

G E O R G K A R G L

Press information

WOLFGANG PLÖGER

Georg Kargl BOX

Press preview: September 11th 2007, 11 a.m.

Opening: September 11th 2007, 7 p.m.

Exhibition dates: September 12th – November 3rd, 2007

In the course of the progressive mediatization of everyday life by way of film and television, a critical engagement with once valid conditions of perception took place in the 1960s and 1970s. Traditional film projections and arrangements were subjected to a new interrogation and their limits were expanded. Artists shifted their focus away from the projected object and narrative film structures towards the investigation of the construction of mediated images and the relationship between physical surroundings and perceptive cognitive mechanisms. So-called "expanded cinema" was extremely heterogeneous, stretching from performances that expanded awareness, performances and environments in the framework of film festivals and multi-media shows to installations, multiple projects, and film and video installations in gallery and museum spaces with roots in media analysis and institutional critique. The links between the individual realms were vital and multi-layered and have to be seen before the backdrop of the expanded arts movements of the period, which found expression not only in terms of the mixing of artistic media like painting, sculpture, installation or photography, but also in terms of artistic realms like music, theater, dance, or film art. Common to all the discipline-crossing activities of filmmakers, musicians, dancers, and artists was their interest in exploring the relationship between real and imaginary space and the disruption the order represented in the classical cinema, freeing it of the isolation of the beholder and the fixed ascription of his gaze in favor of participatory models of participation. With the overcoming of traditional forms of film and media, the beholder himself became a part of cinematographic orders of projection where he himself could see himself as an actor, and no longer structure spatial perception by relying on pre-given mechanisms of order and limitation, but rather define them him or herself.

With his filmic installation at Georg Kargl BOX, the German artist Wolfgang Plöger reflects on developments and debates within the world of expanded cinema, its critical questioning of the relation of media image and physical space as well as its exposition of unstable spatial and temporal parameters today has a new relevance. Due to the development of constantly new forms of information technology and the increasing digitalization of everyday life, a transformation and an alienation of structures of perception and communication took place. An anonymous mass has a part in collective processes of information production, where content can be called up with ever increasing speed, independent of place and time. The "accelerated beholder"¹ that Vilém Flusser already attested to in a time when computer technology and the Internet in comparison to today's technological standards were still taking baby steps has in light of the everyday images and flood of video and information learned to grasp and classify images, information, and visual sequences ever more rapidly. At the same time, today's beholder is accustomed to the constant and rapid shifts of attention and a sometimes frightening lack of commitment and insensitivity of media images, that can be understood as fundamentally transformable and manipulable.

¹ Vilém Flusser, *Das Universum der technischen Bilder*, Göttingen 1992, p. 47

Wolfgang Plöger comes from a generation that grew up both with the self-evidence of an expanded concept of art and the related dissolution of existing genre borders as well as an everyday life that was saturated by the media. When in his film installations he takes recourse to now historical Super8-projectors and cartoons done by hand, this no longer takes place with the aim of the 1960s and 1970s in mind—to explore new structures of perception—but can veritably be seen as a consequence of the artistic and technological developments of that period. When Plöger positions technical devices visibly in space and leads the film strip freely through its projection structure, this should not so much be seen in the context of structural film and conceptual art, which in an enlightenment gesture sought to expose the impact and mechanisms of film and video projection, but in terms of an interrogation of an everyday life that is also defined by digitalization and increasingly constituted as a self-alienated reality.

Plöger's filmic installation moves between sculpture, painting, and film, between still and moving images, between real objects in physical space and fictive objects in illusionistic space. The lightly moving shadow of the filmstrip led through space creates an illusionistic intermediate space on which subject to constant transformation and corresponds with the projected drawings from cones of light from the corners of the room as well as the architecture of the gallery space. The artist tries to make the materiality of the space palpable for the beholder, sensitizing him or her to all intermediacy of real and imagined space that changes with every modification of the light source or movement of the beholder, dissolving and again reassembling itself anew. It expands space and its perception, without concealing it or appropriating it.

Referring to his minimalist thread sculptures that cast an imaginary volume with their shadow, with simultaneous reduction of a body in space on its graphic substance spanned by "pedestrian space,"² a space that is first constituted by the mobile, participating beholder over a self-determined time frame and negotiated. Similar mechanisms of perception are triggered upon entering Plöger's filmic installation, even if only in a second phase of reception. If for Sandback the adjustment of the gaze takes place slowly and not directly, and a feeling of "emptiness" of space always precedes the perception of the work, in Plöger the fascination for the determinants of media visual production, the clatter of projectors, the film strip, light and movement shape the perception of the dynamic transformation of physical existent space.

Text/Curator: Fiona Liewehr

Press image download: www.georgkargl.com

Georg Kargl BOX, Vienna
Schleifmühlgasse 5
1040 Wien
T +43 1 585 41 99
www.georgkargl.com, office@georgkargl.com

Opening hours
Tue – Fr 11 a.m – 7 p.m
Thu 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Sat 11 a.m. – 3 p.m

² Fred Sandback, „Bemerkungen“, in: *Fred Sandback*, (ed. Friedemann Malsch, Christiane Meyer-Stoll), Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern 2005, p. 92-93