

Pensée Sauvage – on human freedom

**An exhibition of the Ursula Blickle Foundation
May 20 – July 1, 2007**

The title of this exhibition has been borrowed from the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss' seminal book "La pensée sauvage" from 1962. "Pensée sauvage" means literally "wild pansy", a very common "wild flower" of the family of the violets. The paradox is that the pansy is wild, yet not exotic since it is a common plant. Indeed, one of the most intriguing questions of our time is if it is possible to be a "wild flower"; namely, how one can deconstruct fear as well as being an authority and start taking initiative. Is it still possible to regain a social space where one can be "wild" and part of a community at the same time? This exhibition tries to address this question through a series of proposals that depart from that premise.

The idea of "human freedom" mentioned in the subtitle does not refer to civil rights, but to the possibility – as the Brazilian pedagogue Pablo Freire put it – to be educated towards a free mind. In a world where adaptation to socially accepted forms of living and obedience to norms and laws play a major role, contemporary art is an exercise in a different logic that looks for gaps and possibilities, and confronts us with the unexpected. The works presented in the exhibition suggest that there is always another chance to reverse the history of the world: to take the liberty to think and act otherwise. This is freedom.

To name a few examples of the artists to be seen in the exhibition:

Playing with the anachronistic can make us aware of today's anxiety of being part of the present. Using large-scale woodcut prints executed in a style similar to German Expressionism Andrea Büttner (*1972, Stuttgart) offers a new reading of the cultural centrality of Modern Art, but she also uses an old-fashioned medium to explore our relationship with the past, with tradition and with religion.

Mandla Reuter (*1974, Nqutu, South Africa) on the other hand, bases his practice on the notion of control. He creates installations where several elements alter the perception of the space and creates an environment where it is no longer clear what exactly the viewer is looking at. In Reuter's installations, it becomes clear how easy it is to alter the feeling of safeness that an institution normally tends to create.

Lisi Raskin (*1974, Miami) poses questions that similarly revolve around the idea of control. Her work departs from an interesting research into the architecture of danger: power plants, nuclear bunkers... Places of fear that sometimes appear in our mind, as powerful myths capable of determining our lives. She reconstructs these places in a hand-made style that gives us the possibility to explore them from a fictional point of view. All of a sudden these architectures are just scenarios, narratives, stories that instead can help us to take control and explore our fears towards the way that hidden powers threaten to take over the world.

Cao Guimarães (*1965, Belo Horizonte) and Lucas Bambozzi (*1965, São Paulo) present in a very conscious way what is "far way", understood as an approach to the appeal of otherness: in this way, their films open up a space for an experience of the beauty of the ambiguous, the necessity of the uncommon, the positive value of forgetting time.

In her films and photographic works, Marine Hugonnier tries to bring together the possible and the impossible by obliging us to wonder what everyday life really is. Henrik Håkansson's fascinating installations with plants and animals can also be read along the same lines; always trying to explore worlds inside the one we are in but that are invisible to our eyes...

To understand that freedom is a matter of travelling in reality with light luggage, a wild common flower is a nice image to keep in mind: it marks the efforts that artistic practice does over and over again to disable pragmatism, to reinforce the importance of being involved in reality, and of underlining enthusiasm as an extremely difficult but desirable form of freedom.

Artists: Lucas Bambozzi, Lene Berg, Andrea Büttner, Patricia Esquivias, Cao Guimarães, Henrik Håkansson, Tamara Henderson, Marine Hugonnier, Rosalind Nashashibi, Deimantas Narkevicius, Markus Oehlen, Maria Pask, Anu Pennanen, Mandla Reuter, Lisi Raskin, Aida Rulova

The exhibition will be shown parallel in the Frankfurter Kunstverein (May 25 – July 8, 2007). Please notice that not all of the artists will be presented in both venues.

Exhibition venue

Ursula Blickle Foundation
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Curator

Chus Martínez,
Director Frankfurter Kunstverein

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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-blickle-stiftung.de

Duration of the exhibition

May 20 – July 1, 2007

Opening

Saturday, May 19, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

Catalogue

A catalogue will be published in cooperation with
Frankfurter Kunstverein

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!

Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit
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