

Hohe Dosis.

Recherchen zum Fotografischen heute



Michael Huey- on the ice, 2012



Timotheus Tomicek - look and see



Matthias-Herrmann_Untitled Film still 1.IX.2012

Liste der ausgestellten KünstlerInnen:

Hohe Dosis. Recherchen zum Fotografischen heute [High Dosage. Looking at the Status of Photography Today]

A Fotohof exhibition at two venues:

FOTOHOF Salzburg 19 July – 7 September 2013

Opens: Thursday, 18 July 2013, 7.30 pm

ATTERSEEHALLE Attersee 20 July – 30 August 2013

Opens: Friday, 19 July 2013, 7 pm

Even in the 21st century photography is a powerful medium for perceiving the world and reflecting on it. Our aim with the exhibition is to explore what characterises the medium of photography in its essence today, i.e. what is “high-dosage” photography, as the title suggests? At a time of dramatic technological changes in image production and the use and presentation of the medium, we are interested in examining both the constants and the variables of the photographic apparatus, or dispositif.

The motif on the invitation card shows a still life by Matthias Herrmann featuring various professional photography equipment – various colour filters – showcased using alluring studio lighting. Here photography as an analogue imaging process is itself making one of its last appearances in a historical phase: the advent of digital photography has long rendered colour filters obsolete, relegating them as relics of a bygone age.

Even if the technological foundations for the photographic process are now being re-cast, the questions asked of photography and the thinking behind photography have essentially remained the same across all generations of users. The exhibition features a cross-section of key Austrian positions with widely differing approaches and methods.

The main aim of the exhibition is to show the very latest works by artists who use the medium of photography in its autonomous form, rather than as a conduit for other visual and aesthetic strategies, a trend often seen in contemporary art. The concept



Peter Dressler. aus der Serie "Wiener Gold", 2011

adopted by the curators has been to structure the exhibition into chapters, even if the way in which individual works are allocated in each case is not always clear-cut; one might very well imagine some of the works in different contexts, too, rather like overlapping Venn diagrams.

Integrated into the exhibition at the Atterseehalle is a number of key historical works which we consider to be "anchoring works" – works by Heinz Cibulka, VALIE EXPORT, Horáková + Maurer, Leo Kandl, Friedl Kubelka, Michaela Moscouw, Margherita Spiluttini, Christian Wachter and Manfred Willmann. These works may well be regarded as exemplary in their innovative and influential impact on the recent history of photography in Austria; they act as the prologue, so to speak, to the individual chapters.

Image work (reflecting on the medium – invoking the material)

In our research we noted that Matthias Herrmann is one of many contemporary artists who are responding to the fast pace of change in the technological prerequisites that underpin photography. While Herrmann adopts a reflective approach, tinged with irony and a splash of sentimentality, to those objects that have long defined the medium in its everyday use, many more recent positions run counter to the zeitgeist by exploring the archaic force often attributed to the analogue process. Thus the works of artists such as Andreas Duscha, Robert Gruber, Michael Part and Elisabeth Schmirler invoke a multifarious materiality that enables image effects ranging from reductionist abstractions to more painterly representations.

Exploring the prerequisites and conditions of the medium – the reflection on the medium – has always been the focal point of the artistic approach. Besides the aforementioned "material evocations" the exhibition will feature works on the subject by Franz Bergmüller, Inge Dick, Gertrud Fischbacher, Thomas Freiler, Maria Hahnenkamp, Ilse Haider, Horakova + Maurer, Herwig Kempinger, Hans Kuppelwieser, Lois Renner, Gabriele Rothemann, Nikolaus Schletterer, Günther Selichar, Katharina Struber, Otmar Thormann and Anita Witek. In the case of the two images from the paparazzi series by the group of artists G.R.A.M. the reflection on the medium is a playful interaction with mechanisms of the voyeuristic use of images in the mass media.

