

A look into the universe of Gerhard Richter

Glances & Sights Photography by Manfred Leve





Philodendron, 1967

80x93 cm

Oil on canvas

CR: 145-3

Privat Collection

Courtesy Galerie Ficher Röhr, Basel

Was durch meine Augen eindringt, mag ich nicht,
aber doch, was meinen Blick verändert.
Clarice Lispector

Diese zwei Ausstellungen wurden aus einem Traum, Begegnungen, dem Kampf und dem Mut des Wagnisses geboren. Hier werden die Kunst der Performance, der Musik, der Malerei und der Fotografie präsentiert. Meine erste Begegnung mit dem Werk Gerhard Richters fand im Jahr 1991 statt. Es blieb der Wunsch, die Person hinter diesem Werk kennenzulernen, die dieses erschuf, seine Welt, seine Gewohnheiten, seine Kultur, seine Inspirationen kennenzulernen. Ich hatte das Bedürfnis hinter seine Kunstwerke zu blicken.

Im Jahr 2006 hatte ich das große Vergnügen, meinen zukünftigen Freund und Förderer, einen sehr geschätzten Kunsthistoriker, Professor Franz-Joachim Verspohl kennenzulernen. Durch das immense Wissen und die Erfahrung dieses Meisters, konnte ich mein Verständnis für die Kunstwelt mehren und vertiefen. Er brachte mir die grossartigen Kunstphotographien Manfred Leves näher, die mir einen Blick auf Momente des Schaffens Gerhard Richters und anderer Künstlers ermöglichte. Leves Photographien laden mich ein, einen Blick zu erhaschen, zu betrachten und zu hinterfragen, hinterlassen in mir die Empfindung beizuhören, die Aura und Atmosphäre zu spüren. Seine Photographien schrieben zudem einen massgeblichen Teil der Kunstgeschichte.

Wir laden Sie dazu ein, einen Ausschnitt aus dem Universum dieser beiden grossen Künstler, Gerhard Richter und Manfred Leve, kennenzulernen. Die Sprachform, nämlich Performance, Musik, Photographie und Malerei, soll uns vereinnahmen, durch unsere Sinne des Hörens und Sehens, um das Verbogene in den Herzen der Künstler zu spüren. Überspringen wir die Schranken des Möglichen, und Ersichtlichen, um das Neue zu erfahren, um die Schönheit der Kunst zu erfassen. Dafür stehen weltbekannte Namen: John Cage, Sebastian Bach, Gerhard Richter, Manfred Leve.

Mein Dank geht an Manfred Leve, Professor Gerhard Richter, Dr. Markus Heinzelmann, Reiner Opoku und im Besonderen an meinen geschätzten Joachim.

Rita Fischer rohr

I first met Gerhard Richter in about the mid-sixties.

My interest in ongoing developments in modern art, and the visual arts in particular, together with my own involvement in photography led to an intense fascination with Gerhard Richter's work.

He was painting his subjects from everyday snapshots – not the work of 'fine art photographers' – and transferring them unchanged and in meticulous detail to the canvas. By creating an original, dispassionate way of looking at things, he instilled his subjects with far greater importance and value. It was as if the very act of painting the photographs elevated their significance as documents and imbued them with a more general appeal. They assumed a new status that was of much greater substance.

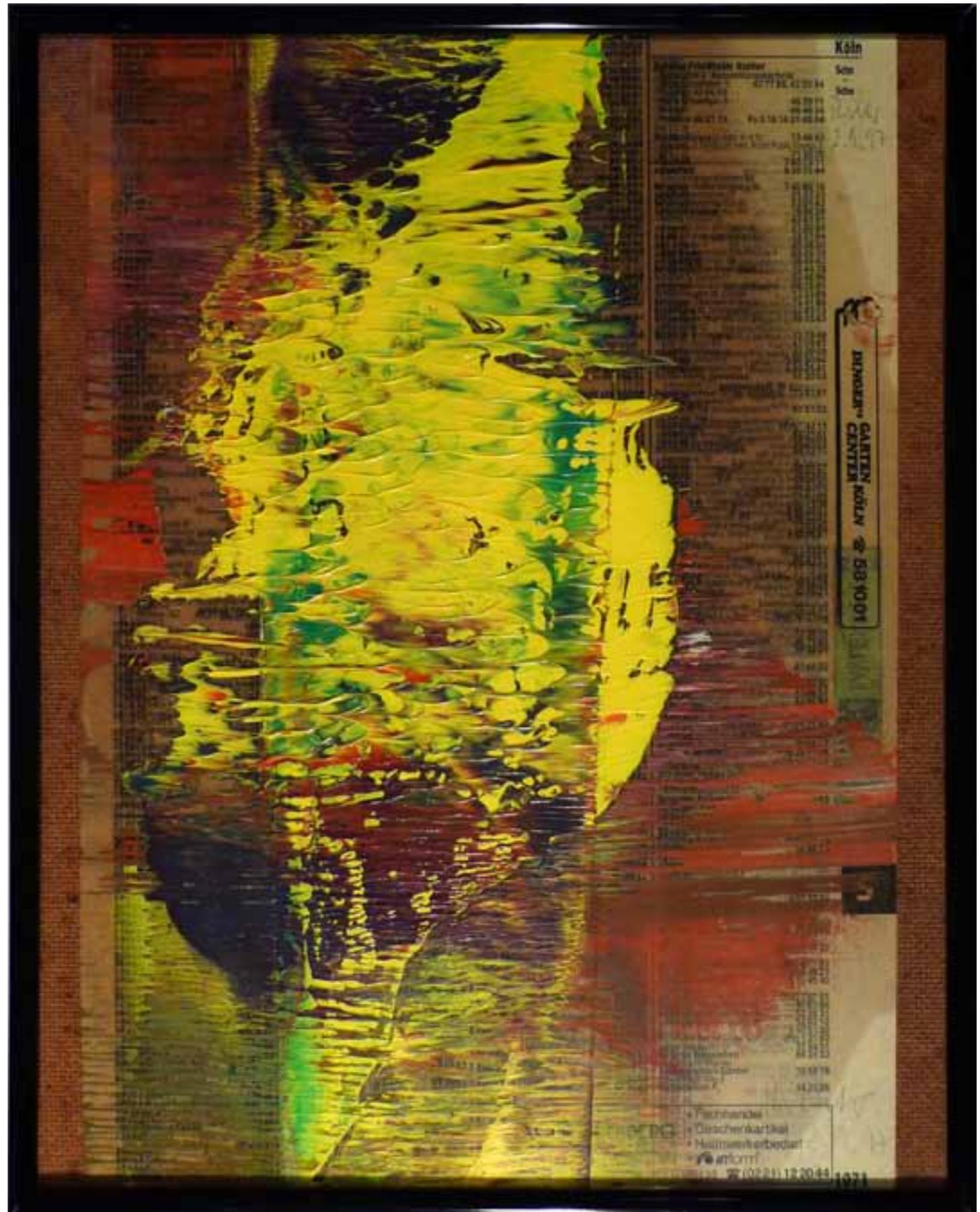
Richter's meditations on many questions, and the consequences he draws from them, continue to be reflected in his work to this day. The issues he addresses include reality, perception, composition and pictorial representation, as well as social developments and trends in consumer values and the media.

I have always found his work and ideas enormously stimulating. They are often mirrored in my own musings, which then flow into my photographic work. To sum up, my friendship with Gerhard Richter is something I value immensely.

Manfred Leve

Untitled
1997

20.5x29.7 cm
Oil on telephone directory page
Privat Collection
Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



Abstract painting

1990

122x102 cm

Oil on canvas

CR: 720-5

Privat Collection

Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



I

TACET

K

TACET

III

TACET

Grey

1973

XX x XX cm

Painting

CR: 341/3

Privat Collection

Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



Grey

1973

XX x XX cm

Painting

CR: 341-4

Privat Collection

Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



The Privilege of Seeing Now writing about the exhibition “A Look into the Universe of Gerhard Richter”, which includes works from 1967 to 1999 and are shown alongside with photos from the artist Manfred Leve also from this period, I feel I can freely state that style was never of the slightest importance to Gerhard Richter –In fact had no meaning whatsoever! I would go as far to say that Richter paints Richter if in Dresden, Düsseldorf or Cologne. Gerhard Richter paints and only paints in the individual style of Gerhard Richter. He remains faithful to his principles and to no one else.

Next to Beuys, Polke, Baselitz and the Korean Paik, who is as much Germanic as the others, Richter remains undeniably Richter. What do I mean by this? It means that he doesn't dance to the same tune as the mass, but has the tenacity to develop his own individual style and his own rhythm. Richter has created both. Deeply Personal!– Unique! Nowadays it's impossible to define German Art in words without mentioning or writing about Gerhard Richter, an artist that is like a seed - Striking! / impressive!

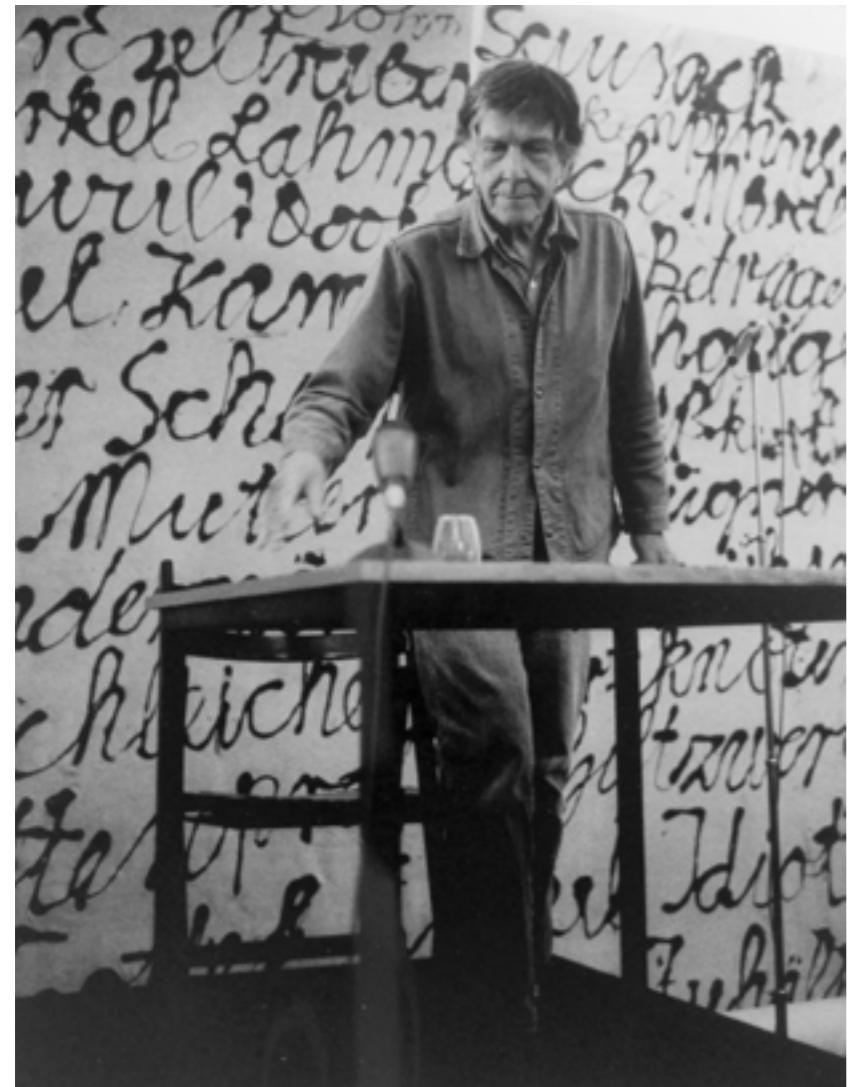
Photographs, magazines, newspapers were just as important for Gerhard Richter as they were for Andy Warhol, But Richter's vision is diametrically opposed to Warhol's. While Warhol increases the impact of the picture by reworking and adding details, Gerhard Richter allows the details to fade or even disappear. The fact that Richter hides or even eliminates reality can be understood as a way of trying to ignore their presence. The existence of the Nazi and communist movements are of no interest to him. He shows reality in black and white with grey tones.

He modifies and eliminates these elements with loose free flowing brushstrokes and lively luminous colours. It's up to the viewer to decipher the images through curtains, doors and screens –Very Subtle! When Gerhard Richter explained, “I like everything that doesn't have any style, dictionaries, snapshots, nature, me and my work”, it sums him and his work up completely. His work is an automatic reflection of this attitude. – Multiple! – Different! – Without a definite model.

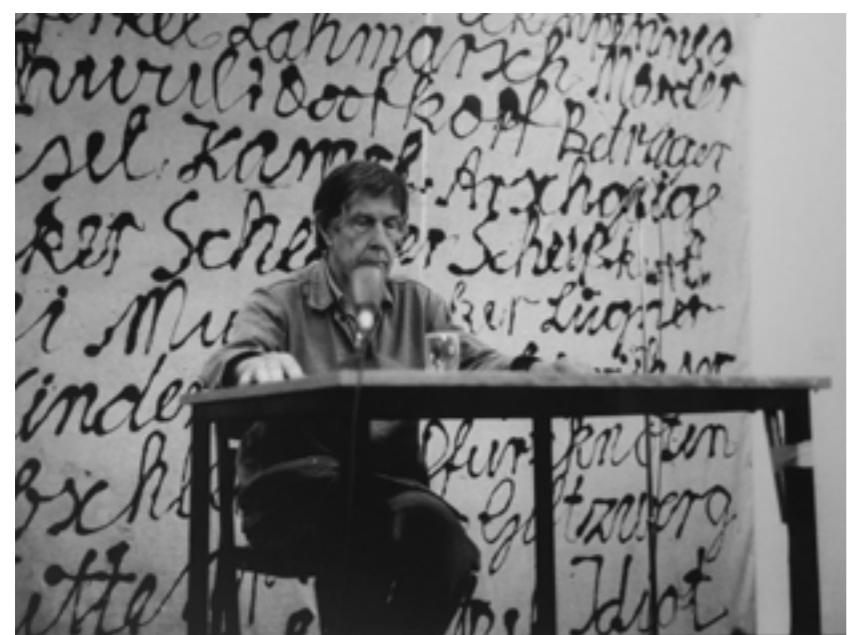
To be able to see a part of this richly faceted output exhibited next to the spontaneous snapshots of the artist Manfred Leve, who has been taking photographs of Gerhard Richter and other artists such as Beuys, Polke, Paik and Cage for decades, is indeed a rare privilege. This privilege is intensified for the viewer by a musical accompaniment of works from Bach and Cage. To be able to step into Gerhard Richter's universe, with the help of Manfred Leve's photos, means that one has surprising glimpses into Richter's daily life!

For me it has been a privilege to write this text a thousand kilometres away in São Paulo, to think about his paintings that I have seen in Venice, Kassel, in MoMA and here at the São Paulo Biennale. Writing about Contemporary German Artists who have put a breath of fresh air into German art, would be without Richter just a repetition of well known and famous names. – Luckily it is not!

