Das unbekannte Meisterwerk | The Unknown Masterpiece

Edited by Christian Meyer

German/English, 144 pages, 21 × 29.7 cm, numerous illustrations in color, softcover

Texts by Brian Boucher, Christian Egger, Fredi Fischli, Niels Olsen, Anette Freudenberger, Alexander Hempel, Benedikt Ledebur, Christian Meyer, N.O. Madski, Roberto Ohrt, Tex Rubinowitz, Margareta Sandhofer, Josh Smith, Josef Strau and with a text excerpt of “The Unknown Masterpiece” by Honoré de Balzac

Teilnehmende Künstler:innen: Heimo Zobernig, Gelatin, Michael Krebber, Julia Haller, Albert Oehlen, Fredi Fischli, Niels Olsen, Amelie von Wulffen, Gedi Sibony, Sigmar Polke, KAYA – Kerstin Brätsch/Debo Eilers, Rachel Harrison, Michaela Eichwald, Josh Smith, Christian Rosa, Franz West

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In the late 1980s, a group of artist friends began to question the localization of art. Was art based in the artists’ personalities, the bohemian society around them, the theoretical concept, or even the artistic object itself? It became clear to Förg, Kippenberger, Oehlen, and Zobernig that the concept and context of artworks would in time acquire previously unknown significance. The unfinishability of a work of art was staged like a piece of evidence, with Honoré de Balzac’s 1831 novella The Unknown Masterpiece serving as a trigger for these aesthetic reflections. Despair of the inability to finish anything thus turned into the frenetic joy of the fragmentary. This catalogue discovers the viral aspects of this approach in current artistic positions and in-depth texts about the artists.

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