

An Exhibition of Exceptional Beauty

How wonderful when even a good art critic is false in their appraisal (Weiß gestrichen oder schmerzhaft Grenzerfahrung? Nachrichten aus zwei Welten: *Die Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt zeigt Michael Sailstorfer und Terence Koh* from Julia Voss in the Feuilleton section of F.A.Z. 28. May): in a hundred years, in books and dissertations, one will be able to quote the follies of today. Your critics should look a little closer before brutally attacking Terence Koh, a brilliant young artist of Chinese-Canadian descent. I was also in the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt and saw an exhibition of exceptional beauty. In my subjective view, the presented objects are bathed in pure white light, agreeing with cultural interests of youth of today. Like all art that takes itself seriously, it pins itself to meaningful cultures of the past. From the cave drawings in Lascaux and the art of Ancient Egypt and China through to artists of the recent past like Beuys, Warhol and Bruce Nauman, only to name a few.

Important collectors like Charles Saatchi almost inevitably have more global perspective than art critics whose negative positions against the true development of the art world have very limited impact. In actuality Julia Voss describes Terence Koh's artistic work quite accurately in that she highlights its connections to sexuality, spirituality, and to abyss. In any case it is always easier to make fun of works than to praise their qualities. Coincidentally I believe that the artist Michael Sailstorfer whose politically correct yet uninteresting Popcorn-Machine are also being shown at Schirn, will soon be forgotten in the hype of the modern art scene.

Contrarily, the work from Terence Koh shows an extraordinary example of the beauty of now, that in its own way is as fragile as the red rose from Beuys, that famous symbol of the bygone era of artistic, political and erotic awareness. Good art comes from art and transformable cultural raids have existed since human thought. Art has a wonderful gift: to again and again regenerate itself from within. To this end, art serves to foster shaman-like leaders. I am convinced that Terence Koh is one of these. The fact that he channels aesthetics of shock, targeted transgression and inherent sexuality can only be considered a bonus.

SIR NORMAN ROSENTHAL,

Secretary of Exhibitions at THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON