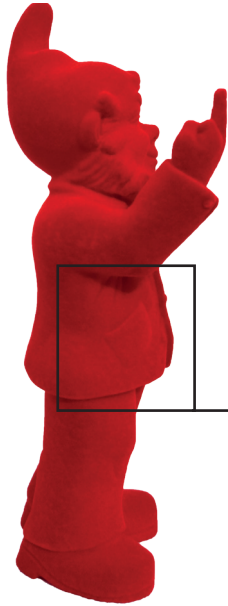


30 years Sponti

In 2024, Sponti is celebrating its 30th birthday and is now presenting itself in red velvet. With its fine pile and velvety surface, it attracts everyone's attention and inspires with its new elegant appearance.



Velvet Sponti, 2024

plastic material with flocking,
ca. 37 x 15.5 x 12.5 cm, HÖRL engraved
unsigned 80 Euro
hand-signed 160 Euro (300 copies)



red



Care instructions: The sculpture is not suitable for outdoor use. Pressure marks are possible due to the surface structure. These can be carefully brushed out with a soft brush. To avoid pressure marks, we recommend storing the sculpture upright if possible without any packaging. There may be fewer fibres in the indentations of the sculpture. This does not constitute a reason for complaint.

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HÖRL

30 years Sponti



Velvet Sponti

30 years Sponti

Happy Birthday Sponti! For 30 years now, he has found a new home in various countries around the world. In 2024, he celebrates his 30th birthday and has put on a very chic velvety robe.

It provokes, triggers emotions, is loved and hated: the garden gnome is an ambivalent creature, at once attractive and ugly, a cultural phenomenon with a long tradition that goes back to the early Egyptians. Many an intellectual today still considers the garden gnome, the epitome of narrow-mindedness and bad taste, a crime against aesthetics. No-one would have been able to say that, in the guise of Hörl's global success model, the garden gnome was to conquer art.

„The garden gnome is the one figure most discredited in Germany. Does it have the potential to double as material for art? This was the question I was interested in,“ says Ottmar Hörl.

On your mark, get set, go! The first garden gnome installations

As early as in the 1970s and 1980s, Ottmar Hörl used industrial products and industrially produced materials. He developed radical, innovative concepts for sculpture and photography. No other artist has dealt with the figure of the garden gnome in so much depth and consistency as has Ottmar Hörl. Even before the growing trend towards modern „anti“ garden gnomes originated in the 1980s, first works featuring serially produced garden gnome figures were created.

Rolling change for garden gnomes

In 1994, Ottmar Hörl launched a new series called Rolling Change and set up 1000 garden gnomes without prior announcement in public spaces in Seligenstadt. Groups of gnomes as well as single blue Sponti gnomes appeared at bus stops, were grinning down from staircases, and posing on Baroque balustrades in the monastery garden, calling



to mind their historical forerunners. After a couple of hours, they had disappeared just as quickly as they had been set up. Passers-by had simply picked them up. This transfer from public to private space was deliberately intended, it was part of the concept. On later occasions, Hörl's monochrome gnomes became part of different exhibitions, and at international art fairs, attracted the attention of the general public as much as that of curators and art collectors.

New edition of the Sponti

In 2006, Ottmar Hörl developed today's sculpture on the occasion of the international art exhibition in Amsterdam, which since then has provoked with a wink and calls for playful disobedience. Characteristic elements (such as the beard, jacket, trousers, and footwear) are deliberately designed in a clear-cut shape. This gives the figures a fresh look that is both timeless and universal at the same time. In fact, Hörl's gnomes are the formal essence of the garden gnome as such. A difference becomes evident when comparing Sponti gnomes created in 1994 with those from 2006. By developing his own models for the gnomes, Ottmar Hörl has succeeded in capturing the essence of the garden gnome as an iconic archetype in cultural history. It comes as no surprise then that the figures have achieved cult status.



Texts:
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