

Thomas Prochnow

*edit-2.0/Second Public Space*

24 October – 28 November 2020

The two-part exhibition title reveals that there are two artistic and thematic focuses that Thomas Prochnow is showing.

**edit-2.0** summarises the two preceding exhibitions *edit\_black* (2017) and *edit\_white* (2019) or rather presents excerpts from them both.

In both exhibitions the artist presented his *edit* works, which are concerned with organisational principles and question the concept of standardisation. On the one hand there is the organisational principle – one could also say the editing feature – of colour, while there is also the order imposed by ISO paper sizes. Following both parameters as basic principles, the artist creates a field of action that is diverse and surprising in its output. In *edit\_black* the colour black is the main feature, so the artist uses all kinds of materials, be they found objects (remnants of wood and building boards, coated or uncoated) or materials from the DIY store such as grilles, rubber mats and the like, which he composes into an assemblage-like picture. It is not difficult to see the influence of the history of constructivist art of classical modernism to post-war modernism, although the work created always contains an aspect of artistic disruption. The sizes of the works are schematically divided into work groups ranging from A6 to A1 and also A0.

Artistic disruption is the act of individualising the work in its process of creation and its finished state, which could be interpreted first of all as the informal playing-through of one or more standards. When Prochnow concentrates, for example, on a series of works that involves the A4 size and the colour white as the ordering principle, the outcome is a multiplicity of pictorial works that could not be more varied. Sometimes, for example, these are shaped items of white plastic, for example, lined up and glued together, and sometimes they are aligned horizontally, vertically or even diagonally. Found pieces of plastic or wood, which have the colour white as their surface feature, are joined together to form layered, sometimes strict and sometimes less strict constructivist configurations. However, each pictorial work here is cut to A4 size. This way, he creates series that, hung together in rows, yield a vibrant interplay of form, structure and colour. Exploiting the shadows of the relief-like works as well as the density of the existing coat of white paint, they are all nevertheless identical in height and width.

When, in the current exhibition, Prochnow now links the organisational principles of colour (here white and black) with standard sizes, a high-contrast scene evolves before the inner eye, forming a varied composition in size, structure and form and in the colours black and white (and shades thereof).

The works from his *Second Public Space* series are all colour photographs, executed as pigment prints on fine art paper. The art photography is the last materialised step in his spatial interventions prepared over a long period of time. This medium is permitted and intended to survive, while the basis for it, his artistic intervention in found spaces, is left to its fate.

The artist comes from the East German graffiti/street art scene of the post-reunification period and over the years has evolved a distinctive, strictly formal language, which is certainly a result of his studies at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, with Monika Brandmeier among others, and his in-depth exploration of the history of constructivist art. His interventions in what the artist calls the *Second Public Space* are always of an intelligent nature and impress us with the contrast between minimalist artistic interventions and the picturesque beauty of derelict places captured for us in photography and showing signs of their former life – be they industrial relics, bunkers or inhospitable, technoid street architecture such as bridge piers and the like.

The artist's reclusive, almost hermit-like intervention in these spaces is preserved for us in astutely orchestrated photography that enables us to share in his pioneering conquests of space. The trophy photography typical of the graffiti scene has become powerful yet quiet art photography.

His photographic works are realised in different formats and edition sizes.

The titles of the photographs testify to his systematic approach, i.e. their ordering in colours and shapes, and thus refer to the structurally organising spirit of the other work groups of his *edit-2*.

Semjon H. N. Semjon, October 2020

His work group *Second Public Space* is currently showcased in CUBE magazine (online version):  
<https://www.cube-magazin.de/blog/detail/sCategory/38/blogArticle/652>