

Daimler Art Collection

Private / Corporate I

Works from the Daimler Art Collection

and from the Paul Maenz Collection: a dialogue

Daimler Contemporary, Berlin

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Foreword

‘Private/Corporate’ is the first of a series of exhibitions in which the Daimler Art Collection will initiate a dialogue with private European collections, thus shedding light on the collection from the point of view of a related collecting interest. Paul Maenz showed about 200 individual and themed exhibitions by European avant-garde artists in Cologne from 1970–1990, thus establishing himself as a ground-breaking European gallery owner. Representative work complexes from the Paul Maenz Collection have been a permanent presence in the Neues Museum in Weimar since 1999. The ‘Private/Corporate’ exhibition includes about 80 works by 50 international artists from 1960 to the present day.

Encountering and analyzing contemporary art is an element of Daimler’s corporate cultural self-perception that has evolved quite naturally. The art collection, which was started in 1977 and has grown continuously since, addresses abstract tendencies in the 20th century. The main focus of the Daimler Art Collection, which now owns approximately 1000 works by about 200 artists, is on an abstract-constructive, conceptual or minimalist view of pictures. This line was pursued first of all in terms of artistic developments in the first half of the 20th century in the Stuttgart area and the rest of southern Germany, but rapidly expanded to include related German, Swiss and European, and finally international positions within non-expressive pictorial art. This direction was followed further and successively extended with

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the acquisition of work from the new media field. Internationalization and globalization have meant that the collection has become more mobile, and have also to an extent affected the long-term concept of the Daimler Art Collection, which will increasingly include international positions. But they also represent a challenge to internal company processes in which the collection is increasingly involved.

“Many works in the Paul Maenz Collection were once seen as spearheading the avant-garde, but have since become classics of post-1945 art. They offer an impressive survey of some of the most important international artistic positions in the four decades between 1960 and 2000, but at the same time reflect the history of the Galerie Paul Maenz, whose self-perception as an avant-garde showcase set new standards in West Germany. As the Cologne gallery’s programme never rigidly followed a certain view of art, but made a point of being open to change, the collection’s aims did not include taking the most linear approach possible to the development history of art from 1960 onwards.

The former Cologne gallery owner and collector Paul Maenz handed over his private collection of about 450 pictures, objects, installations and 330 drawings to the Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar in three sections as a gift, purchase and permanent in 1994. After a first successful presentation called ‘Der Fürst schmolzt’ (The Prince is sulking) in the Residenzschloss in Weimar in summer 1994, the collection has since 1999 formed the core of the former Großherzogliches Museum, which was reconstructed for Weimar’s year as European City of Culture.“ (Gerda Wendermann)

The selection of pictures, sculptures, objects and videos from the Daimler Art Collection in the ‘Private/Corporate’ exhibition starts with early acquisitions of work by Josef Albers, Max Bill and Almir Mavignier, and also examples from Andy Warhol’s *Cars*-series. Further developments of Conceptual and Minimal Art, moving towards the present day, are represented in the form of works by John M Armleder, Richard Artschwager, Haim Steinbach, Elaine Sturtevant and Franz Erhard Walther. But the principal emphasis, in line with current acquisition policy, is on contemporary international art, with new acquisitions of works by Bogin, Dean, Eichhorn, Fleury, Frize, Hauser, Huemer, Mercier, Miller, Mosher, Sanguineti, Schmidt-Rasmussen, Westerwinter and Winter.

In ‘Private/Corporate’, the history and programming policy of the Paul Maenz Gallery is reflected in conceptually oriented works by Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Giovanni Anselmo, Joseph Kosuth, Iannis Kounellis, Sol LeWitt, Piero Manzoni, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Elaine Sturtevant and Peter Roehr. In the 1980s the gallery discovered and promoted painters from

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the 'Mülheimer Freiheit' group like Bömmels, Dokoupil et al., documented the further development of Anselm Kiefer and helped Italian Arte Povera and Transavanguardia to acquire an international profile (Chia, Clemente, Cucchi, De Dominicis, Paladino, Paolini, Penone). Works by Angela Bulloch, Maurizio Cattelan, Sylvie Fleury and Thomas Ruff reflect the development of the Paul Maenz Collection towards the present day.

I would like to thank Paul Maenz and Gerd de Vries for a wonderful, inspiring cooperation.

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Daimler Contemporary

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