

G E O R G K A R G L

Pressinformation

4th November 2005

Gegenwärtig aber ungenau

Richard Artschwager presents new figural wall installations at the Georg Kargl BOX

Exhibition Opening Friday, 4th November 2005, 7–9 p.m.

Duration of the exhibition: 5th November 2005 – 14th January 2006

In spring 2005 Georg Kargl opened his new exhibition hall “BOX” next to his gallery in Schleifmühlgasse and inspired the 82-year-old American artist Richard Artschwager to action. Creating the front design for the “BOX”, Artschwager contributed a new permanent art installation to Vienna. The installation stands out as a new urban landmark in the historic ambience of the apartment building with its red-violet marble front erected by Ernst Epstein between 1910-1911.

Richard Artschwager is presenting his recent series of works of figural wall installations from rubberised horsehair on the new premises. The series of life-size, coloured figures performing every-day acts, partly with sweeping gestures, is titled “Gegenwärtig aber ungenau” (“Omnipresent but blurry”). The traditional boundaries between painting and sculpture blur to form an amalgam between images and objects, between three-dimensional images and two-dimensional sculptures. The installations made of pigment on masonite and hanging on the wall like pictures seem to abandon the place assigned to them in the spatial structure and to be suspended in mid-air. With expressive gestures and movements, they establish relations with one another and the onlooker. This dynamism is highlighted in titles with the stress on active verbs, e.g. “Running Man”, “Rejoicing Woman”, “Climbing Boy” or “Crouching Man”.

Artschwager has developed his so-called “blps” already since 1967/68, whose beginnings were marked by a combination of graphic impulses, such as lines, Y- shapes and hooks. The spatial design of these elements was realised as oblong lozenges, which – being “more effective than a dot” – were first arranged in groups of sawn-out painted wooden components. When Artschwager presented them for the first time at Galerie Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf in June 1968, die “blps” spilt like black spots over from the defined exhibition space into window surfaces, the entrance and ceiling, resisting any architectural concept. According to Artschwager’s records, he later created horsehair “blps” because he wanted ‘to make a “blp” that did not look like a hole punched into space but a soft spot in the air as hard as a diamond’.

In contrast to his formica furniture sculptures of excellent workmanship reduced to basic geometric forms, whose complete, clear-cut outlines aim at avoiding subjective expression to the extent possible, his horsehair sculptures with soft and real-life silhouettes play with spatial illusionist effects.

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After 1998 he created about 30 of his horsehair scissors cuts from the same material he had previously used for the "blps" and "hair boxes". As with the "blps", in this exhibition the artist breaks with the architectural context. The isolated reduced shape - quasi representing the antithesis to experiencing life - is, however, replaced by a performing dynamic figure. Life in its most profound meaning can never be pinned down and enclosed within a self-contained form. The continuous movements and vibrations of all elements lead to a "blurring" that makes the energetic state perceptible, omnipresent. Artschwager simulates this state with the material used and by resorting to figural representation.

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Opening Hours

Tue-Fri 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

Thu 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Sat 11 a.m.–3 p.m.