

Eberhard Bosslet

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A powerful antidote to the blatant moralism of Neo-Expressionists like Kiefer, Baselik, and Lüpertz can be found in the work of a new generation of German abstractionists - including Isa Genzken, Bogomir Ecker, Stephan Huber, and Dieter Teusch who are collectively less concerned with expiating the sins of their fathers than with generating and harnessing the constructive energy that will prevent Germany's future from mimicking its past. The word "constructive" applies quite literally to the painting and sculpture of Eberhard Bosslet, shown recently at Karl Bornstein (December 2-30). Bosslet's materials - steel post shores, concrete cinder blocks, cast copper, and asphalt - are agglomerated in such a way as to declare the human impulse to build. In *Compulsory State of Affairs*, an old, beige filing cabinet evocative of the mundanity of the workplace, its anti-aesthetic aesthetic - is disassembled and recombined with pieces of wood and steel straps, becoming in the process not just an extraordinary object of art, but an icon of renewed productivity. *Anmassend II* is less an icon than a pair of idols, two dense clusters of 37 steel post shores, each rising from a base of red concrete cinder blocks and crowned by a plywood desk and matching filing cabinet, like inanimate twin gods of industrialism.

Yet unlike the other practitioners of what has been dubbed the "New German Abstraction," Bosslet reminds us that even when we most fervently wish to forget it, the past is always with us. In *RH 9-89 IV* a massive sailcloth wall-hanging, geometrically labyrinthine patterns adorning the surface resemble computer circuitry crossed with swastikas. In *Unicon*, an assemblage of filing cabinets and wood, strapped with steel bands onto a black platform, the reference is at once to the figure and to death, the piece becoming an industrialized transcription of a body inside a sarcophagus. The most profound implication of Bosslet's work, then, is that there can be no rebuilding before there is reckoning.