



Riedel
Text
CV

Kunsthalle Zürich, 2017

I am the text accompanying this exhibition.

My name is Arial.

**I am here to inform visitors of the exhibition
CV – Michael Riedel at Kunsthalle Zürich and about
the works included. I am also the foreword on the
first pages of the exhibition catalogue. Sentence –
word – letter, that’s what I am.**

I describe.

The following text quotes from *The Art of Society* by Niklas Luhmann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995). Further quotes: “Sinnmachen beenden” (“Stop making sense”), in: *Saab 95* (Rüsselsheim: Superless, 2007); “Signetismus” in: *Perlstein* (London: König Books, 2011); *Kunste zur Text* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2012); “Serial Offenders, Replicants, Animals of Theory” in: *Oskar* (Paris: Silverbridge, 2003)

CV

The curriculum vitae or CV.docx is the basic medium of human self-definition and promotion. It outlines a person's career path and separates what they have done from what they have not done. An artist's CV can be read as an account of their exhibition activities and the institutions in which these have taken place.

The exhibition entitled CV at Kunsthalle Zürich will take place twice: as an actual exhibition and as an automatic entry into Riedel's CV. The resulting performative discrepancy is precisely what Riedel is interested in. As if unfurling out of itself, this paradoxical form is a perfect manifestation of Riedel's artistic form of autonomy, which can be described as a reinsertion of the form into the form – CV into CV – each inducing an irritation in the other.

The exhibition will be on display on both levels of Kunsthalle Zürich. You have entered the exhibition after walking through its entrance.

Lower Level — Room 1

Replica of Kunsthalle Zürich Entrance (1/3), 2017

MDF, emulsion paint, table
Dimensions variable

Untitled (CV), 2017

Offset print on paper
84 x 118.8 cm each

The freestanding replica of the entrance – a double-door-sized wall opening with a reception desk – repeats the previously made decision to enter the exhibition. To change one's mind at this point would not undo the visit as such, as the visitor would still have visited an unvisited exhibition.

Untitled (Jury), 1998

Stamping ink on paper
316 x 378 cm

It is no longer about critique, about theory or about justified verdicts made from a level of reflection that holds itself at an observer's distance to the art establishment. Nor is it about specific phenomena. Instead, it is about performative self-contradiction and deconstruction retroacting on itself.

As an art student in 1998, Riedel applies for a grant. The application form requires applicants to submit only originals of work samples; the grant will be awarded by a jury. Riedel hands in a large sheet of paper with an assessment table containing the names of the jury members alongside his own, thereby re-entering the form into the form. Although his application is unsuccessful, he succeeds in avoiding the assessment of his art as the table is never filled out.

Lecture Performance on *Signetism*, 1998–99

Photocopy on paper

Untitled (I), 1998–99

Photocopy on overhead transparency
21 x 29.7 cm each

Untitled (Signetisms), 1998–99

Photocopy on overhead transparency
21 x 29.7 cm each

Untitled (*Art Movements from 1800 to the Present*), 1998

Photocopy on paper
35.5 x 52 cm

Michael S. Riedel (Bag), 1998

Stamping ink on paper
70 x 43 cm

Untitled (Lecture Setting), 1998

Photocopy on paper
21 x 29.7 cm

Through the process of re-entry, meaning:

...the entry of the distinction into that which has been distinct

...the re-entry of the form into the form

...the self-referencing entry into its own distinctive form the artwork exhibits itself along with its own self-description.

Michael Riedel has been implementing the paradoxical concept of 're-entry' in countless variations since the beginning of his artistic career. The three interconnected rooms on the museum's lower level contain works that are a chronological exemplification of this practice applied inside the art system.

'The act of labelling, as well as the label itself, thus acquires artistic relevance' is a quote from a lecture performance by the artist in 1998 at the end of which Michael Riedel, with a paper bag over his head, labels himself as Michael S. Riedel. From then on he declares himself a follower of an art movement that derives its justification of existence precisely from the fact that it doesn't exist. His own existence is based on signs and thus he *is* not, yet he *considers* himself as being. As a labelled reality, he has been everything, is everything, and will possibly be everything.

In any case, the concept of re-entry has created a paradox through which an authentic thing is regarded as inauthentic.

