

ROB TUFNELL

AT

URSULAPLATZ 2
KÖLN 50668



**LEBENS-ANSICHTEN DES KATERS MURR NEBST
FRAGMENTARISCHER BIOGRAPHIE DES
KAPPELLMEISTERS JOHANNES KREISLER IN
ZUFÄLLIGEN MAKULATURBLÄTTERN.**

**THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF THE TOMCAT MURR
TOGETHER WITH A FRAGMENTARY BIOGRAPHY OF
KAPPELLMEISTER JOHANNES KREISLER ON RANDOM
SHEETS OF WASTE PAPER.**

9. SEPTEMBER – 29. SEPTEMBER 2018

Taking its title from the early nineteenth century novel by E.T.A. Hoffman this exhibition includes graphic works by **Laura Aldridge, Edward Bawden, Hanne Darboven, Bendix Harms, Will Benedict, William Hogarth, Mark Leckey, David Robilliard, Stephen Sutcliffe** and **Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan** accompanied by an automated, machine created by **Joe Jones**. It marks the forthcoming 200th anniversary of the publication of the first volume of what was to be Hoffman's final literary work before his death in 1822.

'Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr...' (1819) comprises two distinct narratives apparently combined in error by the printer: one, the imodest autobiography of an autodidactic cat. The other, an account (written by the cat's owner) of the life of a brilliant yet wayward composer described in the novel by its fictional author as: "an unlucky man who brings nothing but distress and mischief wherever he goes."

Hoffman's anti-establishment fable followed both Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm's retelling of the 'Puss in Boots' folk tale in 'Kinder- und Hausmärchen' (1812) and, more significantly, Lawrence Sterne's 'The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman' (1759-1767) (the latter acknowledged in Hoffman's title). As in Sterne's novel Hoffmann's book appropriates, parodies and satirises other contemporary writers and thinkers in an otherwise essentially banal biographical account. However Hoffman's accompanying description of the composer Johannes Kreisler (his fictional alter ego) interrupts Murr's tale to celebrate the romantic belief in impulsive, vocational creativity. He writes of Kreisler that if he could be persuaded to take the trouble to transcribe a composition 'he would throw the work into the fire immediately afterwards'. Kreisler's characterisation was in part inspired by William Hogarth's engraving of 'The Enraged Musician' (1741). Within Hogarth's depiction of a cacophonous street scene a pair of brawling cats are glimpsed on a distant rooftop (an image that recurs in Murr's biography). The fictional Kreisler would later be referenced by Robert Schumann with his 'Kreisleriana' (1838), a composition in eight movements for piano. And Johannes Brahms would also use Johannes Kreisler as a pseudonym. Perhaps fittingly, within all this disjuncture Hoffman's book also offers the first literary accounts of schizophrenia and dissociative identity disorder.

For further information please contact mail@robtufnell.com

The gallery is open Fridays and Saturdays 2 – 6 pm and by appointment.

The gallery is open Friday 7 September 18.00 – 22.00, Saturday 8 September 12.00 – 20.00, Sunday 9 September 12.00 – 18.00 (as part of DC Open) and then on Fridays and Saturdays between 14.00 and 18.00

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