

Bremen

Wolfgang Plöger

Künstlerhaus Bremen

Am Deich 68/69,

November 28–February 7



Wolfgang Plöger, *to the point*, 2009 (detail), photocopies.
Installation view.

In “to the point,” Wolfgang Plöger renders the period—that is, the punctuation mark—as the building block of a two-part installation that is both minimal and rich in associations. The work, which shares its title with the exhibition, explores the graphically plain symbol that syntactically functions as a purely regulative element. Plöger’s oversize photocopies of periods are, in some instances, transferred onto animated Super 8 films. Others are enlarged on paper, so that the show’s subject, typeset in Arial, becomes a black square. These ink-jet printouts magnify the reproduced form’s diffuse contours and “frayed” edges.

Formally, Plöger stylizes the full stop, achieving astonishing transformations in the process. For instance, a looped Super 8 projection in the darkened first room is reminiscent of Malevich and depicts a black square that flickers on a light background. Here, Plöger filmed his copied enlargements, image by image, partly separated by blank passages. By adding these negative spaces and recording the elements in their individual, slightly different shapes, Plöger’s looped film makes the image appear to wander around in small leaps, interrupted only by a few short blank frames. The film runs alternately between the projector and a second spool on the ceiling such that the celluloid becomes a sculptural element in its own right.

The second part of the work, exhibited in another, brightly lit room, provides a resolution of sorts: On two adjacent corner walls painted rust red, Plöger has hung a dense arrangement of 339 enlarged photocopies of texts in a continuous grid. The type’s size increases farther from the corner, so that as one moves outward from the installation’s center, progressively shorter text fragments appear, until finally the typeface is so large that only the full stop at the end of the sentence is visible, by now simply a black square. Here, what first appeared to be a purely formal process becomes highly charged: The statements Plöger has chosen are the last words of US death-row inmates as published on the Internet. A final, full stop—quite literally.

Translated from German by Jane Brodie.

- Jens Asthoff