

May 23, 1978.

Sachrang, Bavaria

I've just returned from Japan. It is good to be home and to see the Alps again. The show at the Tokyo gallery went well. Almost everything sold, but I feel disillusioned. Perhaps it's just post-show depression.

I managed to spend 3 days at Antaiji. Since first meeting the Zen priest Uchiyama at his humble little temple outside Kyoto, 4 years have passed. He wishes to ordain me, but I don't feel as if this is my path – for now. I can't imagine taking on that sort of commitment. I can't commit to having a dog, for god's sake. But the simplicity of Dogen Zen, and this practice of just sitting without goal or expectation, continues to amaze me; and perhaps, change me, I don't know. Who can tell when they are finally wet walking in fog?

I find myself frustrated with the indirectness of these objects I've been producing, and equally so with the public's ability, or lack thereof, to see them in a fresher way. I have decided to perform again, as I did under Beuys tutelage in Dusseldorf...almost 10 years ago...ach, has it been so long? But I will not shout, lecture, or bang cymbals like my old teacher. I only want to sit, and invite others to do so, in hopes that someone might feel the change in the atmosphere of the space, their perceptions; even if they themselves don't participate. It's clear to some, how the power of this shikantaza, "just sitting", transforms...everything, I sometimes think. A room can begin to hum with even two or three people simply *paying attention*. I seem to know nothing more than this anymore. Politics, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy; I understand nothing of any of it.

I have decided to produce a series of custom zafu & zabuton (sitting cushions), with a white Swiss cross on top of the black mat, and a blood red seat on the pillow – perhaps a personal act of reclamation of these pure tones from the Reich's poison. Some will be offended, I imagine. I think of course of Beuys, but also Malevich, and Reinhardt, other precedents. Archetypal. It is the union of opposites, symbolic of the activity the work is the tool for. Art as functional object. This is all I wish to produce at this moment. We shall see.