

## Zur Vergolderin

Welcome to the Restaurant says the Restaurator, where liquids are served and preserved. Please do not use the tableau, just use the tableau. Its fragments of silver, silky marble, veined carbonate of lime, minted forms former drinks or shapes of rotating shields and fields.

Some day every painting was fluid and liquid; colour to mould, cast, brush, pour, stroke, mix. Green, silver, brown, mauve, ochre, white, sienna red, red, gold, black, turquoise, blue, grey, pink matter, sencha, buttermilk, spritz, lemonade, chocolate in currents and currencies.

Some days they are a restauration of memories, physical recess, cognitive faces, spiritual places, personal laces and cultural traces; they Age.

Someday they will love Jakob Forster, maybe unconditionally, directly, ecstatically, splinteredly.

As Jakob Forster names his exhibition “Someday I’ll love Jakob Forster”, a title-adoption of the Ocean Vuong Poem “Someday I’ll love Ocean Vuong”, his own name and identity become the programming for his exhibition at Tonus. The tone and taste to read and feel what is presented is perfumed with little droplets of “Eau de personnel”. We smell poetry, self-doubt, self-acceptance, wanting, desire, longing, autofiction, and so the forester, instead of the ocean, guides our gaze. The changeable element is the I, not the Name. It is this tricky difference he is staging and thus the title speaks from the paintings’ mouth without barely subjectifying them nor merely objectifying them, but holding the paintings in a position, on a level, of simultaneously being both. The paintings are bistro tables made out of wood, the actual table board is a painted surface. White chalk primer imitates a small tablecloth which overlaps the round edges in a way

Mondrian’s paintings often do. Placed on this field are material samples made by a restorer’s apprentice. Here again it is the ambiguity, between being a performance of a leftover and referring to a cascade of meanings, that holds the disc in a vibrant state. Emphasising only one side would mean assuming a fixed place at the table either being the object or the subject. Jakob Forster is deliberately playing with it. Therefore the gold leaf could be a remnant of a chocolate, a beer, chewing gum wrapper or a reference to mediaeval gold grounds, baroque frames, emergency blankets, gold as currency, or even to the doreur, a profession that some of Jakob Forster’s family members practised. The same for the imitated marble. Do we see marble, the material under the tablecloth, through a tear in the tissue or do we see a reference to painted marble by Mantegna or Fra Angelico, to marble symbolising liquids, blood, flesh, lava, or to a metaphor for transcending painting, or an homage to Lucy McKenzie’s Trompe-l’œil paintings, or, again, does it refer to the profession of the restorer? The planes definitely display more than we can see while collectively wrapping wood, paint, tables, objects and subjects in a communicative shell. Together they converse with various pasts and futures, with the unspeakable, the unaddressable, with the complex simultaneities in friendships, families, passions, obsessions, sessions. Heavily loaded terms mounted invisible under minimal marks, mat(t)ers and pat(t)erns.

Jakob Foster is showing four bistro tables, two horizontal and two vertical. As a result of this installation, two tables are presented in functional mode and two in storage mode. But they are not only tables, they are mainly paintings. Switching the idea of being a table into the idea of being a painting, the modes of activity and passivity as well as the modes of function and dysfunction change sides, the public sphere flips to the private, the social figuration transcends into soloistic configuration. Usually a painting is horizontal for preparation and vertical for presentation. The painted surfaces of the self-made bistro table contain traces of drinks, materials, glasses, art history, family history, bar stories and uses. Memory is embedded in the ground, the soaking surface. A painting’s past carries spheres of constellated dots, lines and planes in a similar way our memory bears early experiences poured in a chewy fluidity, ready to be iced carefully. (In “... wie aus einem Ingenieurgestell Tisch Warburgs Bilderatlas wurde ... ZKM 2016” Thomas Hensel speaks about the relationship between constellations on a horizontal, a tilted and a vertical panel).

The German word “*Einrichtung*” has several meanings in English: from structure to furniture to institution. Seeing some day paintings as *Einrichtungen*, they need adjectives to distinguish themselves from other *Einrichtungen*. Are they *decorative, critical, philosophical, aesthetic*

*or communicative?* Keeping the table-paintings ambivalent as images and tables, intentionally staging them as *Einrichtung*, emphasises their conflict of having a function and being at the same time without function, being something to enjoy, to just live with, something attractive, inspiring, beautiful and nice, Nizza. Usually, for furniture the function is first. For a painting it is the opposite, its use is invisible and subjective, the function – intangible and objected. Functions and uses can be provoked from the primer, grounding, walling, framing and hanging of a painting while its texture, veils, skins and stories disguise them simultaneously. Hinges, passages, messages to mediate, flip, click and social figurate are in between the tilted grades of perception.

Since the times of the first salons the proliferation of paintings increased enormously. Antwerp. Since the Paris Salon the concept of painting diversified, since galleries gather in cities and fairs paintings are currencies and liquids on bistro tables. The bistro table is very often used for brief meetings and short conversations in bars, entrances halls, hallways, marriages, fairs and conferences. Jakob & I met a year ago at a Rotterdam bar table. A conversation started, about the social and painting, about Bild, about teaching and what is teachable, about earning a living and living a discourse. We exchanged names and ideas and are always coming back to the table to play a new game, a game of social & intellectual exchange, of love and loving us, functionalizing visions and visionalizing functions, interlocutors and addressees. I could start the game here or end it. I end it with naming some Visitors, I personally saw standing at Jakob Forster's tableau, to begin with: Ocean Vuong, Fra Angelico, Anne Rößner, Berthold Reiß, Monika Baer, Saidiya Hartman, Nayvadius DeMun Wilburn, Manet, Van Gogh, Ensor, Cameron Rowland, Andrea Mantegna, Isabelle d'Este, Apprentices, Aunt, Claude Cahun, Mom & Däds, Octavia Butler, Volkshoch- und Realschüler, Evelyn Taocheng Wang, Kai Althoff, Josef Strau, Birgit Megerle, Florine Stettheimer, Marcel Duchamp, Franz Erhard Walther, Cady Noland, Agnes Martin, Martin Wong, Harlem Renaissance, Moritz, Anna, Jan, Gerlach en Koop, Dior, Frank Ocean.

In love Philipp Schwalb

