

G E O R G K A R G L

Press Release

Yves Mettler Exologisms

Georg Kargl BOX

Exhibition Dates: January 18, 2008–March 1, 2008

Yves Mettler has chosen an unusual approach for his exhibition at Georg Kargl Box: he first invented a term, and then explored what it might stand for in his work. Fundamental for the artist were his existential experience of being bound in external processes and patterns, and his longing to find tools with which these external conditions could be changed and shaped. To find or invent tools to produce situations that allow for this cultural transformation, things would have to be radically rethought, new concepts would be necessary. In this sense, the exhibition operates as an experimental space in which the attempt is made to create these moments, to activate them and with each visitor bring them out to the space that Mettler is especially interested in: urban space.

Exologisms recognize the other before it is exotic
—Yves Mettler

The term he has chosen is exologisms. The story of lead glass foil helps to grasp the meaning of exologisms. As a decorative foil produced in Germany that can be affixed to windows for purposes of beautification and protection, it makes reference to European cultural history, for the patterns represented are taken from Gothic stained glass windows. But interestingly, this foil is most successfully sold in the Arabic world, where it is used as decoration for ceiling lamps or windows. As a common replacement for the traditional *maschrabias* or wooden shutters, the foil here becomes a medium between cultures. The border is fluid.

Exologisms configure a culture that transforms the relations between cultures, modalizing them and formalizing them. (YM)

The pattern of this foil interests Mettler in a dual sense: on the one hand as a globalized product that makes use of Western cultural history, and at the same time as a possible image for the processes that produce urban space. For him, this sample represents the formalization of a threshold, the threshold of inside and out, between abstract form and concrete political space.

This sample is now transformed, expanded, and translated like a kind of leitmotif in the exhibition. Just as words can be declined, here Mettler declines the formal possibilities of the sample, and watches what happens when the form bends and enters into dialogue with other exologisms by way of their mutual encounter.

Exologisms are desirable for they allow various models of existence to appear alongside one another.
(YM)

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T E L + 4 3 1 5 8 5 4 1 9 9 W W W . G E O R G K A R G L . C O M

This sample, filled with volumes and constructed of cardboard, is able to form an object that seems to be both an abstract light sculpture as well as the reproduction of a skyline. This sculpture, reminiscent of a model without being one, here becomes a illuminated body, a beaming structure of multiple layers whose light pushes outwards through narrow slits that also seem impenetrable. In so doing, *The Neighbourhood* is located somewhere between the illustrative function of architectural models and the autonomy claim of contemporary sculptures, without fulfilling either.

Exologisms are needed wherever a link is created to the external without it being marked as external. (YM)

The pattern seems blown up in *The Island*, the pillows from which one can comfortably get an overview over the rest of the events. A second skyline can be found in the video *The River*, a skyline that seems unattainable for the subject, who is separated from it by a river. While a day passes and the figure spends the time engaging in inexplicable activities, the city remains a slightly pulsing body in the background that never seems to come to rest. The relationship between the city and the individual subject seems here to be formalized, while the sound installation is tied to a very particular city-subject relationship: that of Yves Mettler and the city in which he currently lives, Berlin. The question of “neighborhood” is posed in quite a subjective fashion: how does my neighborhood sound, how can it be identified through sound, what can I find out from the sounds of the city? By way of so-called “field recordings,” Mettler tries to come closer to his surroundings, experience them more consciously, and activate their imaginary potential. Repeatedly obtruding on us, later disappearing to the depths of the unconscious, sound is much more direct than image. It inspires our imagination and lies across the entire exhibition like an invisible carpet.

Exologisms are to that extent possible that one recognizes ones own culture and produces with no fear of losing it, or vice versa, of getting lost in another culture. (YM)

Countless relationships are created among the individual components of the exhibition: they overlap, stand in one another’s way, complement one another, illuminate from various aspects, zoom in and out. The exhibition is thus to be understood as a whole from which the individual parts are difficult to separate. This condensation of experience is the exhibition’s hidden quality. To truly place the relations between cultures on new, untested foundations, to truly achieve something like cultural heterogeneity, we need to be able to think between the parts; complex relations must be allowed. For ultimately it is not important to define exactly what exologisms are. On the contrary: this would be the end of all exologisms. These moments must be reconstructed over and over, questioned and varied.

Exologisms are always temporary. But they do not take off, satisfied with the ensemble of now. The ostensible interests of exologisms are articulating approaches towards the mainstream as well as the subculture, local and nomadic, migrating or imported cultures. (YM)

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Opening Hours

Tues-Fri	11am–7pm
Thurs	11am–8pm
Sa	11am–3pm