The magical moment – here and now

Every photograph is indissolubly linked with the time and place in which it was taken. Paul Albert Leitner's contributions to the exhibition – a compilation of self-portraits and a series of single images – emphasise the medium's reality-bound character through their precise captions, even if the staging of that reality (for example in the self-portraits) occasionally plays a crucial role. Leitner's contributions also provide insights into the way in which photographic archives are structured: in Leitner's case, analogue index cards, written by hand.

Other positions in this chapter given over to street photography (a genre now relatively rare) include Philippe Gerlach, Christopher Mavric, Annelies Oberdanner, Ingeborg Strobl, Timotheus Tomicek and Michael Ziegler.

Combinatorics – image sequences

This chapter looks at the way in which content is visually formulated into series. The single image, from snapshots to elaborate tableaux, is expanded into an often filmic series, with images communicating with one another and, jointly, vis-à-vis the viewer. Heinz Cibulka's Hochgebirgsquartette are both an artistic contribution to alpine rural life in the federal province of Salzburg and a prototypical example of an artist working with image compositions. In the seven photographs of his Wiener Gold series (2011) Peter Dressler is seen panning, prospector-like, for gold nuggets in a trench on a street in Vienna. The series again illustrates Dressler's ability to highlight in only a few photographs pivotal issues such as the financial crisis using subtle humour (Dressler himself is the recipient of the 2013 Austrian State Prize for Artistic Photography). Other positions include Anja Manfredi, who works with the methodology of the tableau, and Michael Aschauer, who uses a high-tech photographing method to depict a large

section of the Westautobahn motorway (approx. 50 km long) in a single photograph.

Social documents

In a recent radio broadcast marking his 90th birthday Erich Lessing spoke of the loss of an entire culture of photography which once stored the world as prints in photo albums. In his view, the masses of digital images now stored on hard drives would not be preserved for the future, for technical reasons, and it will no longer be possible to see how people once dressed and what people, buildings and cars on the streets used to look like.

Even if this collective visual memory seems to be in jeopardy due to the new uses of photography as a mass medium, interest in perpetuating the artistic tradition of the social landscape – the view of the individual that allows a view of society – remains unbroken.

So across the generations it would seem that there is a commitment to maintaining a photographic approach which we might refer to as an empathetic and critical participation in the everyday lives of the image protagonists. Leo Kandl's Weinhaus series from the late 1970s is a case in point, a series which Klaus Pichler for instance explicitly references in his new photographs.

The reception of images of the world is shifting increasingly from the realm of classic photo reportages in magazines to the art world in general and the medium of books in particular. Matthias Aschauer's photographs of Attnang-Puchheim for instance are part of a "book in progress", a sort of scrutiny of his origins, while Paul Kranzler's third photo book surveys the social landscape of Upper Austria from a variety of perspectives. The farmyards of the Mühlviertel region photographed by Bernhard Fuchs are immersed in atmospheric light and appear to be deserted; and yet, somehow, its inhabitants are present, a phenomenon that has characterised photography since its earliest days. By contrast, with Angelika Kampfer and Rudi Strobl, human beings are a direct counterpart. Kampfer's photographs are as touching as they are objective in their depiction of the very elderly in the face of death, opening up an existential dimension; with Strobl, the family with all its potential for conflict is an occasion for autobiographical analysis. In his reportage Marko Mestrovics embarks on a journey to the world of the "garbage baron", a subversively alternative world in Bosnia with its own economy and its own rules.

Constructions of space as an image – investigations into landscape

As a painterly genre, landscape representations entered art history only at a very late stage and were intended, from the outset, as something of a construct. By contrast, 19th century photographers included landscape depictions in their repertoire early on. In the contemporary application of the genre the photographic apparatus with its central perspective continues to condition space as a construct immanent in the medium.

The spectrum of the artist's engagement with the theme of outside spaces ranges from the grand designs of a landscape shaped by the impact of civilisation (Markus Krottendorfer, Margherita Spiluttini, and Andrea Witzmann) to the directly scanned, camera-less landscape pieces by Günter Stöger. The dissolution of the (architectural) space and its rearrangement and reorganisation has also been of interest to artists such as Krüger & Pardeller and Anita Witek as a means of scrutinising the "natural" laws of photography and building a bridge from image to symbol. Anna Barfuss, Aglaia Konrad, Matthias Kessler and Gregor Sailer also offer different approaches to this theme.

