

HENRIK EIBEN
„WHEN THE WIND SINGS“
NEW WATERCOLORS

Opening: Saturday 20 May 2017 at 11 am
20 May – 24 June 2017

The work of **HENRIK EIBEN** (b 1975 in Tokyo, long resident in Hamburg) alternate between sculpture, room installation and drawing. After three previous exhibitions, Galerie Nikolaus Ruzicka now concentrates solely on his characteristic graphic works.

Reduction and economy of resources are **EIBEN'S** artistic principles, his works often being categorised as close to *Minimal Art* or *Hard Edge*. His drawings and works on paper, however, open up a further perspective: here he manifests a style reminiscent of the concentrated, strict poetic form of the Japanese haiku, which demands the reduced form, the candour of the narrative, the rigour of the written words – and the irretrievability of the immediate expression.

HENRIK EIBEN'S watercolors tolerate neither correction nor uncertainty; they result from clear gesture and decisiveness in their spontaneous formulation. It is often the small format that proves most successful for such experiments, but sometimes the notations set down on paper like fleeting thoughts are to be found in his aluminium objects and his painted and wood relief works. The concurrence of these creative formulations is the determining factor in the artist's work. He always has several works in progress in his studio, all in various stages of progress, at different phases of development. In his works on paper, however, he comes closest to his intentions of reduction and concentration. The stroke once made, the coloured line, the transparent colour field, the gently bending angle, the sweeping trace of chalk – here we can follow the artist directly as he develops his forms. Here the absolute singularity of his graphic oeuvre becomes evident, since it cannot be broken down – as is customary in the repertoire of art history – into line and area, colouration and drawing.

HENRIK EIBEN'S graphic vocabulary is not divided into classic categories; it formulates the genre of the coloured drawing according to unusual considerations. In an essay written in 1911, Auguste Rodin stated that "drawing and colour are not separate at all; in so far as you paint, you draw". The great sculptor of the incipient Modern Movement had already rendered in his own graphic works what he proposed for reflection on art; what we see in Rodin's drawings is recognisable in **HENRIK EIBEN'S** graphic work: as reduced in form as possible, as intense in colour as imaginable.

Salzburg, May 2017

Margit Zuckriegl