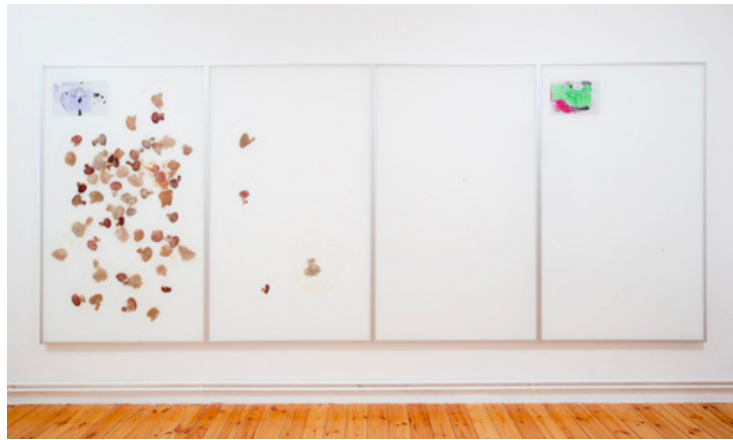


ARTFORUM

Hans-Christian Lotz Critics' Picks

by Barbara Buchmaier
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View of "Hans-Christian Lotz," 2011

Hans-Christian Lotz's solo debut in Berlin is also the first exhibition at this new gallery. Lotz, who most recently exhibited dirty and rusty white refrigerator doors from junkyards as paintings, has again incorporated readymades here. Hanging in a compact block are four aluminum frames that typically encase solar cell panels, each titled *Rain Over Water* and dated 2011. In the place of cells, however, one discovers pig brains pressed flat on white panels. Lotz obtained these brains from a slaughterhouse, set them in various preservation solutions, and laminated them between the plastic layers of the solar-cell panels under hot air and a vacuum. The furthest left section reveals a swarm of red-brown brain halves at its center. The other panels have markedly fewer entrails. In all, though, air bubbles filled with condensation form in the periphery of the organ-enclosures, generating shapes that resemble puddles. Seth Price's well-known plastic-vacuum castings of ropes and bomber jackets are perhaps a touchstone for this work. Yet the reliefs so characteristic of Price's works are only to be found on the backside of Lotz's panels and remain invisible to the viewer.

The aesthetic and the status of the rotting organic substances (how long will they last?) also brings to mind works by Dieter Roth and Damien Hirst. A further "imponderable" is provoked by the felt-tip drawings integrated in two of the panels. Drawn in the style of Surrealist automatism, one can discern faces in them. Whether they will retain their chromaticity, however, is hard to estimate, because the glass offers no UV protection. A final work, untitled, 2009-11, which consists of four black-and-white striped postcards behind glass, references the Internet meme Pedobear. It is shown here in an optical encryption. Only from a distance does one see the bear emerging from the pattern of stripes.

A narrative interpretation of this show, which is at once sober and experimenting with various effects and references, appears to be impossible. This is seemingly by design; neither a title nor a press release was published. Instead, the audience is challenged to draw on a personal position and to question the storage capacities presented (solar-cell panels, brain, artwork, etc.) in terms of their action.

— *Translated from German by Diana Reese*