

8. 1. 2020, 18.00 Uhr, Raum 119

Dan Adler, York University, Toronto
Oil and Fascism: Isa Genzken at the Venice Biennale

This talk explores Isa Genzken's exhibition *Oil* at the Venice Biennale (2007). Genzken's show included rows of anti-monuments: assemblages featuring suitcases, taxidermied owls, toys, posters, and paint splatters. With such makeshift sculptures, Genzken explored mixtures of parodic, satirical, and ironic modes of presentation as means of treating political and topical subject matter—such as imperialism and greed—without losing sight of the perceived impossibility of direct action, hence allowing for the Beckett-like possibility of miscommunication and comic failure. Genzken's approach to assemblage depends on practices of disjunction and repetition that allow for the extended play of irony. Her use of humor reflects a generational resistance to a “politics of realization”—referencing politics without making commitments, and avoiding direct action in favor of a more distanced and parodic skepticism.

Dan Adler is Associate Professor in the Department of Visual Arts & Art History at York University in Toronto. His most recent publication is *Tainted Goods: Contemporary Sculpture and the Critique of Display Cultures* (Routledge, 2019), which explores modern and contemporary tendencies toward assemblage. He considers how these works incorporate tainted materials – often things left on the side of the road, according to the logic and progress of the capitalist machine – and offers a range of aesthetic models through which these practices can be understood to function critically. The book's main chapters focus on a single exhibition by a different artist: Geoffrey Farmer, Isa Genzken, Rachel Harrison, and Liz Magor. His other books include the monograph *Hanne Darboven: Cultural History 1880-1983* (Afterall Books/MIT Press, 2009). He co-edited (with Mitchell Frank) *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism* (Ashgate Press, 2012) and co-edited (with Janine Marchessault and Sanja Obradovic) *Parallax: Stereoscopic 3D in Moving Images and Visual Art* (Intellect Books/University of Chicago Press, 2013). A former senior editor of the *Bibliography of the History of Art* at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, he regularly contributes reviews to *Artforum*. An alumnus of the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program, he co-curated (with Lesley Johnstone) a Liz Magor retrospective exhibition at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, which traveled in 2017 to the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; the Kunstverein in Hamburg; and the Musée d'Art Moderne et contemporain in Nice, France (the accompanying catalogue, *Liz Magor: Habitude*, was published by JRP Ringier). His other curatorial credits include the exhibitions *Francis Bacon and Henry Moore: Terror and Beauty* (2014) held at the Art Gallery of Ontario and *When Hangover Becomes Form: Rachel Harrison and Scott Lyall* (2006), held at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE).