

Meuser
Hängepartie

'Things are traditionally rather under- than overstated in the Ruhrpott,' says Meuser about the language of his origin. In line with this, the artist presents the solo exhibition *Hängepartie* (adjournment), his sixth at Galerie Nordenhake Berlin and tenth with Galerie Nordenhake. The industrial background of the material, which shapes his work, is reflected both in his laconic visual language and in the humorously subtle tone of his titles, visible in this exhibition through sculptures spanning the years 1978 to 2024.

After the intellectual excess of his studies with Beuys from 1968 left him with endless knowledge but little direction, Meuser drew a line under it in 1975 with the encouragement of Imi Knoebel: 'It's fine now, just do it.' This prompted the artist to head to the scrapyards, 'out of necessity,' where he found his beginnings. 'I really immersed myself emotionally. Whether it stunk, was broken, greasy or dirty, I was able to abstract from that.' Meuser works with scrap metal finds, beginning the process by letting his gaze wander over places of discarded objects. Contrary to the familiar artistic theories of the *objet trouvé*, the artist turns away from the fantastical, but instead creates chains of associations to engage with the essence of objects and their everyday experiences. 'I would never take a refrigerator, that would be far too literal for me. I'm only interested in a visual language if I can translate it into something else. If I discover forms that are unfamiliar to me but have a specific peculiarity, then they captivate me.' Given Meuser's biography, this appreciation of scrap metal as a material is unsurprising. He grew up in Essen as the son of an engineer and often accompanied his father to industrial inspections in the Ruhr region.

The artist processes the selected pieces sparsely; he shortens, extends, and paints. They are understood almost traditionally as carriers of form and (industrial non-)colour. As a continuation of the material, Meuser primarily uses anti-rust paints, industrial lacquers, or oil paints – reddish Bundesbahn brown, signal yellow or bluish container grey, 'in any case colours that Mondrian would have told me for: you are no longer my friend.' Through this use of colour and the 'walling' (*Wandung*) of his sculptures, as Meuser puts it, avoiding exuberance where possible, the works are given a spatial relationship. Often positioned on or against walls, they appear almost like paintings. The ambivalence of their pictorial quality and, on the other hand, sculptural down-to-earth gravity becomes a paradoxical play of meaning. Similar to his titles, which he liked to 'cook up' with Martin Kippenberger, his sculptures speak through their conception and materiality of a sincere gesture and pragmatic poetry, which challenge through their self-evident ambiguity. 'Scrap, there are tonnes of it. There's also a lot of rubbish.'

Meuser was born in Essen in 1947 and lives and works in Karlsruhe. Between 1968 and 1976, he studied under Joseph Beuys and Erwin Heerich at the Staatliche Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. His work has been shown in numerous solo exhibitions: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey, MX (2023); Skulpturenpark Heidelberg (2020); Städtische Galerie Karlsruhe (2011); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2008); Oldenburger Kunstverein (2003); Staatliche Kunstakademie der Bildenden Künste, Karlsruhe (1996) and Kunsthalle Zürich (1991). The most important group exhibitions include: Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2023); Margulies Collection, Miami (2022); Marta Herford (2018); Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2016); Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen (2015); Bundeskunsthalle Bonn (2013); Kunsthalle Darmstadt (2012); Bonner Kunstverein (2007); ZKM Museum für Neue Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe (2006, 2002); Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund (2001). In 1992 he was part of the documenta IX in Kassel. His works are represented in renowned public and private collections: Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Kunstmuseum Stuttgart; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart; ZKM / Centre for Art and Media, Karlsruhe; Falckenberg Collection, Hamburg; The Margulies Collection, Miami; Viehof Collection, Mönchengladbach; Frankel Collection, Bloomfield Hills.

Exhibition: November 23, 2024 – January 18, 2025

Opening hours: Tu–Fr 10 am – 6 pm, Sa midday – 6 pm

Please contact the gallery for press images and further inquiries.