



View of “Beginnings, Middles and Ends,” 2009, Christine König Galerie, Vienna. From left: Lawrence Weiner, *As long as it lasts*, 1992; Valentin Ruhry, *23:40*, 2008.

VIENNA

“Beginnings, Middles, and Ends”

SCHLEIFMÜHLGASSEN GALLERIES

Schleifmühlgasse

May 8–June 6, 2009

The four galleries that Gianni Jetzer has curated in the extraordinary collaborative exhibition that forms part of the Curated By project are located next to one another. Financed by Departure, an economic-development program in Vienna, the Curated By project, which coincides with the ViennaFair 09, is an experiment in cooperation: Eighteen galleries were clustered into four units, each of which chose one curator. At Schleifmühlgasse, Jetzer, the director of the New York–based nonprofit Swiss Institute, renders convincing the concept of a fragmented exhibition: “Beginnings, Middles, and Ends” does not envision a shared history, but rather narrative works as the building blocks of a history. A wall text by Louise Lawler at Georg Kargl Fine Arts that reads ONCE THERE WAS A LITTLE BOY AND EVERYTHING TURNED OUT ALRIGHT THE END serves as the point of departure. It is complemented by Guido van der Werve’s video *nummer acht: everything is going to be alright*, 2007. Here, a gigantic ice-breaking ship follows a man as he walks over a vast expanse of ice. The scene repeats endlessly, and nothing happens, which is exactly the idea: narrative as intimation. Lawrence Weiner’s

wall-based work *As long as it lasts*, 1992, at Christine König, which recalls *Exit*, 1995, by Kris Martin and Olivier Mosset at Engholm Engelhorn, makes the same point. Through his precise selection and distribution of works, Jetzer has organized a conceptually strong exhibition that culminates at Gabriele Senn Gallery with works by Gedi Sibony and Matthew Higgs. Here, Jetzer once again points to a ruptured narrative. Higgs's reduced pictures and Sibony's poetic trash remnants of ripped fabrics and casually stuck-together strips of paper speak of contrast and closeness, precision and randomness—exactly the elements that characterize “Beginnings, Middles, and Ends.” Like the “Correspondences” in the portion curated by Higgs, the Curated By project has proven an extraordinary chance for new collaboration. It will hopefully be a history with many sequels.

This exhibition is on view at Engholm Englehorn, Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Christine König Galerie, and Gabriele Senn Galerie until June 6.

Translated from German by Jane Brodie.

— Sabine B. Vogel