GEORG KARGL

THOMAS LOCHER - [ALWAYS] TROUBLE WITH PRINCIPLE

Georg Kargl Fine Arts

Exhibition opening on Thursday, 11th May 2006, 7 pm – 9 pm

Duration of exhibition: 12th May 2006 – 1 July 2006

Press brunch: Thursday, 11th May 2006, 11 am

Artist Thomas Locher, born in 1956, has always been interested in principle basics, such as grammar or law, which appear so irrefutable yet have at their disposal a large portion of fictive belief. The exhibition [ALWAYS] TROUBLE WITH PRINCIPLE, a confrontation with several aspects of the economic realm, is divided into four different works. Arising is a parcourse of sorts, adapted to the situation of the gallery space, in which the work from the main room surfaces repeatedly in the exhibition, taking on the function of a label or commentary.

Starting with the eighteenth century, an epoch in which the question of guilt/debt/change was dealt with in literature, and also, one in which the establishment of paper currency as a binding means of payment began, Locher works with the theme of money as mediator of exchange of commodities and also communicative exchange. [ALWAYS] TROUBLE WITH PRINCIPLE is an exhibition about giving, about the impossibility of the gift. Jacques Derrida sees the gift as a phenomenon that simultaneously exists and doesn't exist, and, as a principle, cannot be comprehended conceptually. The gift is a contradictory phenomenon, equipped with the means to question the economic realm's circulation and cycle. In order for a gift to even be a gift, it cannot circulate; it must not be taken in by the process of exchange. But in order for anything at all to be exchanged, it first has to be given.

Undecided between giving and taking, inherent in the gift is a time in which what is given makes reference to what will be returned at a later point in time, the obligation to reimburse, as supplement that develops fully in the economic realm surrounding credit, debt, exchange, and credibility.

In the gallery's first room is a paper mural with motifs from Diderot's encyclopedia; juxtaposed fragments of depictions of French interiors from the close of the eighteenth century and an excerpt of an illustration from Craig Ellwood's Case Study House #18 from the 1950s. This mural sets the exhibition's theme into a larger time frame and transforms the entry space, in the pre-revolutionary style, into an interior of the "Master."

The base text for the series "Exzerpt aus dem Exzerpt," are taken from an 1844/45 essay by Karl Marx. The essay highlights alienated and unalienated society, money, credit, and humanity. The installation refers to essential formulations about an alienated commodity society and a humane society in which individuals produce for one another and encounter one another in their production (of things) as complementary and enriching.

In the gallery's second room is an installation with printed counterfeit bills, likewise intermingling with two works from "Exzerpt aus dem Exzerpt."

The main room is staged with the text-picture series "GIFT. TO GIVE. GIVING. GIVEN. GIFT, IF THERE IS ANY...(J.D.)," whose images from commonly available media—primarily with the motif of giving, transfer, gestures of handing over—confront text fragments from Jacques Derrida's _Donner Le Temps_.

This exhibition [ALWAYS] TROUBLE WITH PRINCIPLE is about money, about fake money, about money that is not real, about money that isn't money. Everything that can be offered and sold can be represented by money as a universal medium: it is representative of a mediating activity, a social act, even representative for man itself. Since money can represent everything, it also equally represents nothing. It is possibly something that is identical with itself: money is money and nothing else. Money can be everything, except one thing: a gift.

Text: Thomas Locher