

## **EXACT INEXACTITUDE**

**Rainer Fuchs**

Inauguration of the exhibition in the gallery Atrium ed Arte, 2004

If you classify the art of Fritz Rupprechter as painting you are missing the point. And if you consider painting as being emotionally expressive art or an art of intimate self-reflection you are missing the point again. Rupprechter does not use colours to express feelings or to tell stories but his pictorial art is the result of a precisely structured material processing comparable almost to sculpture work.

If you look more closely at the pictures you will realize that his art is actually relief art, and you will notice that the surfaces are not always smooth but show cracked profiles. And in addition you will notice that the fine graphic lines are actually cuts and *caesuras* of the material. Simply put, they are pictures made of material stripes and their surfaces are treated with colours and wax in a way that the surfaces show a translucent effect and one gets the impression of looking at marble or synthetic material.

Hence, it is painting of materials or a kind of conceptual puzzle. While this art may evoke lyric or meditative states in some of the viewers it is nevertheless based on calculation and meticulous details. Actually this kind of art is quite untypical for Austria because it is neither cultivating the spontaneous expressive gesture nor wallowing in feelings, but implementing a precise work scheme that step by step is being realized.

These works remind one of notation systems or scores and as a pictorial sign system they also move closer to language. And it is not by chance that Fritz Rupprechter has used squared and ruled paper as a work basis for some of his aquarelles, i.e., paper that normally is used to adopt texts and language. I would not like to leave unmentioned in this context that Fritz Rupprechter is also a musician and therefore used to reading and interpreting notation systems and scores.

You are only able to detect their special qualities if you compare the individual pictures of the series with each other. Only at first sight they look similar but actually each of them has its own character and represents an independent formal solution and invention. Hence, the particular characteristic of each picture becomes apparent always in the function of being different from the others and all together build something like a set of different concepts. Again, the comparison with language comes into mind but without wanting to suggest an equation. Concepts and words alone often have little or only very general meaning. It is only their position within a contextual relation, a phrase or a sequence of arguments, that enables one to clarify and specify their meaning. The context in which words are used is therefore essential; it generates the characteristics and interrelations of concepts as a relational net. Rupprechter's approach to the picture series exposed here can be compared to that.

Rupprechter often designs picture series in which the individual pictures already adhere to a serial structure. One could also describe it as a chain of pictures consisting of single parts that show a chained structure themselves. The one is reflected in the whole and the whole is reflected in the one. It is a kind of indirect painting, which only at first sight has a perfect and even painting structure. But

in fact these pictures are characterised by the principle of interlocking and shifting as well as by a structure emerging from a deviation from symmetry and metric. The painting is syncopal, to stick to music terminology, evading the perfect regularity and consciously provoking irritation. It is, for example, difficult to focus on the blue pictures because the surface is uneven, although at first one gets the impression of looking at a uniform surface. In addition the lines are actually cuts and *caesuras*, which means indentations and joints. If you focus on the shades at the lower edges of the pictures they will reveal to you those surface cracks that nobody would expect at first.

So these works are deliberately cultivating imperfection and inexactitude and represent a conscious ironic undermining of perfectionism and sharp calculability. Another issue is the impossibility of calculating and controlling everything in advance. But also the viewers and their reactions and interpretations can never be planned beforehand. Every viewer has experiences and expectations, which distinguishes him/her from other viewers. But because everyone departs from different priorities and focuses it would be a pointless and naïve enterprise to offer a unique and definite solution to begin with. For this reason exact communication often consists of being inexact in a very exact way. It is this undeniable, experience of appreciation of art that Rupprechter seems to discuss in his works somehow in advance.