

## Klaus Kertess, Andrzej Zielinski

For the last six years or so Andrzej Zielinski has been painting instruments of communication and electronic dispensers of our money and/or credit – a satellite, ATMs, laptops, cell phones, and paper shredders – that determine much of the conduct of many, if not most, of our lives. He has updated the arrangements of shiny brass bowls, piles of fruit, flowers, glistening fish, still-feathered fowl et al that filled many a canvas from the seventeenth century onward, until modernism sublimated them into abstraction and near abstraction. Few artists have turned to depicting the machinery meant to simplify so many of the operations of our everyday lives. Duchamp, Man Ray and Picabia invented some fabulous mechanico-sexual contraptions in the second decade of the twentieth century that helped generate some of Surrealism's surreality. Somewhat more recently Konrad Klapheck (1935 -) partially under the influence of Duchamp and Picabia, has painted portraits of an adding machine, bicycles, irons, sewing machines, and more, in the lunar glow of many a Surrealist's light. And Zielinski had occasion to see some of Klapheck's work in Berlin. However, the pyrotechnics of Zielinski's intense and varied palette as well as the visibly visceral physicality of his paint application are at a far remove from Klapheck's generally subdued palette and carefully ruled figuration. Zielinski's painterly gusto looks more to de Kooning's and other late modernists' painterliness.

The tools Zielinski has painted are of relatively recent origin, except for the satellite. For those of us around then, no such conveniences existed in the 1960s – we had no access to our checking accounts, nor phones we might take along on our travels to foreign lands, nor laptops to connect us to the world, wherever we might sit down. Today we all float in the anonymity of cyberspace. On my cell phone, no one can locate me. I might be outside their door, strolling through downtown Kalamazoo, or hailing a cab in Barcelona. Our coordinates are always shifting, even though we are very frequently being surveilled. We often have no physical awareness of our actual location, although our houses can readily be located on Google. Enter Andrzej Zielinski to animate our space by endowing our tools of anonymity with vibrant life. He has stretched them into resilience, infused them with singular chords of vital color – reinstated some of the emotional fanfare neutralized by digitalization. Painting communication.

Klaus Kertess