

## MARKUS WEGGENMANN – Tornadorot 26 April – 1 June 2013

Markus Weggenmann's last exhibition in Berlin displayed large spray-painted still lifes. In his current one at taubert contemporary, the jars are lacking their opulent contents. Only the empty bowls remain, some as high-gloss painted pottery, some entirely flat as digital prints.

This strong focus on a single representational motive in an exhibition is a new development for Weggenmann. At the same time however, it picks up an idea of his art of the 1990s, when he exclusively painted colourful horizontal stripes for a decade and covered entire rooms with such paintings. He used this formal reduction to draw the attention to what he considers the most important aspect of painting: the interaction of colours.

This is now again the case in „Tornado Red“ (the colour of his recently stolen car, as well as that of one of the now shown ceramic bowls). The showcased receptables are nothing but devices for the display of colour to him. Contrary to his old stripe paintings, this is now reinforced by a symbolic component: the bowl motive isn't *just* a banal form, but also references a certain function: the holding of contents. Instead of fruit, flowers, or nuts, Weggenmann's bowls are „filled“ with colour. As such they certainly kept their functionality as receptables, but paradoxically remain empty of all material contents at the same time, which further increases the visual dominance of the exterior, the surface.

Contradictions like this are prevalent throughout Weggenmann's art in general and in this exhibition in particular: the archaic air of the rough pottery against the perfection and polish of their varnish, the highly personal script of his brush-painted drafts against the technical coolness of their final execution as digital prints, the lusciously colourful presentation against the almost melancholic scantiness of forms, the wealth of possibilities for symbolic interpretation against the always so emphasised meaninglessness.

Weggenmann's art aims to be primarily beautiful and not talkative, but it is exactly the desire to make this intention clear that makes these works speak of themselves regardlessly. No matter how much the artist tries to hide the liveliness of his brush strokes behind the external, professional realisation with car paint, print, or in a carpet manufacture – they can never quite be killed off and in spite of all attempts at taming they again and again embark on peculiar lives of their own.

*Markus Weggenmann born 1953 in Singen/Hohentwiel, Germany.  
He lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland.*