

Michael Raedecker, artist: 'You're in the studio every day and you want to keep things lively and interesting'

Karen Wright meets the Dutch artist in Homerton, east London

Karen Wright | 21 hours ago | 0 comments



Brush hour: Michael Raedecker's east London studio is filled with domesticity *Teri Pengilley*

Michael Raedecker works in Homerton, east London, in one of a row of purpose-built studios. It is filled with domesticity: fabric, an ironing board and embroidery cotton usually associated with female artists. On the walls a group of canvases destined for his forthcoming show in Amsterdam are different enough to be exciting although they contain many of his trademark everyday objects: chairs and house plants. What is missing in these is the embroidery and stitching that played such a large part of his early work. Raedecker does not see it as much of a departure but a continuum of his practice of experimentation. "I'm going to use something like a craft material and not a high art material, and mix it and see what's going to happen."

Recently Raedecker has been investigating fake fur. The "paintings" have been stretched so that he has been able to attack them with scissors, incising the surface with the outlines of the generic chairs of waiting rooms and art colleges. He has chosen a grey colour, aptly called "Alaska" as the fabric "is on the edge of being almost a kitschy material, but I think the colour I selected, it almost looks a bit like concrete."

Raedecker was born in 1963 in Amsterdam, and recalls spending much of his childhood with a buddy exploring the Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum. Here he admired the work of Andy Warhol, Yves Tinguely and Ed Kienholz. He studied first in the Netherlands at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, and then completed his studies at Goldsmiths College. He settled in London and was nominated in 2000 for the Turner Prize.

He reminds me that his BA degree at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie was in fashion. He enjoys using materials traditionally associated with craft but "in the early days – the early Nineties – there were a few female artists who were almost thinking 'what are you doing? You can't do that, that's our terrain!'"

I see a lot of Warhol in these imposing stony textured works. Early on Raedecker recalls he was also attacked for not using "high art materials". When I comment how different these look from his more painterly works he says: "You're in the studio every day and you want to keep things lively and interesting for yourself. And if the ideas keep flowing then you execute them. And then of course the last step is to allow them out of the studio." I ask if these are an attempt to make less time-consuming works, and he denies this, indicating the wools lying nearby. "I do like the physicality of it, how involved you are with it. As a painter you are always a brush length away, with the stitching you are much closer." ●