

VIA LEWANDOWSKY



Und dann das / And then this (2021)

Neon, Wooden Box

35 x 30 x 130 cm



как жаль (ach, schade) / what a shame (2009/2022)

Text with Neon

25 x 120 cm

Via Lewandowsky's works speak for themselves. The two text pieces spell out a scathing portrait of our times. Inside its own packing crate is nestled a red neon word meaning 'senseless'. Originally intended by the artist as a caustic comment on the art market, this work and the sentiment behind it are even more applicable to our situation today with the senseless outbreak of war in Ukraine. While the translated title of *как жаль* (*What A Shame*), executed in glowing Cyrillic letters, doesn't begin to cover the profound pathos of this short phrase in the original Russian. What a shame, indeed, that violence and repression have returned again to a people who have already endured so much. Having been born and raised in the DDR, Via Lewandowsky in his work often voices his resentment at the legacies of this repressive political system with bittersweet humor. Yet there is no room for humor in the atrocities of war unfolding in Ukraine right now, and *как жаль* (*What A Shame*), as a statement of our times, remains simply bittersweet.

BIO

Via Lewandowsky (born in Dresden in 1963), is a contemporary artist based in Berlin. He studied at the Dresden University of Fine Arts from 1982 to 1987. Between 1985 and 1989 he organized subversive performances with the avant-garde group "Auto-Perforations-Artisten", which subverted the official art scene of the GDR. His multimedia practice focuses on sculptural-installational works and exhibition scenographies with architectural influences. His leitmotifs are always the misunderstanding as a result of failure of communication, as well as the processual. An ironic refraction of the everyday, the intrusion of the foreign into the familiar, mostly domestic, realm, often happens by using insignia of the German bourgeoisie (e.g. a cuckoo clock, or a budgie). His predilection for the tragic-comical, the absurd and paradoxical, as well as the Sisyphean motif of the constant repetition and futility of action connect his art with Dadaism, Surrealism and Fluxus. Via Lewandowsky's works have been shown worldwide in solo and group exhibitions, most recently at the Jewish Museum, Berlin (2020), Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2019), Bongsan Cultural Center in South Korea (2019), Shedhalle, Zurich (2018), David Nolan Gallery, New York (2017), Museum of Fine Arts Leipzig (2016) or Kunsthalle zu Kiel (2015).