

The current exhibition of Jorge Pardo at Galerie Gisela Capitain features a number of private photographs – snapshots and souvenir photos of family, friends and pets. Photographs which could have been hanging in anyone’s living-room for ever. In fact, only at the first sight one gets the impression of a private photo gallery. None of the photographs are left in their original state. With the help of digital techniques, the artist has added ornaments, eliminated or changed the background – individually and with respect to their unconventional framing; each is designed differently, surrounding the photograph in a sculptural way. Does the already existing picture, the developed photograph, take on a new function because it is revised? Or is it the other way around? The question is posed, what was first: picture or frame. Pardo seems to reverse the function of image and frame. Not the frame supplying the picture, but rather the picture completing the frame.

At the same time the question is raised, how much of the commonplace is bearable in Art? Private photographs are taken out of their original surrounding and are placed in the White Cube of the gallery. But can they consequently and automatically be declared as Art? In addition to the photographs, large-scale paintings on canvas are exhibited. With their colourful and ornamental style, they allude to the design of the frames and the actual photographic images. It becomes clear that not only the objects themselves, but especially their presentation, are of significant, meaningful content. The artist, who was born in Cuba in 1963 and today lives in Los Angeles, plays with the understanding of art. He creates environments in which architecture, photography, painting, sculpture and design are intertwined and question each other in function and significance. Where does art begin? Where does it stop?