Carlos von Schmidt curator and Art Critic – São Paulo May 4th 2009



1. John Cage: 4'33", August 1986. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



2. John Cage: 4'33", August 1986. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



3. John Cage: 4'33", August 1986. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



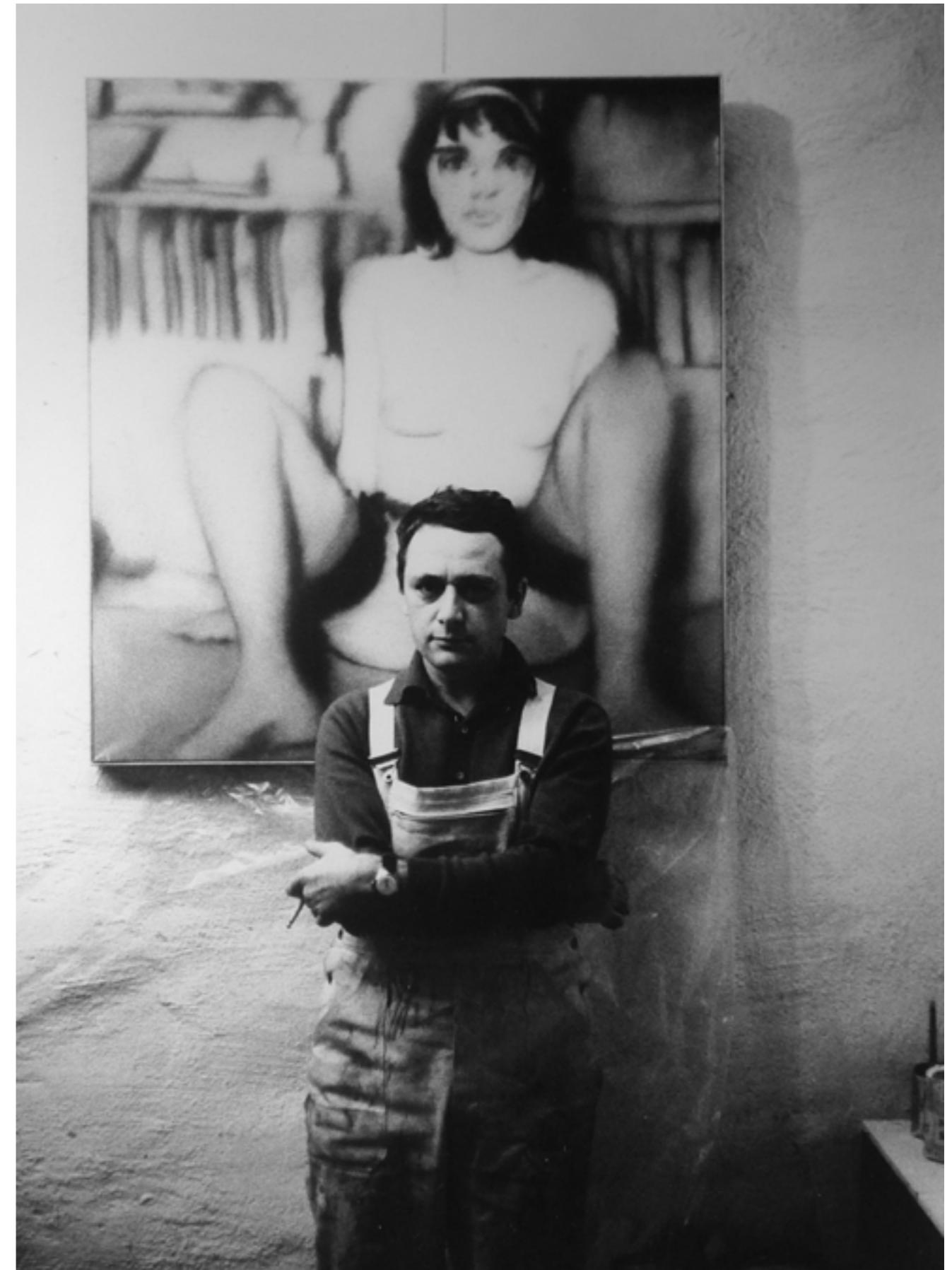
4. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



5. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



6. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



7. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



8. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, September 1990. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



