

# Heike-Karin Föll: Speed

**In her first institutional solo show, the German artist plays on the fast fickleness of commodification, trend and fashion**



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Darboven hated Richter's paintings. So, at least, claims the title of a work by Heike-Karin Föll, which introduces her exhibition [Speed, at Berlin's KW Institute for Contemporary Art](#). Föll's work, also a painting, about 1 metre x 1 metre, is from 2016, and shows a thick black line. It begins at the left edge of the picture about three-quarters of the way up, and loses force as it approaches the middle.

Whether Hanne Darboven hated Gerhard Richter's paintings, I don't know, but Föll asks the viewer to speculate. If so, it might have had something to do with how Richter portrayed history; solemnly, piercingly. Considering, for instance, his German landscapes, the Baader-Meinhof suite and the 48 portraits completed for the German Pavilion at the 1972 Venice Biennale, he did not necessarily lay claim to truth, but something about the concision of these works, their dedication, insinuates an aspiration, at least, towards credibility. Darboven, too, was dedicated, but manically so. Take *Bismarckzeit* and *Ein Jahrhundert ABC*, in which she made absurdly comprehensive attempts at capturing the reign of Germany's first chancellor in the former, and a whole century in the latter, by means of countless drawings, hundreds of frames. For Darboven, history is flickering and insane, grand and impossible.



*Heike-Karin Föll, Artist books (unique). Installation view (detail), Speed. KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2019. Photo: Frank Sperling.*

Föll's painting tells us very little about Richter or Darboven, other than what her single line suggests of her own investment in opacity. As such, on the matter of history, I would say she is more with the latter than the former. Still, where Darboven relies on quantity, Föll presents rather a choreography of concealment; an allure sourced from scarcity, editing and exclusion.

Accompanying that work almost like a diptych, *Made of Violence and Light* (2014), in spite of its epic title, is similarly vague: as if tracing the flight of a bumblebee, a doodle loops across the canvas. In these two works, the surface of the painting is an interface; gestures over a touch screen, but with the content of the screen excised; alive and interactive, but ultimately flat.