

JEUDI 16 DÉCEMBRE 2004

INGEBORG BACHMANN - ALTAR

« INGEBORG BACHMANN - AUTEL »
1998
THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

Thomas Hirschhorn is a reverse formalist, one who strips form of all remnants of autonomy only to invest it again with a breath of freedom. The subject matter of Hirschhorn's art makes such an impact primarily due to its stringency of form. It extracts form from experience in the "social course of things" before filling it with new, distilled subject matter.

The artist's subject matter is "mediated" subject matter. He advances definitions; he is the helmsman, but he treats himself as a place of transit. The works of Thomas Hirschhorn do not open up a view of another, "abstract" reality but rather of an enhanced reality. Decisions are superimposed; his own and those that he makes in the name of fictional others overlap with the decisions of the powers that have designed our world and made it what it is.

When Hirschhorn exposes himself as a "fan" of important people in his "altars," "kiosks," and "monuments," he refers to cultural givens. Many people appreciate and admire Ingeborg Bachmann, Piet Mondrian, Otto Freundlich and Raymond Carver, but being a fan means stooping to the "low" level of devotion and emotional involvement reserved for football and entertainment. The burning fervor of the amateur, the autodidact is juxtaposed with the controlled but, by comparison, somewhat sterile attitude of the scholar.

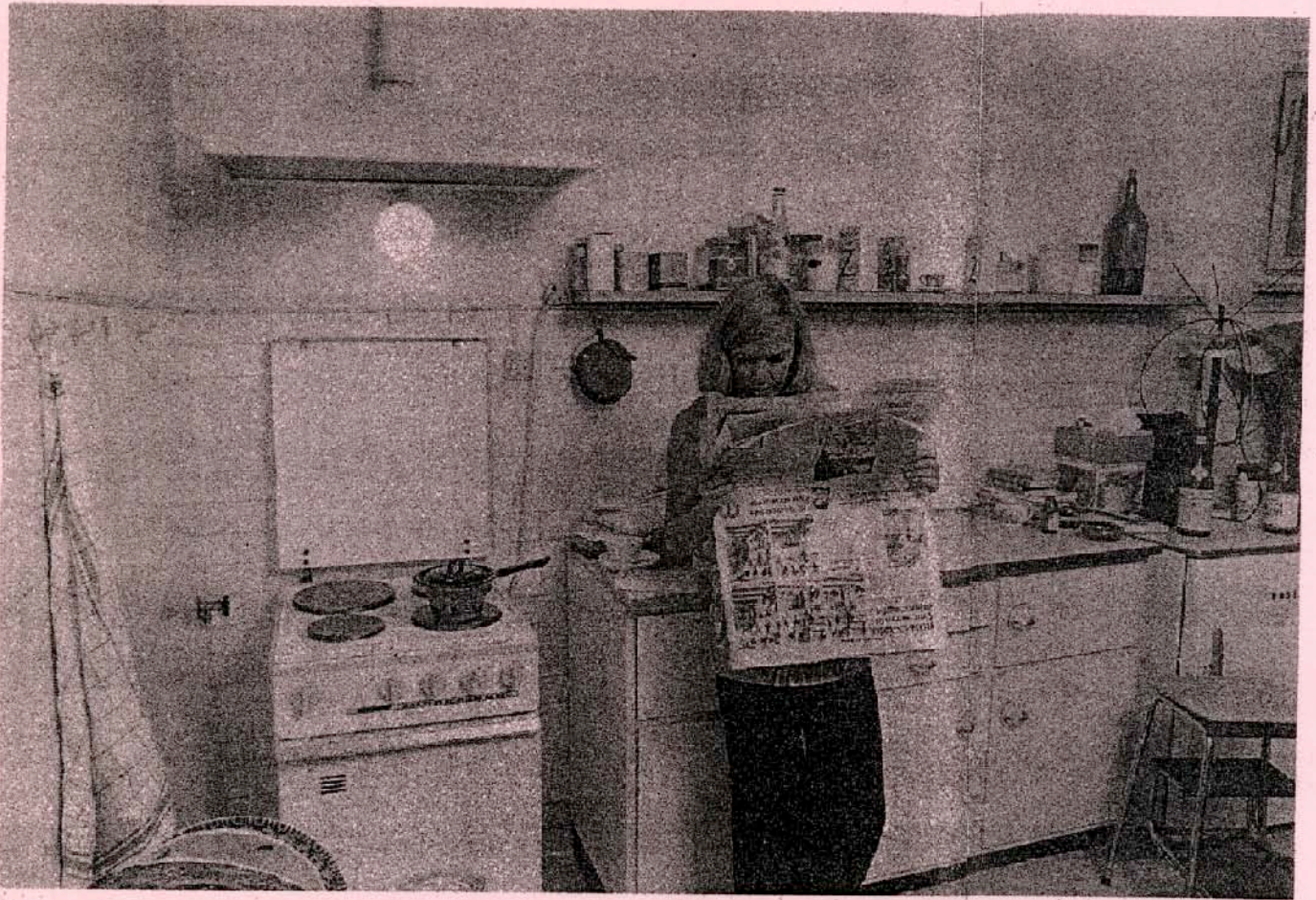
The "altars" are like emotional rents in the asphalt. An anonymous, mute, collective expression of feelings at unexpected moments in unexpected places. As low visual flowerings on sidewalks they embody a fragility comparable to that of an artist's life in society. Ingeborg Bachmann established, approved, integrated? Do the greats of culture belong to everyone and to whom do they really belong? Only to those who have been tamed, refined? It is precisely because of the kitsch and baubles, the codes that connote "uncultivated," that Hirschhorn penetrates to the heart of the matter, to a condition of existential exposure.



Ingeborg Bachmann

Aus der Zeit des Studienbeginns (1945)

(INGEBORG BACHMANN)



Rom — In ihrer Wohnung, Via Bocca di Leone 60