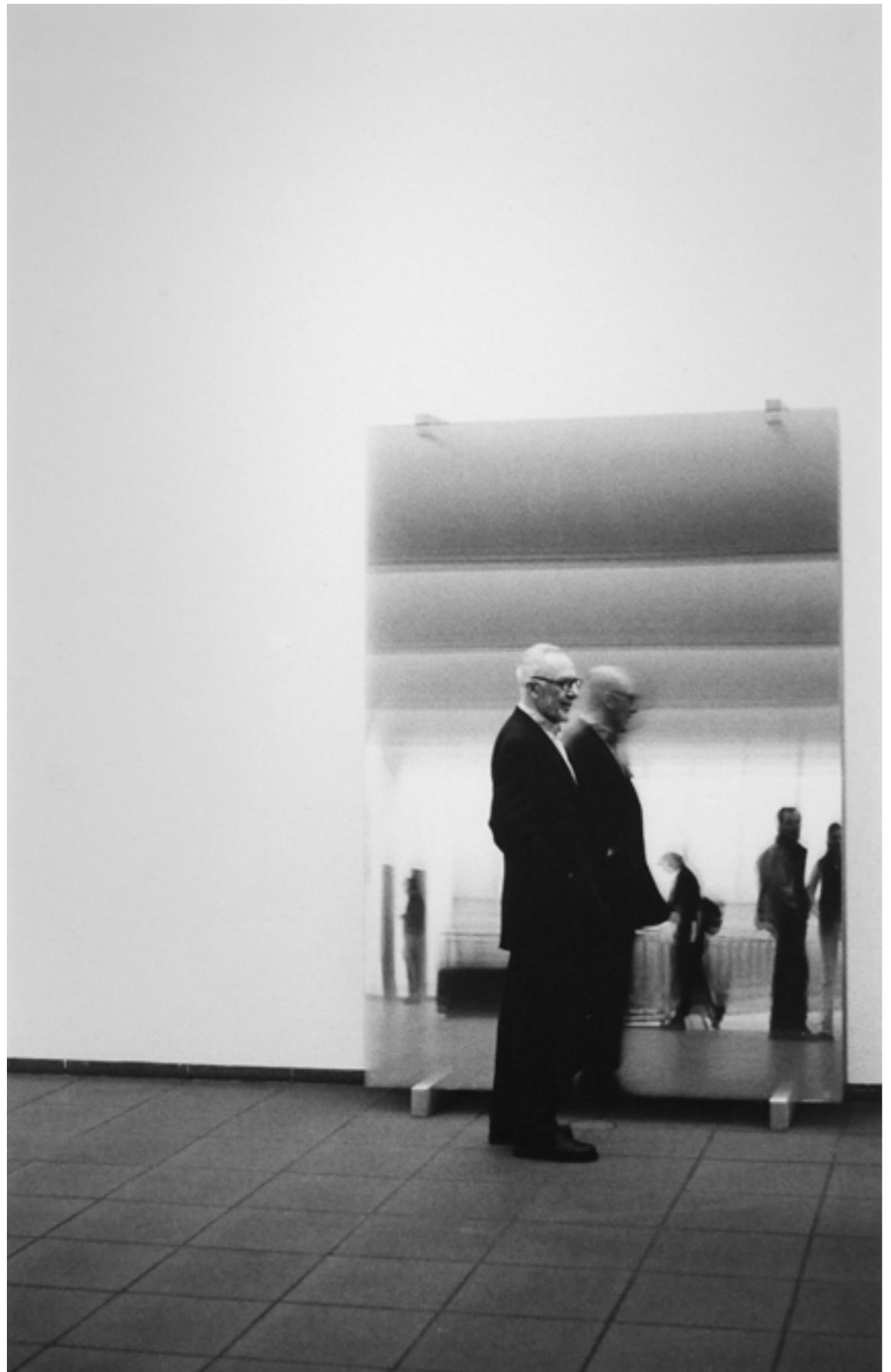
9. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, September 1990. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



10. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, Februar 1997. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



11. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, August 1999. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry,Basel.



12. Gerhard Richter, 11 Scheiben Museum Ludwig, Köln, Oktober 2003. Courtesy Ficher Rohr Galerry, Basel.



Paracelsus building in St Moritz

Manfred Leve's Photos

1. John Cage: 4'33", Uraufführung der Neufassung, Kölnischer Kunstverein, August 1986. Size XX x XX cm
2. John Cage: 4'33", Uraufführung der Neufassung, Kölnischer Kunstverein, August 1986. Size XX x XX cm
3. John Cage: 4'33", Uraufführung der Neufassung, Kölnischer Kunstverein, August 1986. Size XX x XX cm
4. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Size XX x XX cm
5. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Size XX x XX cm
6. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Size XX x XX cm
7. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Fürstenwall, Düsseldorf, Oktober 1967. Size XX x XX cm
8. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, September 1990. Size XX x XX cm
9. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, September 1990. Size XX x XX cm
10. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, Februar 1997. Size XX x XX cm
11. Gerhard Richter, Atelier Bismarckstrasse, Köln, August 1999. Size XX x XX cm
12. Gerhard Richter, 11 Scheiben Museum Ludwig, Köln, Oktober 2003. Size XX x XX cm

Catalog published on the occasion of the exhibition of Gerhard Richter and Manfred Leve in the Paracelsus Building in St. Moritz, during the St. Moritz Art Masters 2009. The exhibition's inauguration will be accompanied by a brief performance of five musicians of the Chamber orchestra Vienna-Berlin featuring works by John Cage and J.S. Bach.

Concept

Rita Ficher Rohr Gallery, Basel
Reiner Opoku, Cologne

Design and Production

Denon Publizistik AG, Hauptplatz 5, 8640 Rapperswil. www.denon.ch
Art Direction: Carlos Mejía

Copyright

St.Moritz Art Masters International AG, 2009



**ST. MORITZ
ART MASTERS**

ON TOP OF THE WORLD

21.08.2009 – 30.08.2009