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PARIS+ SITES
Christoph Weber

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Christoph Weber's work always displays an innate dichotomy between construction and destruction, violence and tenderness, depression and hope. In the artist's own words, it has a distinct "laconic sadness" to it. No sculptures convey this compound dichotomy better than a series of pieces that bear the common designation **Untitled (Gegenstück) (counterpart)**.

In each piece, two monolithic concrete blocks stand facing one another, separated by a crack and appearing to have been broken apart from a single solid block. If one of the blocks is missing an enormous corner piece, its counterpart has a protrusion that matches it perfectly.Yet there are also smooth surfaces between the two blocks, revealing the absurdity of the fissure and thereby the artificial production process. First, one block was cast in concrete. After it hardened, a corner was broken off. Next, the resulting gap was moulded in silicone rubber and added to the cast of the second block, which was then poured. Both objects indicate that Christoph Weber's artistic practice not only accommodates the metaphors inscribed in the material, but also the material's unique consistency. As a type of artificial rock, concrete passes through various states of matter from liquid to solid, enabling it to be cast in a predetermined shape or sculpted in its hardened state. Concrete allows for both "modelling", an additive process that creates a shape by affixing material, and "carving", a subtractive process that creates a shape by removing material.

Weber's Gegenstück sculptures always follow the same procedure. Rational, calculated fabrication is followed by physical demolition, which in turn serves as a precondition for renewed fabrication. Construction enables deconstruction and the other way around. The capacity for human control remains crucial throughout. Christoph Weber would never abandon his process-oriented technique in favour of a purely mechanical procedure; unlike the Minimalists, he would never use mass-produced or made-to-measure industrial products. Although his sculptures are reminiscent of minimal art, they never deny the traces of their production conditions, the material's consistency always remains in view, and they never convey the Minimalists' rigid self-referentiality and chilly severity. Christoph Weber even creates the Gegenstücke, some of which weigh tonnes and are beyond human scale, by hand on his own. He only resorts to help from a crane and assistants when demoulding and repositioning them. In that sense, Weber is a completely traditional sculptor who processes his work.

Text by Fiona Liewehr













