

Artists and Furniture. Judith Hopf, Trix & Robert Haussmann (ft. Liam Gillick) at KW

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Christian Hain



(Berlin.) Did we [mention](#) already, it was cold in Berlin, two weeks before [Berlinale](#)? Because it was. Could a visit to **KW** prove heart-warming at least?

The art centre welcomes its visitors with a neon pearl necklace(?) hanging from ceiling to floor, and the artist is not [Jean-Michel Othoniel](#) but **Judith Hopf**. This is her solo show. Emerging from a wall across the room, two brownish-red hands desperately reach for that rainbow-coloured fly- or shower curtain(?). Proof of an unfortunate encounter between [Tamerlane](#) and Grover from Sesame Street (now walled in)? Later, a fake **Posenenske**, or rather: lots of them. If you're told the title before, and are blessed with an imaginative mind, you recognize the seated *Laptop Men*, stick figures working hard. The title being crucial for the understanding of an artwork, does that mean, it's really in there? Or planted in our minds by words alone?

Add more chains of beads(?) (/smartballs?) and a film that is somehow reminiscent of [Bill Viola](#). - I'm not sure, whether it is a good thing to think of another artist with every work in a show. Water keeps dripping on a couple's

dinner table while the woman upstairs is crouching on hers, waving, paddling with magazines through the pool that was once her flat. In between, we observe the staircase evolving into a waterfall. Yes indeed: A burst water main is annoying.

You sort the umbrellas, straighten your abstract art on the walls, and the background music gets hectic. That's pretty much all of it. Ok, to be fair: If you stay long enough for the film to start over again, you watch a family (couple – one of them might be a transgender person – with two children) leaving that woman upstairs home alone. Bad idea. She first forgets the password for her MacBook, then the open kitchen tap in her back. And thus, the story unfolds, in pictures without dialogue.

Is this supposed to be some sort of metaphor?

The second room of silver-grey sharpened metal plate *Men with Laptops* later, things get more interesting with the view into the atrium: Freestanding walls, raised fingers - fores only, no digitus impudicus -, pears, footballs, two Kaabas (->**Gregor Schneider?**), and a pretty intern in tight jeans all apparently made from brick, except the intern.

We don't want to see the nose that finger is aiming for. People emerge from under the Kaabas that on closer inspection turn out to be rectangular cotton tents suspended from the ceiling. Would be even more impressive, had they tried to conceal the strings keeping them in place. Watching people's legs move below the tents *is* nice: [Erwin Wurm](#) could not have done it better. Entering yourself, you can watch a film. A street scene, a kid playing the drums, and people emerge from hiding – almost like the photos of **Liu Bolin**. It's warm in there, and maybe you do some Yoga for the sake of those outside. Joining them again, better resist the urge to kick a ball (more like basketballs actually, but Europeans will always prefer the foot): They don't just *look* like solid stone. The walls at least really are, as I verified when sitting down on one for a moment. Solid masonry, real bricks, indeed. From down here, the view gets nicely sliced, another wall, a hovering tent, a piece of white, black window frames in a line of glass, and the ceiling, white again. Elsewhere, the building's half-renovated state shows even more, to make a fascinating setting for every art show.

Another film under the second tent, Asian waiters, a Barber Shop trio, and more waiting in a doctor's waiting room. The artist herself appears, and people obviously having ordered cheap "Police"-sweaters from spreadshirt.com. A coming and going in a Wilhelminian Berlin building.

A second show on the upper floors brings Swiss couple **Trix and Robert Haussmann** who apparently are living legends of 20th Century design. If you say so. (Do you think it a coincidence, or was **Robert** born to **Raoul** aficionados? He was at his height at the designer's birth in 1931!) Their show starts with a ménage à trois of intertwined chairs so hot, a fourth is melting away. A golden shower curtain (wait, that sounds weird), and a superb mini bar (empty, unfortunately), Greek T-columns like architectural typography, some of the pieces solid-, others just plywood. A text on the wall recalls those lusty chairs again - Oh wait, that's actually **Liam Gillick** with architectural poems, giving furniture a voice! An Easter Egg, an artist hiding in another show?

Mirrors, in form of a crucifix – and simultaneously: a stick man (without laptop) – or covering chairs to provide camouflage for beginners, others shaped in most irregular forms. Occasionally, they multiply some more texts of **Gillick**.

The greatest thing about this type of interior design is the playfulness, **R. & T. Haussmann** don't seem to take their job dead serious: Movable for fun.

Judith Hopf, Stepping Stairs, 10 February-15 April 2018

Trix & Robert Haussmann (& Liam Gillick), The Log-O-Rithmic(sic!) Slide Rule:

A Retrospective, 10 February-29 April 2018

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