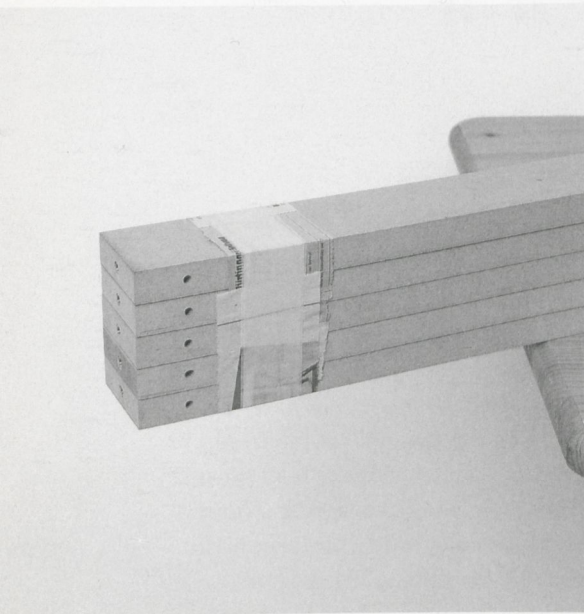


31 32 33 34 35

Hannelore Paflik-Huber

31 The Material. MDF is the abbreviation for Medium Density Fibreboard, which is pressed from softwood and reinforced with aminoplast resin. The profiles can be veneered, laminated or varnished. Christian Wulffen uses unvarnished, mechanically prefabricated rods measuring 105 x 5 x 1.6 cm, and panels with the dimensions 20 x 20 x 1.2 cm. Of these two elements, there are 50 pieces each. 21 holes are drilled in the centre of the front side of each rod, and there are also 3 drill-holes in the sides of each. In the rectangular upper surface of each rod there is a hollow, into which a brass plug has been inserted. The square panels each have drill-holes measuring 4 mm (which is the same for all the other holes as well) in the centre of all four sides. At right angles to each of these, there are also holes on the front sides of each panel. Wulffen uses black socket-head screws as connectors. In addition, there are 100 weatherproof sheeting foils. Their size is approximately DIN A0, exactly 1300 x 1000 mm, and they are attached to the respective supports – be it the outer wall of a house, the wall of a room, or a prefabricated MDF rod – with aluminium-steel push-pins. 16 black stripes are printed in silkscreen on each of the Evacast foils. They each measure 1.9 x 11.7 cm. A fourth element consists of large-scale reproductions of feature pages from newspapers. The entire page is enlarged and printed on tear-resistant, weatherproof indoor/outdoor banners. The backside shines through slightly. For these, there is no pre-set number. The inclusion of these prefabricated products into his works clarifies how Wulffen would like to have the principle of mass-production understood. It is tied solely to the material, not to the contents and not to the information. The dimensions, the material and the attachments are components of a system that, through the artistic placement, open up a playing field on which both the viewer and the artist are equally entitled to play.



32 Play of numbers. Wulffen himself describes his works as »details«. The smallest number of elements used for any given detail is two. The title of a detail describes the subtle tightrope walk, which – here, between play, infinity, order and placement – hits the point that Wulffen is attempting to steer towards with his description of condition. It is a model, an artistic analogy for the experience of reality. Every day, we require a structure with easily comprehensible units of measurement in order to reduce our conception of the world to an understandable level. Added to this is an element that corresponds with Christian Wulffen's working methods. Everything is explained clearly; within

his system, nothing is concealed or hidden, right up to the title. Based on the sum of the series and the number of elements selected, an equation is put forward. And, in fact, this is done in such a way that we can discern how the artist integrates the individual details into his system; this means that they can only be understood and taken into consideration within this system. When, for example, 6 elements are taken from the kit for one particular detail, they are then subtracted from the total number. De facto: 6 elements from 50 equals 44. The chronological succession is not expressed by the title, although the total sum decreases continuously. Each work is to be thought of and viewed first of all through its result. The artist describes each detail, without placing it within a hierarchy or a chronology. With each detail, the equation is calculated, positioned and structured anew. This is Wulffen's own personal mathematical model for the correlations between simultaneity and equivalency. The result is then a reduction of the number of available

elements to 44. But the starting point, from which the artist now operates, is no longer 50 elements, since he already used 6 of these. The spatial and temporal layering on top of, beneath, next to, and together is not only an esthetic placement, but also a formal compression. The model functions, finally, as a visual substitute for his intent to give each detail a sense of integration. And he achieves this with his own highly individual language and grammar. The complexity of the system, within which he integrates the details, stands in opposition to the simplicity of the source materials of the elements. As viewers, we stand in front of a detail, one that is limited to the here and now and is thus determined in such and such a way. The point of the game is to limit the endless possibilities of combination through the reduction of the number of elements available, based on the knowledge that the potential number of relationships is in fact infinite.

33 Information. Due to its industrial production, the source material is comprised of similar elements. Wulffen selects particular variants from a repertoire of possible conditions. He then leaves the production of the elements to the industry. A selection of elements with the same basic information is combined by the artist and thus receives a structure, which appears flat, three-dimensional or architectural. Viewers do not necessarily have to know that a selection has been made. They can, however, simultaneously co-conceive all the other possibilities, although they cannot see these. The artist has limited himself to this structure, this form and this constellation. Understanding and its encoding are prerequisites for communication.

34 Communication. Information + Statement + Understanding = Communication. With this group of works from the last several years, Wulffen clearly and esthetically confirms the thesis that information is a selection from a (known or unknown) repertoire of possibilities. A statement is nothing more than a proposed selection, a suggestion. Information can only be communicated through a form. The artist communicates it to us with his own unique precision. The introduction is easy; the information well known to us from everyday life: MDF from the furniture

industry, the sheeting foils as decoration material, the newspaper pages as our daily reading material, especially for art enthusiasts. A readiness to read, to make connections between the random and the intended, to expose oneself to a media-immanent grammar – Wulffen is well equipped to touch upon all of this with his works.

35 Visual identity. Fictitious reality. Idealist of form. Profiles of esthetics. What is a picture. Art and structuralism. The world as form. Esthetics of absence. On effectiveness. The color black. Knowledge, concept, culture. From Giotto to Cézanne. The art of society. Epistemology of the 20th century. Etymological dictionary.