Models 1:2 *Signetic Drawing (Sheets)*, 1994–95/2016

Photocopy on paper, grey board
70 x 100 cm each

Due to the lighting conditions caused by its large window fronts, Kunsthalle Zürich was, for conservation reasons, unable to loan the *Signetic Drawing* originals from the collection of the Städel museum in Frankfurt. These drawings form the paradoxical inception of Michael Riedel's work. At the age of twenty-two, the artist equated a signature with a work of art by signing a signet intended as a signature. Departing from this *Signet*, his so-called *Signetic Drawing* represented a self-perpetuating form of production whose recursive processes consisted of views, views of a view, views of a view of a

view and so forth. This type of second and third level observation (as well as endless levels after that) is a demonstration of the unobservability of the world. This has toxic qualities. Transparency comes at the price of non-transparency, which is precisely what ensures the endless continuation of these operations.

Art Magazine [MoMA-Won't-Loan Remake], 1999/2015

Photocopy on paper
7 covers, 30.1 x 26.7 cm each

The exhibition copies on display are copies of original works in the collection of MoMA New York and consist of copies of copies of art magazines with formats that differ from the originals. The white edges resulting from this divergence mark the area of the non-made inherent in the parameters made by the art magazines, which must persist against the challenge that these parameters could be different. They convince by evoking alternative possibilities and can neutralise any preference for forms not chosen.

Lower Level — Room 2

Replica of Kunsthalle Zürich Entrance (2/3), 2017

MDF, emulsion paint, table
Dimensions variable

Untitled (CV), 2017

Offset print on paper
84 x 118.8 cm each

Untitled (H&M Poster, Sticker 09.03.02), 2002

together with Dennis Loesch
Screen-print on paper, sticker
90 x 248 cm

Untitled (Sticker 28./29.04.2001), 2001

Sticker
42 x 29.7 cm

It's about a room full of possibilities, none of which as interesting as the room itself containing these possibilities, which, in turn, opens

up room for an attention to frameworks, as well as for their confusion. The name of this room is *Oskar-von-Miller Strasse 16*, the site of a permanent introduction to the art of the incidental, an art space in Frankfurt (am Main) founded by Riedel together with Dennis Loesch in 2000 upon Riedel completing his art degree. Here, they reiterated the languages of the city's cultural offerings, often with no real understanding of what was being said but always with great enthusiasm for any mistakes that might occur during their transfer. The principle of 'record, label, play back' allowed them to replicate cultural events and, in the process, create an alteration from the original that did not aim to be anything but a dissimilarity. The aim was to find possibilities for art to stage itself in the form of procedures that would themselves face observation in their role as artworks. However, if an artwork no longer attempts to be persuasive as an artwork but is instead merely labelled as such, certain observers might reject it or self-consciously fall back on any conventional identifying features that remain.

Warhol Shooting (Installation), 2001/2014

Table (MDF and silver foil), camera, tripod, pullover, cable, wood, books (*Oskar*)
Dimensions variable

Warhol Shooting (Poster/Flyer), 2001

together with Dennis Loesch
Photocopy on paper
60 x 29.7 cm / 20.2 x 10 cm

Warhol Shooting, 2001

together with Dennis Loesch
Screen-print on paper
70 x 72 cm

In the form of two so-called Conferences of Anecdotes, the book *Oskar* re-plays the repeated story of *Oskar-von-Miller Strasse 16* (2000 to 2001). A replica of the rooms of Warhol's second Factory (as pictured in Cecil Beaton's photo *Andy Warhol and the Members of the Factory* taken in 1969) serves as a display for the book and had already provided the setting for a re-enacted group shot in 2001. Forming part of the installation is a camera, positioned to imitate almost identically Cecil Beaton's perspective when the original shot was taken, that automatically takes pictures of exhibition visitors as they read from the book. Andy Warhol is also among the readers, trying to decipher the title on the cover floating in front of him, a cover design which repurposes the 1998 Grove Press re-edition of his own book *a: A Novel*. Surrounding the 'a' in his title with the letters O-s-k-r created the new

title 'Oskar', just as anything else can be used to create a B-C-D-E... version. This is an introduction to the concept exercised at Oskar-von-Miller Strasse 16 in endless variations over the years. Once the rules of the game are understood, one can sit back and observe the great variety of moves that are played.

