

Don Giovanni: Two Plus Two Equals Four. Or "Lust is the only swindle I wish continuance."

**An exhibition of the Ursula Blicke Foundation
March 12 – April 23, 2006**

**In cooperation with the Kunsthalle Wien
March 24 – April 16, 2006**

E. T. A. Hoffmann referred to Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* as the "opera of all operas." Kierkegaard speaks of its "sensual-erotic brilliance." To Max Frisch, on the other hand, Don Giovanni strives for the "love of geometry," because in the end his actions are "lies and deception" in order to once again arrive at his geometric abstraction, "as heartless as he is" (Frisch).

With numerous video works by contemporary artists from all over the world the exhibition at the Ursula Blicke Foundation examines how the figure of Don Giovanni and his breathtaking lifestyle still remain current today.

The filmic works, which will be on display simultaneously at the Ursula Blicke Foundation and the Kunsthalle Wien, direct attention to the figure that serves as an unparalleled embodiment of the great themes of *love, lust and death*. Works by Tracey Moffat, A. K. Dolven, Noritoshi Hirakawa, and Erwin Wurm, among others, investigate the explosiveness of this character in the present-day context.

The very figure of the dazzling and multifaceted Don Giovanni has undergone several metamorphoses over the centuries. On the one hand, Don Giovanni was an amoral womanizer and unscrupulous hedonist; hundreds of women succumbed to his seductive powers. On the other hand, he was a weak and undisciplined man given to despair. What is astounding are the many and varied roles and identities that Don Giovanni assumed for his pleasure-seeking pursuits. This archetypal character always signals an ambivalent desire: the longing for pain also implies a longing for pleasure; cold-blooded seduction turns into a melancholy yearning for death. In the end we see that everything – even emotion – is just a masquerade. The seducer can only be conceived as the counterpart of the seduced person: Don Giovanni's actions reveal various models of female desire. They span the gamut from the masochist who lures the soon-to-be assailant as his victim to the dominatrix, the *Donna Giovanna*. Noritoshi Hirakawa demonstrates the extent to which Don Giovanni's female counterpart has evolved in the course of time. In his work *Spring Fever* he inverts the primal seduction scene, the fall of man. Don Giovanni's desire is perpetually ambivalent. Thus, as a survey of the history of cinema, Tracey Moffat's *Love* combines the many facets of this figure, thereby showing its metamorphoses: from the harmless flirt to sexual dalliance to suffering and death.

The works by A. K. Dolven reflect the effects of Don Giovanni's destructively indulgent lifestyle as well as his fantasies of violence and their repercussions. This intense examination of human drives always seems associated with a sense of emptiness and desperation.

The video films by Tracey Rose and Lilli and Lola Kuschel as well as a scene staged especially for the exhibition by the theater group *Rimini-Protokoll* deal with the venality of love and Don Giovanni's authenticity as the dazzling seducer. The exhibition explores the sensual, the haptic, and human emotions according to the motto: seduce and be seduced, gaze upon and be gazed upon.

Participating artists: Tracey Moffat, A. K. Dolven, Noritoshi Hirakawa, Erwin Wurm, Tracey Rose, Lilli and Lola Kuschel, Zoran Naskovski, Klaus Pobitzer, among others.

Exhibition venue
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Curator
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Preopening viewing
Please call for an appointment:
Phone +49 7251 60919 Fax +49 7251 68687

Press photos
Available on our website:
www.ursula-blicke-stiftung.de

Duration of the exhibition
March 12 – April 23, 2006

Opening
Saturday, March 11, 2006, 7:00 p.m.

Catalogue
A catalogue shall be published in conjunction with the exhibition.

Opening hours
Wed. 2:00 p.m. till 5:00 p.m.
Sun. 2:00 p.m. till 6:00 p.m.
and by appointment

We'd appreciate an announcement of our exhibition in your medium. If publicized, please send us a copy for our files. Thank you.