

# Flash Art

## REVIEWS

### CEAL FLOYER KUNST-WERKE - BERLIN



Left and right: CEAL FLOYER, *Things*, 2009. CDs, CD-player, speakers, cables, wood, dimensions variable. Courtesy Esther Schipper, Berlin. Photo: Uwe Walter.

Ceal Floyer's treatment of the Kunst-Werke is a literal application of Mies van der Rohe's aphorism "less is more." "Show," a succinct title for an equally rigorous exhibition, is a refreshing touch for an institution mostly notorious for its interesting if not chaotic events, and a well-deserved exposure for an artist who finally gets institutional recognition in her city of residence after winning the Kunstpreis in 2007.

*Things* (2009), one of the works conceived for

the occasion, consists of fifty or so white plinths displayed in a large room, each equipped with a PA system emitting a verse of a pop song at irregular intervals. Walking around the installation provides an experience not dissimilar from crossing a crowded square, with a Babel of sounds desperately trying to claim our attention, but each lost within a global energy field.

The flexibility of art when called to deal with contextual site-specificity finds here an almost literal representation in *Title Variable; 5m 29 cm* (2001-09). It's a stretched rubber band employed to measure the wall on which it is hung, with the title resembling the original length of the material as a hefty reminder of the impossibility of viewing the piece in its original format from now on.

Floyer, who is blessed with a strangely attractive sense of humor, seems to have a predilection for relegating monumental objects to minor status and vice versa. So it happens that the color white, the ultimate symbol of minimalism, and celebrated in an epic chapter of Melville's *Moby Dick*, is reduced to a shopping receipt glued onto the wall, intangibly present as the common thread for all purchased items

(dairy products, sugar, tissues, etc.). Conversely, simple stationary shop pieces of paper used to test pens that the artist collected over the years are amassed altogether to form a macroscopic installation. Questions related to authorship/appropriation and private/public sphere quite naturally come to mind, but *Works on Paper* is even more effective if viewed as a counterpoint to *Things*, implicating the enormous degree of power theoretically accessible to even the most anonymous and ordinary gestures when surreptitiously collected together.

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