Untitled (Traced Drawings of a: A Novel), 2000

Photocopy, ink on paper
3 drawings, 42 x 29.7 cm each

Untitled (Cover of Oskar), 2003

Offset print on paper
46 x 32.5 cm

Cover of a: A Novel (Grove Press), 1998

Photocopy on paper

Moving Walls, 2001/2006

together with Achim Lengerer
Cardboard boxes, emulsion paint
2 boxes, 75 x 78 118 cm / 75 x 50 x 40 cm

Moving Walls, 2001

together with Achim Lengerer
Video
04:03 min

On the afternoon of 24 April 2001, Michael Riedel and Achim Lengerer entered the Michael Neff Gallery in Frankfurt to imitate Jeppe Hein's exhibition *Moving Walls 180°* (2001) – two replicas of gallery walls which, reacting to motion detectors, would move back and forth and from side to side. Underneath two cardboard boxes painted white, Riedel and Lengerer crawled around on the floor for about fifteen minutes in imitation of the moving gallery walls.

Gallerist Michael Neff soon managed to find out who had been underneath the cardboard boxes and that the whole intervention had been video-recorded. When he invited Riedel and Lengerer to watch the video with him at his gallery, they published an invitation card that was adopted from those of Neff's gallery and converted the private meeting into a public event. As a result, a group of people arrived at the gallery, which by that time was hosting a Gerhard Merz exhibition, even before Riedel and Lengerer, and when the artists finally arrived, a heated argument with Michael Neff about who was and who wasn't allowed to issue invitations to his gallery broke out.

In 2006, the video, along with reconstructions of the cardboard boxes from 2001, was finally officially shown at the Michael Neff Gallery. The show was titled: *24.04.2001 – 16.03.2006*. Since no art theoretical discourse about the 2001 action had ever been undertaken, Riedel

and Lengerer commissioned a film director to stage one with their desired panel participants, namely Jeppe Hein (artist), Wilfried Kühn (architect of the Michael Neff Gallery), Achim Lengerer (artist), Gerhard Merz (artist), Michael Neff (gallerist), Brian O'Doherty (author of *Inside the White Cube*), and Michael Riedel (artist), played by actors. In a room that had been rented separately from the gallery, the staged debate was shown on video beside the replica of a specially built table from the political talk show *Der Internationale Frühschoppen*, which was modelled on the format of the American *Meet the Press*.

Untitled (Sound Recording on Minidiscs), 1999–2007

548 minidiscs, 7.2 x 6.8 x 0.5 cm each

Written and Unwritten Texts [Audio Recordings 1998–2007], 2007

Offset print on paper

Between 1999 and 2007, 85,645 minutes' worth of audio were recorded. Of these, 12,235 minutes have so far been transcribed, which has taken around 815 hours.

The resulting transcripts are uninterrupted verbatim accounts of technologically recorded situations involving conversations or any form of speech that, in a deliberate decision against any type of punctuation, bring to mind certain twentieth-century literary experiments: excessive texts where completeness supersedes cohesion; total disclosure undertaken from a distance; texts like photographs of verbal encounters; texts that never reveal their speakers' identities, maintaining the greatest possible indifference towards the topic at hand. Expression is sacrificed to the reality of the recording situation – which, in turn, becomes more and more universal, the more interchangeable and open to interpretation the meaning produced therein is, and the more possibilities one encounters to produce *any* kind of meaning. Writing with a recording device guarantees an endless plurality of styles, thus allowing each specific form of expression to appear against the backdrop of *all* possible forms of expression. The situation supersedes any actual plot; information becomes an illustration. This occasionally results in the excessive relativisation of all that is being said.

Untitled (Record–Label–Play Back [Missverständnis, Ignoranz, Doppelte Unschärfe]), 2014

Offset print on paper
42 x 59.7 cm

Untitled (Record–Label–Play Back [Malentendu, Ignorance, Double Flous]), 2014

Offset print on paper, double-sided
42 x 59.7 cm

Lower Level — Room 3

Replica of Kunsthalle Zürich Entrance (3/3), 2017

MDF, emulsion paint, table
Dimensions variable

Untitled (CV), 2017

Offset print on paper
84 x 118.8 cm each

CMYK (Saint Veronica), 2008

Offset print on paper
4 postcards, 10.5 x 15 cm each

CMYK (Cyan Magenta Yellow Black), 2007–12

Offset print on paper
Different formats (Frieze, Zéro Deux, Spike, The Master of Flémalle, Made in Germany Zwei)

In 2007, Michael Riedel called the London print shop that prints the contemporary art magazine *Frieze* and commissioned separate prints of the magazine's most recent edition in the four print colours CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black).

