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ekw14,90

eh ben

19 08 — 15 09 2016

Press talk
18 08, 11am

Opening
18 08, 6pm

Artist Talk
15 09, 6pm



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The artists' collective **ekw14,90** was founded in Graz in 2000 by Moke Klengel, Christoph Rath, Marlies Stöger, and André Tschinder. Since then it's continued to develop its shared practice of art, both installative and performative, in the fields of video, photography, music, and theater. ekw14,90's works are mainly distinguished by a subtle treatment of associations and linguistic jokes, radical reduction, and absurd exaggeration applied to individual situations.

In the exhibition "eh ben" ekw14,90 tells of a fictitious artistic avant-garde that opposes drastic reality as a whole—starting with a group that calls itself the "Zu-Realisten" (a pun that combines the concepts of being "too realist" and moving "toward realism"). This group vehemently demands a withdrawal from reality. Yet, not only do they simply withdraw, but, precisely because they promote the notion of permanent withdrawal, they also seem to consider themselves a new and vital force in social engagement. In their strongly escapist tendency, the "Zu-Realisten" develop a two-pronged artistic strategy that sheds clear light on their attitude, while also publicizing it. Through their visual productions, the "Zu-Realisten" oppose the painfully perceived, high-resolution images produced by the reality of omnipresent visual technologies.

Interestingly enough, ekw14,90's "eh ben" doesn't at all attempt to test which updated form of Realism and which reservoir of artistic means could be combined to counteract the powerful order of the present and the naturalization of these conditions. Rather, the exhibition presents the elements that the "Zu-Realisten" have decided constitute reality, and how they behave toward it. In addition the "Zu-Realisten" have also set up their concept so that it is consciously non-political. Rooting their motivations for action in abstract, sublime notions of art obviously conceals the inconvertibility of the goals, as well as disappointment and the potential for self-dissolution.

In the exhibition at Raum D located on the ground floor of Künstlerhaus – Halle für Kunst und Medien, the "Zu-Realisten's" story is also told twice: first, through a group of works from 2012, which presents works that the Zu-Realisten might have made. The works themselves, as well as the "Zu-Realisten's" movement are introduced and explained in an accompanying audio guide. The text is consistently told in the subjunctive. Secondly, the "Zu-Realisten's" narrative is presented once again, but this time, in an altered tone of voice, in the form of a film similar to the films of Jean-Luc Godard.

In this tricky setting, ekw14,90's double narrative shows not only the processes that historicize any artistic undertaking, but also refers to the utilization of various media and their equally diverse, subtle, auratic effects. To what extent ekw14,90's own experiences play a role in the yearnings of the fictitious "Zu-Realisten" and their methods of artistic action is certainly of less importance than the fact that today the idea of a historical fiction is perhaps, in general, one of the few remaining forms that Realism can still accept. <http://ekw1490.mur.at>

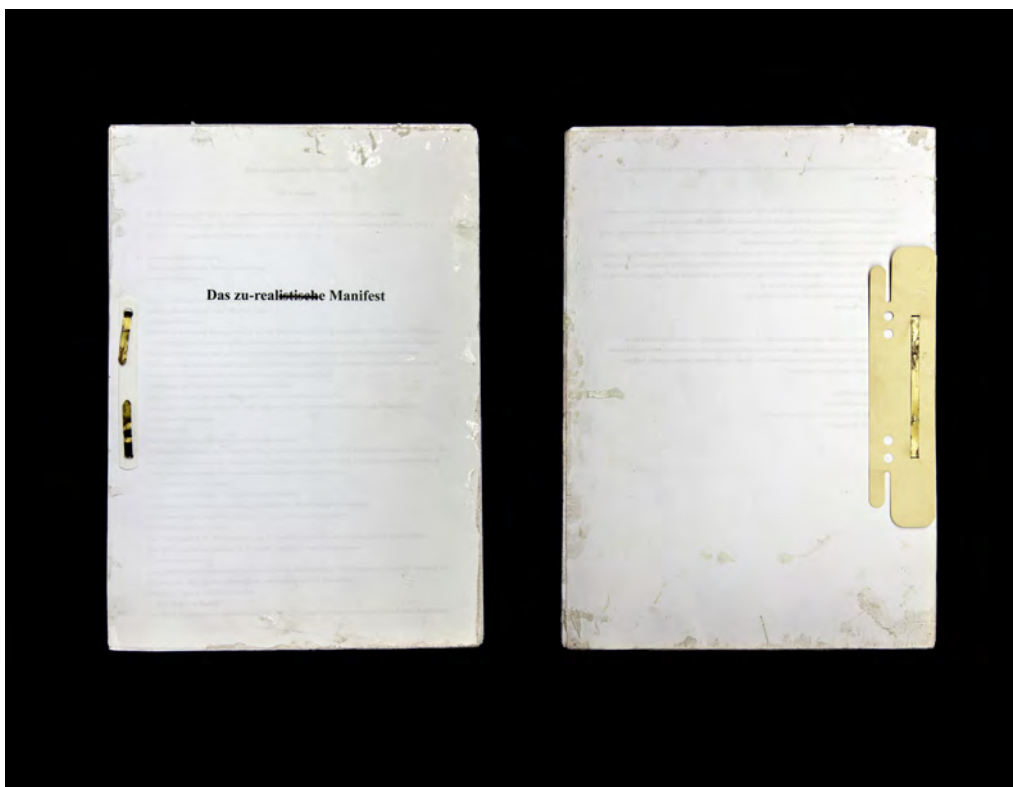
Press download: <http://www.km-k.at/en/exhibition/ekw1490/press/>

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Fanzine available



ekw14,90, Imperativ (l'individu dans l'image), 2016, HD video



ekw14,90, Subjonctif (Manifest), 2016, photography, 50 × 65 cm