The meaning of objects is endless.
– THORSTEN BRINKMANN

Wearing blue jeans, sneakers, and often a motorcycle helmet and gloves, artist Thorsten Brinkmann lightheartedly puts objects from his collection to absurd use. In short, sped up scenes of studio slapstick, Brinkmann crawls through, crashes into, and stuffs his body into furniture, chairs, and cardboard boxes. Other mundane objects, like a water bottle with a pink cap, venetian blinds, and a lawn chair with a gaudy floral print, to name a few examples, are used in unintended ways to show their different qualities of size, form, sound, color, and their relationship to the human body.

Brinkmann’s video harkens back to pioneering videos by artists filming themselves in their studios, such as Bruce Nauman’s works of the late 1960s, where simple actions are isolated against the studio’s neutral and austere backdrop. The video’s title, Gut Ding will es so, is a combination of German phrases that roughly translates to “Good things want it this way,” and Brinkmann takes his cues for his actions based on each object’s characteristics. These experiments seem like the first in a series to see what else a taken-for-granted object might be capable of beyond the utilitarian and obvious.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Brinkmann has had solo exhibitions in Belgium, Germany, and Mexico. His work is represented in museums throughout Europe and was included in Beyond Borders, The Fifth Beaufort Triennial, Belgium (2015); and Dress Codes: The Third ICP Triennial of Photography and Video, International Center for Photography, New York (2009). Following his 2012 residency at The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Brinkmann undertook La Hütte Royal, a yearlong installation project of transforming a dilapidated house in the Troy Hill area of Pittsburgh into a permanent artwork.

In 2011, Thorsten Brinkmann received the Finkenwerder Art Prize, “awarded to artists who have made an extraordinary contribution to contemporary art in Germany.” He lives and works in Hamburg.