The resulting series of CMYK publications has quadrupled each of the originals used. The areas of text that appear in the black version are replaced by swaths of empty white space in the three colour ones.

Seen and Unseen Exhibitions [Invitations],

2016
Offset print on paper
84 x 59.4 cm

Seen and Unseen Exhibitions [Invitations],

2016
Offset print on paper
4 print sheets, 60.5 x 86.0 cm each
2 volumes, 496 p. and 480 p., 13.5 x 18.5 cm each

Printed and Unprinted Posters [2003–08],

2008
Offset print on paper
84 x 59.4 cm

Printed and Unprinted Posters [2003–08], 2008

Offset print on paper
1 print sheet, 63.5 x 88.0 cm
41 print sheets, 63.5 x 88.0 cm each
2 volumes, 368 p. each, 13.5 x 18.5 cm each

The number of invitations sent out always exceeds the number of visitors. This explains Riedel's fascination with invitation cards and posters as well as their graphic design. The artistic value of these supposed by-products is, however, questionable. As Riedel has stated in one of his talks, for him personally they have none. It is not until they are reproduced as part of books that they acquire their status as artworks. Both *Printed and Unprinted Posters [2003–08]* and *Seen and Unseen Exhibitions [Invitations]* are publications that, despite their claim to completeness, remain unreadable.

In the dialogue box belonging to the user interface of the graphic design programme InDesign, users are able to individually define different page formats. Inside an area determined by the maximum width of 548 cm plus the corresponding height, Riedel defined a format with a total surface area that allowed him to line up his graphic images into an overview of all invitations from 2005 to 2016, as well as an overview from 2003 to 2008.

Trimmed to a handy book format, these layout spreads transform into 976 and 736 single pages respectively.

As a result of the technicalities of the printing process, these single pages require 61 and 42 print sheets respectively, some of which, due to how they are folded, needing page layouts to be upside down in order to appear the correct way up in the finished publication. The invitations' original design is thus replaced by production-induced processes, finally resulting in the transformation of the print sheets into artistic graphic design.

Fuchs, 2017

Photo wallpaper, table elements, chairs, computer, publication
(*Fuchs*)
Dimensions variable

8 Kunst & Publikation, 2009–17

PowerPoint presentation
approximately 50 min

8 Kunst & Publikation is the title of a talk by Michael Riedel, in which he gives an overview of his publication activities and discusses different aspects of self-description in art. With the help of the presentation software PowerPoint, he shows around 300 slides depicting selected works that trace the increasing differentiation of his art inside the art system up until the point where the talk is re-entered

into the talk. An essential part is played by the software itself, which provides a tool that enables the user to use animated transition effects between two slides. These transitions have names like 'Comb Horizontal', 'Cover Left', 'Fade Smoothly', and 'Wheel, 8 Spoke'. The software takes the creative lead, repeatedly applying over 40 different transition effects in a random sequence, thus marking an area of "non-works" created by the dissolving and distorting of the work illustrations. Riedel then captures these transition instances as screen shots. Since 2010, his focus has increasingly been on the translation of art into the visual language of mediation. Using communication software, he creates new clusters of works by modifying existing works, so that they are perceived as notifications.

