of buildings bombed by the Israeli air force in the Gaza Strip). Therefore, with *Nachwirkung*, and by using the motif of ruins, I want to give form to a factless, faceless truth – beyond any relevance to current issues. Spread out through the Grand Gallery, *Nachwirkung* is a building or a landscape that presents an experience of precariousness and of porousness.

Five works of art from the collection of the Kunsthalle Bremen are integrated into the landscape of ruins. These integrated works are an assertion of form; they stand for the actual time and the actual place of the work *Nachwirkung*. This is the ‘truth’ of the work; asserted and reinforced by the graffiti in different places of the building in ruins. The graffiti testifies to the presence of elements and energy that has nothing to do with the rooms’ previous use; if this should remain something to speculate about.

I see the form of *Nachwirkung* as an abstract form – despite its decoration’s aesthetic. *Nachwirkung* has a form that reaches beyond what we generally call the ‘real’ or ‘reality’. Making something abstract means starting from the concrete – in this case the ruins, the works from the collection of the Kunsthalle Bremen, and the graffiti. The idea is to begin with the concrete in order to make the abstract visible, this is why *Nachwirkung* cannot be shared and grasped immediately.

(The term *Nachwirkung* also stands for ‘effect’, ‘consequence’, ‘result’, ‘impact’, and ‘significance’. There are also ‘after-effects’ in the legal sphere where the ‘after-effect’ refers to a regulation which remains in effect after expiration or termination of a contract. Medication can have ‘after-effects’. In English I prefer the term ‘Aftermath’ and in French the term ‘Repercussion’ for *Nachwirkung*.)