Self-assurances - identity

The question of identity is undoubtedly one of the questions most often raised today in the visual arts debate. The starting point is often the staging of one's (own) body, a device which serves to enumerate questions of gender, origin and social class. With the emergence of body art in the 1960s, photography freed itself from the taboo of depicting the body in explicit poses. Friedl Kubelka deliberately presents herself as an erotic object, thereby undermining conventional feminist positions. In his self-portraits Matthias Herrmann unsparingly formulates a homosexual identity caught in the field of tension of lust and HIV. In her series Elisabeth Wörndl works with her mother's dress, showcasing it as an original prop for her staged self-portraits. Michael Huey's entire oeuvre is a concentrated process of retracing an extensive American middle-class family. Heidi Harsieber uses the device of the classic psychological portrait to engage artist personalities and their partners in an interplay of representation and self-presentation. Other positions in this chapter include Sissi Farassat, Anja Manfredi, Michaela Moscovou and Judith Rohrmoser.

Discourse - history

In recent years photography has become increasingly important as a means of flagging up descriptions

of the world and as a marker of historically relevant events, but also of private experiences in places in which social and political realities have become inscribed. It is not appellative, documentary-style reporting that is required here, rather the subtle conflation of personally researched concerns which are represented in an artistically visual process. These inquiring reflections characterise the works of Caroline Heider, Werner Kaligofsky, Ulrike Lienbacher, Tatiana Lecomte, Markus Oberndorfer, Isa Rosenberger, Wolfgang Thaler and Christian Wachter.

Film programme

In the foyer of the Atterseehalle the exhibition will run concurrently with a film programme curated by Siegfried A. Fruhauf in co-operation with sixpackfilm, with a one-off screening scheduled at the Fotohof on 28 August 2013.

Films by: Michael Aschauer (aka m.ash), Miklos Boros, Carola Dertnig, Nikolaus Eckhard, Siegfried A. Fruhauf, KarØ Goldt, Dariusz Kowalski, Claudia Larcher, and Nana Swiczinsky

List of exhibited artists:

Matthias Aschauer - Michael Aschauer - Anna Barfuss - Franz Bergmüller - Miklos Boros - Heinz Cibulka - Inge Dick - Peter Dressler - Andreas Duscha - VALIE EXPORT - Sissi Farassat - Gertrud Fischbacher - Thomas Freiler - Bernhard Fuchs - Philippe Gerlach - G.R.A.M - Robert Gruber - Maria Hahnenkamp - Heidi Harsieber - Ilse Haider - Caroline Heider - Matthias Herrmann - Horáková + Maurer - Michael Huey - Werner Kaligofsky - Angelika Kampfer - Leo Kandl - Herwig Kempinger - Matthias Kessler - Aglaia Konrad - Paul Kranzler - Markus Krottendorfer - Krüger & Pardeller - Friedl Kubelka - Hans Kuppelwieser - Tatiana Lecomte - Paul Albert Leitner - Ulrike Lienbacher - Anja Manfredi - Christopher Mavric - Marko Mestrovic - Michaela Moscouw - Annelies Oberdanner - Markus Oberndorfer - Michael Part - Klaus Pichler - Hans Pollhammer - Lois Renner - Judith Rohmoser - Isa Rosenberger - Gabriele Rothemann - Gregor Sailer - Nikolaus Schletterer - Elisabeth Schmir - Günther Selichar - Margherita Spiluttini - Günter Stöger - Ingeborg Strobl - Rudi Strobl - Katharina Struber - Wolfgang Thaler - Otmar Thormann - Timotheus Tomicek - Martin Vesely - Christian Wachter - Manfred Willmann - Anita Witek - Andrea Witzmann - Elisabeth Wörndl - Michael Ziegler

Fotohof curator team:

Brigitte Blüml-Kaindl, Rainer Iglar, Kurt Kaindl, Michael Mauracher