Untitled (Vertical Lines), 2014

Inkjet print, archival board
144 x 255 x 4 cm

Untitled (New Jersey H), 2009

Offset print on paper
42 x 59.4 cm each

Untitled (Propositions faites et non faites de changement du modern [dans le logo du 'The Modern Institute']), 2010

Offset print on paper
59.4 x 84 cm each

Fuchs (Artforum), 2017

Offset print on paper
352 p., 26.6 x 26.6 cm

Perlstein (Artforum), 2011

Offset print on paper
324 p., 26.6 x 26.6 cm

Meckert (Artforum), 2009

Offset print on paper
400 p., 26.6 x 26.6 cm

Tirala (Artforum), 2006

Offset print on paper
312 p., 26.6 x 26.6 cm

Michael Riedel has unrequestedly been adding his self-produced issues of the American art journal *Artforum* to the shelf-busting series of existing ones. The titles of his versions, identical to the originals in terms of format and material but always printed in black and white, are based on the names of art collectors who, in return

for their names being mentioned on a copy's cover, agree to fund its production. On the inside, Riedel's versions document his artistic output, which is simultaneously used as input for new output and so forth. In this way, Riedel's *Artforum* series intends to be seen less as a source of information than as a sketchbook capturing graphic instances and adding to the development of new groups of works.

21 Invitation Cards PowerPoint (Cardboard Boxes), 2013

Offset print on paper, audio CD, cardboard box
44 x 29 x 21 cm each

The sequence of three exhibition rooms ends here, inside the third room, a dead end. To reach the Kunsthalle's upper level (on the third floor) where the exhibition continues, we turn back on ourselves, once again passing the three replicas of the entrance as well as other works whose common denominator is the reintroduction of the form into the form (re-entry), a technique which enables Riedel to resolve any problems of presentation and create a new kind of visibility that extends focus into the sphere of unrealised possibilities. He himself feels amazed by the production process of his own art and the fact that it comes out in a certain way and not another. What's essential to him is the possibility as well as the question it implies: How can the art system reflect its own differentiation, not only in the form of theory but also in individual artworks?

Upper Level

Untitled (Art Material_Mystriosaurus 0°), 2015

Inkjet print on paper, aluminium honeycomb panel
285 x 250 x 4 cm

Untitled (Art Material_Mystriosaurus 180°), 2015

Inkjet print on paper, aluminium honeycomb panel
285 x 250 x 4 cm

Or rephrasing the previous question: How can the possibilities for the production of art that are presented by an art supply store be depicted as art? With an item used to transport these possibilities: an ordinary plastic bag. Riedel used the scanned image of a plastic bag and produced stickers with it, which he then attached to reproductions of fossil forms.

Untitled (CV Floor Plan of Kunsthalle Zürich),
2017

Floor panels, inkjet print on paper, vacuum cleaner
Dimensions variable

Untitled (Select_CV Floor Plan of Kunsthalle Zürich), 2017

Inkjet print on paper
150 x 210 cm each

Increasingly, Riedel's artistic practice has been determined by an unresolvable indeterminacy. Making use of art's need for commentary, Riedel converts this need into an artwork by submitting it to the process of self-reproducing operations. The indiscriminate use of all possible forms will, in turn, produce a form that claims to be self-description and artwork at the same time, thus providing a perfectly autonomous system.

This takes us to a threshold that marks the point where communication about art abandons its function as information, desiring instead to be a mere notification; or more specifically: The only thing it intends to inform about is its status as a mere notification.

Untitled (Printer Accessories for Anitech M 90),
2017

Inkjet print on canvas
170 x 230 x 3 cm

Untitled (Eye Balm Folding Box), 2017

Inkjet print on canvas
170 x 230 x 3 cm

Untitled (Aftershows [Palais de Tokyo 2013–15]),
2016

MDF, plexiglass, computer, projector, microphone, amplifier, controller, cable, paper, voice-recognition software
225 x 119 x 80 cm

Voice-recognition software is used for the production of texts that surprise the author himself. In contrast to Riedel's texts produced from 1995, which were based on simple sound recordings whose transcription produced unedited verbatim accounts of speakers' verbal output, the appeal of using voice-recognition software lies in its having to deal with complex background noise. In 2009, Riedel subjected it to the acoustic mayhem of Art Basel and then watched in amazement how text wrote itself.

For his three-tiered exhibition series at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2013–15), he used multiple hours of sound recordings of the dismantling process of large museum shows. The resulting text produced by the software took the place of an exhibition and was presented in the form of a room-filling installation.

Visitors of the exhibition were also able to watch live as the voice-recognition software automatically transformed the ambient noise inside the room into written text.

