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Archives of American Art

Celebrating 175: Richard Artschwager, Clippings, 1965-1969

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This chair does not precisely resemble any chair in the real world, but its chairness is obvious and unquestionable. It invites sitting, as a chair, but repels it as a work of art (What would the guard say?) and by being a little too high, too shiny and with no place for your legs. It conveys perfectly what is meant by abstraction.

Because, if he made even so many as two, then once more a single ideal Bed would make its appearance, whose character those two would share; and that one, not the two, would be essential Bed. Knowing this, the god, wishing to be the real maker of a real Bed, created one which is essentially unique. (Plato, The Republic, Book X)

Dieser Stuhl sieht einem Stuhl der wirklichen Welt nicht unverwechselbar ähnlich, aber sein Stuhlsein ist offensichtlich und nicht fraglich.

Als Stuhl lädt er zum Sitzen ein, aber als Kunstwerk lehnt er es ab (was würde der Aufseher sagen?) und auch dadurch da kein Platz für die Beine vorhanden ist.

Er vermittelt vortrefflich, was wir Abstraktion nennen.

Denn, wenn er ebensoviele wie zwei machte, dann würde noch einmal ein einzelnes Ideal-Bett erscheinen, dessen Kennzeichen von den zweien geteilt würde, und jenes eine, nicht die zwei, wäre das wirkliche, wesentliche Bett. Dies im Kopf, hat der Gott, in dem er sich wünscht, der wirkliche Macher eines wirklichen Bettes zu sein, ein Bett Geschaffen, das in seinem Wesen nicht seinesgleichen hat. (Plato, Die Republik, Bd. X)

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