

ANONYMOUS SCULPTURES**Video and form in contemporary art**

with Nathalie Djurberg, Matias Faldbakken, Zilla Leutenegger, Aernout Mik, Yves Netzhammer, Tony Oursler, Paul Pfeiffer, Tracey Snelling, Fiona Tan and Diana Thater

26 February – 1 May 2011

Press conference: 24 February 2011, 10 a.m.

Opening: 25 February 2011, 7 p.m.

Speakers at the opening

Dr. Thomas Juen, chairman of the Tyrolean Culture Department

Dr. Beate Ermacora, director of the Galerie im Taxispalais

Dr. Sylvia Martin, deputy director, Kunstmuseen Krefeld

The *Anonymous Sculptures. Video and form in contemporary art* exhibition is showing ten international artists whose work addresses ephemeral video images and their sculptural presence in a space. Video and sculpture, which seem to be at opposite poles, engage with each other in room installations to create a complex aesthetic interplay between image and object. In terms of content, they focus on various socio-cultural tendencies in present-day society and the media-related, urban and ecological impact they make. This makes it possible to examine individual viewpoints and how these relate to an environment that has now become highly complex and shaped by a flood of pictorial information.

The *Video-Skulptur. Retrospektiv und aktuell 1963-1989* (Video Sculpture. Retrospective and current 1963-1989) exhibition took place in the Kölner Kunstverein in 1989. This is the first appearance of "video sculpture" as a concept. This comprehensive show, presenting work by video pioneers Wolf Vostell and Nam June Paik among others, demonstrated both the current and the historical potential of video sculpture. The Galerie im Taxispalais exhibition takes this notion up again. It was scarcely relevant any more in the 1990s, as further development of technology now made large-scale projection in cinema formats possible. The fact that artists have recently gone back to the monitor format in combination with sculptural objects reflects the internet age's need to re-anchor virtual pictorial worlds in reality and in the space where viewers are located.

The works, some site-specific and some formally closed, invite revision both of the history of video sculpture and of genre boundaries, and also reflection about the qualities and transparency of categories that are separate as such. The interplay of videographic and sculptural elements creates complex pictorial spaces that trigger contradictory experiences in the field of tension between technology, nature, society and the individual.

Catalogue

Anonyme Skulpturen. Video und Form in der zeitgenössischen Kunst

Eds.: Sylvia Martin, Beate Ermacora; with essays by Martina Dobbe, Beate Ermacora, Ursula Frohne, Nina Heindl, Thomas Janzen, Christian Katti, Sylvia Martin, Christina Nägele, Sabine Maria Schmidt, Jürgen Tabor and Rein Wolfs and an interview by Beate Ermacora and Sylvia Martin with Wulf Herzogenrath

German/English, 144 pages, Verlag für moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 22 euros

In co-operation with the Kunstmuseen Krefeld

Nathalie Djurberg (b. 1978 in Lysekil / Sweden, lives in Berlin) transfers the three-dimensional approach she had already adopted for her work *Johnny* into the exhibition space. Nine large trees are arranged in a circle around the video projection directed at the floor. Viewers slip into the role of the male protagonist, the voyeur Johnny. Djurberg's work breaks with conventional ways of seeing things, confronting viewers with strong emotions such as lust and fear both visually and physically.

Matias Faldbakken (b. 1973 in Hobro / Denmark, lives in Oslo) uses various media forms such as DVD covers and VHS tapes as working materials, with no use of video images. The black DVD covers tied together in *DVD Covers Squeezed* address a technique that is slowly being lost. In *Absurd Measurement*, a VHS tape of the Italian splatter movie *Absurd* runs along the wall of the exhibition gallery – an absurd measurement that also refers to film and art history.

In her work called *Library*, **Zilla Leutenegger** (b. 1968 in Zurich, lives in Zurich) combines drawings and real objects with video. A comfortable armchair, a reading lamp, a fake fireplace and a wall drawing representing shelves convey the idea of a living room, but it remains empty and lifeless. There is a video projection indicating a person making him- or herself comfortable in the armchair, but viewers are given no further information about this figure. Here reality and fiction become a disturbing unity.

In *Piñata*, **Aernout Mik** (b. 1962 in Groningen, lives in Amsterdam) shows people in the act of destroying various objects and materials by hand. The large-format projections relate viewers almost physically to this supposed act of destruction. They are irresistibly drawn into this strange setting, which emphasizes the sculptural aspect of the work.

People with their bodies and psyches are central to **Yves Netzhammer's** (b. 1970 in Schaffhausen, lives in Zurich) quiet and disturbing pictorial cosmos, which he invents on the computer with drawings and 3D animations. He combines his video productions with sculptural objects and the architectural space, which he spans with shoelaces in the work shown, *Dialogischer Abrieb* (Dialogue Abrasion).

In *Fear* by **Tony Oursler** (b. 1957 in New York, lives in New York), human facial features are projected on to the sack-like head of a small rag doll that is draped over a child's chair. Figure, chair and technique form an inseparable unit whose media dependencies are presented directly to viewers. Oursler's work addresses awareness of identity and of bodily sensations in the mass media age.

Paul Pfeiffer (b. 1966 in Honolulu / Hawaii, lives in New York) reflects on the perception of the individual in a mass society shaped by the media in his work *Race Riot*. The video on the open display of a camcorder shows a short scene from a basketball game. This is modified and re-choreographed so that it is impossible to categorize it simply by looking at the image. It is not clear to viewers whether the hand movements are to be interpreted as violent or helpful gestures.

The multimedia sculpture *Caochangdi* by **Tracey Snelling** (b. 1970 in Oakland / California, lives in Oakland) is a model of the suburb of the same name in Peking, charged with images and narrative. The sculpture combines the rich detail of a model landscape with buildings with video and light installations. Video images and photographs suggest the energetic life in the location and convey images of private spaces. The work invokes the ultra-rapid urban and socio-cultural changes brought about by the growth of megacities such as Peking.

Fiona Tan's (b. 1966 in Pekan Baru / Indonesia, lives in Amsterdam) camera captures her two sons playing at home. She has designed this portrait in an undefined intermediate format: the flatscreen monitor looks like a framed black-and-white photograph. It becomes clear only on a second look that this is a moving image. Tan's work explores possible different forms of the portrait in the video medium.

Diana Thater (b. 1962 in San Francisco, lives in Los Angeles) filmed the North American Monarch butterfly for her work *Untitled (Butterfly Videowall #2)*. Viewer move in a space lit in orange around the five flat screens lying around on the floor. The videos show a close-up of the butterfly broken down into fragments; only its colouring and markings can still be seen. In this work, Thater is addressing the relationship between man, nature and technology.

You can find downloadable images for free use under
www.galerieimtaxispalais.at/presse.html.