Untitled (Display; Visible; Drop; Update; Colour; Poster; ...), 2014

Screen-print on linen
120 x 120 x 4.5 cm each

Riedel begins his painting process by producing a palette: This palette corresponds to the system that produces possibilities. His palette of 34 posters which, arranged in different variations, represent his *Poster Paintings* are print-outs of websites that have communicated about his art online. Riedel uses the hypertext markup – or HTML – language of these sites, a programming language made up of the code that is behind the internet sites displayed by web browsers and responsible for all their functions. Quarter- and semi-circles on the posters serve as structuring aids when assembling the multiple posters on the canvas while simultaneously visualising the moment announced by a little turning wheel on a computer screen when its operating system is 'busy', when the computer temporarily enters a state of non-function or locks up.

Untitled (Art Material), 2017

Inkjet print on canvas
170 x 230 x 3 cm each

By Riedel's definition, all text describing art material can be defined as art material. Instead of ordering material, Riedel uses the freely available information from the websites of different art supply stores, referring to it as 'undefined art material'.

Areas dense with white text set on a monochrome black surface represent the mass of possibilities from which to choose from.

Untitled (Marcus), 2014 and 2016

Inkjet print on archival board
144 x 255 x 4 cm each

The activities of the art space *Oskar-von-Miller Strasse* in Frankfurt (am Main) marked an attempt to discover possible ordering

principles – meaning order on the basis of self-irritation. In the same way, communication can be described as a self-irritating, self-reproducing process with dynamic stability. Time after time, Riedel has translated communication from inside the art system into pattern-like visual language. In this process, the paradox continues to be the super-form that insinuates what is not said in an artwork but is instead only marked as the “not-said” – or as a gap, if you will; it is always the principle of continuous connection that leads us back to what we have formerly excluded and makes us define it as an occasion. The basic design to form a form out of a form is an ornament. Ornaments are recursions that continue by recalling previous and anticipated further forms in an ongoing interplay of shapes, displaying the unity of redundancy and variety, recognisability and significant difference, of actuality and potentiality.

In 2008, Michael Riedel was invited to an artists’ talk by the Frankfurter Kunstverein. Since the director’s post at the Kunstverein was vacant at the time, Riedel announced himself as the new director and, with curator Daniel Baumann, delivered an inaugural speech. The speech Riedel and Bauman had prepared together, which talked about a possible change of direction for the institution, was read out by one of them and then repeated by the other from memory, paragraph by paragraph. An even faultier version was created by the voice-recognition software iListen, whose attempts at transcription were projected onto the wall behind them. Riedel ended his talk by demanding: *Kunste zur Text statt Texte zur Kunst* [a word play inverting the title of an influential German art periodical, as well as the words ‘Text’ and ‘Kunst’, which creates the non-existent and deliberately stupid sounding word ‘Kunste’] the artist as director [,] even though we can say that it’s about an unreliable narrator we can’t avoid the masquerade [,] only look behind the mask. Incidentally, as a result of the wide support he received, Riedel did in fact apply for the vacant directorial post. The transcript of the talk was later published under the title *Marcus*.

Untitled (Re-entry_Exhibition View Kunsthalle Zürich), 2017

Photo wallpaper
Dimensions variable

Riedel uses the white cube in the same way he would edit the layout of a document: by inserting text and images, thus relocating real existing spaces into the realm of pure signs. In his installations, the documentation of reality becomes a part of reality which, in turn, influences all subsequent documentation.

The re-entry of the installation view into the installation at Kunsthalle Zürich visualises the unity of a ‘realised and not-realised’ exhibition: The empty wall depicted on the photo wallpaper is actually the same

wall the wallpaper is attached to. This paradoxical situation cannot be resolved by additional photographic documentation or by recurring re-entries, as it would only be shifted into the virtual.

Untitled (Art Material), 2015

Offset print on paper
Poster, 59.4 x 84 cm each, wallpaper dimensions variable

Untitled (Select_Art Material), 2017

Ink jet print on canvas
60 x 80 x 3 cm each

The act of selection always presents something of an imposition, and for Riedel, therein lies the appeal of the ‘select all’ function of his graphics software. The selected text areas result in a new type of visual language and exemplify the never-ending ‘overwriting’ process inherent to his work.

Audio book *Muster des Kunstsystems [wallpapers]*, 2017

Audio files, MP3 player, loudspeakers

Untitled (Option), 2017

Screen-print on canvas
60 x 80 x 3 cm each

