

PETER SANDBICHLER**Truth is the invention of a liar** (Heinz von Foerster)**16th of July – 4th of September 2011****Press conference: 14th July 2011, 10.00****Opening time: 15th July 2011, 19.00****Speakers at the opening**

Dr. Thomas Juen, head of the Department for Cultural Affairs, Government of Tyrol

Dr. Beate Ermacora, director, Galerie im Taxispalais

Diana Baldon, independent curator and critic, Vienna

The upcoming exhibition at the Galerie im Taxispalais is the first large-scale presentation of the work of Tyrol sculptor Peter Sandbichler in Austria. The title – “Truth is the invention of a liar” - is a quotation originating with the physicist and philosopher Heinz von Foerster (born in Vienna in 1911, died in 2002 in California), who analysed the construction and invention of reality in order to depose outmoded values and create a new class of thought. Peter Sandbichler looks at the concept of “truth”. The material he presents takes us to the heart of a vocal social debate; he unites opposites by deploying sculptural devices that draw attention to their constituent materials to express conceptual thought. He has used sculptures and spatial installations to create an exhibition tour that depicts closed systems, the imposition of uniformity on the individual and, at the same time, the individual’s potential to suddenly vanish beneath the smooth surface and into hidden labyrinths. The sculptor analyses the jungle of media lies, consumer greed and Mafia-like social structures that we move within every day with geometrical precision. His subtle combinations of sculptural forms with references to political figures and events migrate from surfaces to three-dimensional space. The artworks presented in this exhibition show the artist’s typical synthesis of material, creative process and content.

As a sculptor, Peter Sandbichler is interested in the ambivalent tension between monitoring of visual appearance and the deviations, evasions or non-conformities created by alteration. The exhibition features large-format metal-embossed portraits of journalists and politicians who have engaged in investigative activities or made critical statements in public and have subsequently been persecuted, abducted or even murdered, displayed on the walls or on shelves placed within the space (*Roberto*, 2010; *Hrant*, 2008; *Suu*, 2008). The ambivalence of this form of presentation, which is based on modular construction, is crucial to the exhibition. Displayed either as monumental wall pictures or in a fragmented form, these subtly alienated portraits tell of the systematics of the media world and the problems that arise where the public sphere meets the private sphere. The “archaic” sculptural techniques Sandbichler uses also articulate a sense that the individual fates of the persecuted and murdered journalists and politicians should be archived, their memories preserved.

The artwork *Fliegenauge* or “Fly Eye” (2011), which was created especially for this exhibition, is also concerned with our perception. It demonstrates how every piece of knowledge we gain is crucially influenced by the medium through which it is transmitted to us. In a reference to the “panopticon” architecture of prisons, which enables a large number of people to be simultaneously observed by a single individual, the *Fliegenauge* puts the viewer in the position of a voyeur. Several round mirrors enable exhibition visitors in other rooms to be observed from an unusual perspective. This artwork reveals the ambivalent tension between unrestricted (360°) access to information and the checking and surveillance mechanisms that exist within our society.

Sandbichler repeatedly uses commonplace, found materials in his artworks that bring with them associations from everyday life and also serve to actively involve the viewer. The artworks *Hiding* (2011) and *Labyrinth* (2011), created for Innsbruck, are large three-dimensional installations that are distinguished by a charged combination of severe form and social function. The *Labyrinth* installation, which is constructed from recycled bicycle boxes, is concerned with the idea of a labyrinth as a

meditative exercise that involves walking a predefined path. At the same time, visitors in this area can be observed via the *Fliegenauge* in the exhibition area above without them being aware of it. In contrast, the artwork *Hiding* (2011) suggests a safe place where one can move around undetected. *Hiding* extends the ideas behind two previous artworks, *Tiger Stealth* (2010) and *Be Prepared! Tiger!* (2006), in which Sandbichler created a replica stealth boat – a boat with a special surface coating that prevents it being detected by radar. In *Hiding*, Sandbichler returns to the concept of camouflage, creating a complex spatial installation that blends into the architecture of the gallery.

Peter Sandbichler

1964 – born in Kufstein, later lives and works in Vienna

1983 – studies at the Art Students League, New York

1984-1986 – studies at the Universität für angewandte Kunst, Vienna

1986-1991 – studies at the Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna

1993-1994 – postgraduate study at the Institut für Neue Medien at the Städtelschule, Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste Frankfurt am Main

The artist made his name through a number of group and solo exhibitions, including: 2010 *sustain*, Galerie Grita Insam, Vienna; 2010 *preloaded key: colour – Yudi Noor, Peter Sandbichler*, Galerie Stadtpark, Krems; 2007 *Floating Maze*, Festival der Regionen, Upper Austria; 2006 *Designing Truth*, with Knowbotic Research, Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg; 2002 *United We Hack*, The New Museum, New York; 1995 *46th Venice Biennale*, Venice; 1993 *Ars Electronica*, Linz.

Catalogue

Peter Sandbichler. Wahrheit ist die Erfindung eines Lügners

Texts (German / English) by Diana Baldon, Alfredo Cramerotti and Beate Ermacora.

Snoeck Verlag, Cologne 2011

Accompanying programme of events

Thursday, 4.8.2011, 19.00

Lecture by Robert Misik

Commercialisation garnished with censorship (and vice versa) – on the state of press freedom

Robert Misik is a journalist, political author, blogger and video blogger who lives in Vienna. His most recent published work was entitled *Anleitung zur Weltverbesserung. Das machen wir doch mit links*. In 2009, he was awarded the Österreichischer Staatspreis für Kulturpublizistik.

Friday, 2.9.2011, 19.00

Catalogue presentation and artist discussion

Peter Sandbichler, interviewed by Dr. Beate Ermacora