

GEORG KARGL FINE ARTS

Presseinformation

MARCEL VAN EEDEN

The Restaurant

Ausstellungsdauer: 17. Mai – 22. Juni 2013

Für seine Ausstellung bei Georg Kargl Fine Arts verwandelt Marcel van Eeden den Oberlichtsaal der Galerie in ein Restaurant und führt uns in das Jahr 1956, auf die Spuren von Oswald Sollmann, dem Protagonisten seiner fiktiven Geschichte. In zahlreichen detailreichen Zeichnungen lässt Marcel van Eeden die Geschichte in den einzelnen Räumen aufklingen und uns die dramatischen verwobenen Ereignisse nachspüren. *The Restaurant* ist die letzte Episode aus Marcel van Eedens 3-teiliger Ausstellungsreihe *The Hotel*.

Marcel van Eeden, 1965 in Den Haag geboren, zählt zu den wichtigsten internationalen Zeichnern der Gegenwart.

In seinen umfangreichen Bilderzyklen verbindet van Eeden reale und fiktive Biografien. Seit 1993 erstellt van Eeden mindestens eine, manchmal auch mehrere pro Tag, die er in zunehmend größere Serien einbindet. Auf Streifzügen durch Antiquariate, Archive, Bibliotheken und Flohmärkte sammelt der Künstler die Bildmotive, die ihm für seine Zeichnungen als Vorlage dienen. Dass die Zeitungen, Bücher und Fotos ausschließlich aus der Zeit vor seinem Geburtstag am 22. November 1965 stammen müssen, weist auf die intensive Beschäftigung van Eedens mit dem Tod und dem 'Nicht-Dasein' hin - alles kreist um die Zeit, bevor er geboren wurde.

Für seine Bilderzyklen wählt er jedoch nie historisch bedeutsame Ereignisse, sondern alltägliche Orte oder banale Situationen. Es sind Landschaften, architektonische Ansichten, Menschen, einzelne Objekte, oft Ausschnitte und immer unbekannte vergessene Motive und Geschichten, die er auswählt und in ein immergleiches, kleines, kompaktes Format setzt. Auffallend dabei ist nicht nur die Virtuosität seiner Graphitzeichnungen, in starken Schwarz-Weiß-Kontrasten, sondern seine lockere Art, mit historischen Motiven zu jonglieren, mysteriöse Figuren mit noch mysteriöseren Ereignissen zu verstricken und das Ganze in ein ästhetisch plausibles Gesamtkonzept einzubetten.

Seit seiner Teilnahme an der 4. Berlin Biennale (2006) ist Marcel van Eeden mit zahlreichen Ausstellungen international vertreten. So widmete ihm u.a. der Kunstverein St. Gallen, die Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, die Bawag Contemporary in Wien, das Haus am Waldsee in Berlin, das Kunstforum Baloise in Basel oder das Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens in Deurle umfangreiche Einzelausstellungen. Seine Arbeiten waren darüber hinaus im Museum of Modern Art, NY, im Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, in der Bonniers Konsthall in Stockholm, in der Kestnergesellschaft in Hannover oder im Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Kopenhagen zu sehen.

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Öffnungszeiten:

Di – Fr 11.00 – 19.00
Sa 11.00 – 16.00

The Hotel, Part 1

The Lobby

Oswald Sollmann and a woman checked into the hotel on the 15th of August 1956. Shortly afterwards, four men entered the lobby within moments of each other. They settled themselves on the sofas. None of them spoke, nor did they sit together, but they seemed to know one another. There were plants in the way, witnesses were to say later, so no one could really see what they were doing.

They sat there for at least an hour, maybe more, which drew the attention of the staff. These men were definitely not hotel guests. Sollmann remained in his room for some time.

Meanwhile, the woman who had checked in with him had left the hotel. On her way out she seemed to nod almost imperceptibly to one of the men waiting in the lobby. Suspicions were aroused when one of the men went over to the reception desk and asked whether they had a room available.

„I'm afraid not“, said the receptionist, „we're fully booked.“

„That's a pity. Thanks anyway“. It didn't sound convincing.

The man returned to where he had been sitting. The lobby got busy. The telephone kept ringing and guests came and went.

That may be why the receptionists didn't see exactly what was happening in the lobby. And why they didn't see that one of the men had got up, taken something from his bag and headed for the entrance.

A little later, one of the hotel staff noticed that a repairman was working on the glass sliding doors. He was surprised that he hadn't been told. Just as he was leaving the reception desk to go and investigate, the first bomb went off. Not a big bomb, but just big enough to damage the doors. The second explosion filled the lobby with smoke. Then everything happened at once. The other men sprang into action. One leapt over the counter and held the receptionists at gunpoint. He forced them into a small office and locked the door. Another, heavily-armed man posted himself at the main entrance and allowed no one to enter or leave the building.

That was the beginning of the tragedy.

The Hotel, Part 2

The Room

The hotel was soon under siege. More armed men stormed the building, entering through open windows in the lobby. Snipers took up positions on the roof. The hotel guests were herded into the restaurant. Sollmann was still in his room. The telephone rang from time to time and men came in to take orders or discuss the situation. Room 62 was adequate but not large. In any case, Sollmann wasn't intending to stay here for long. The plan had been worked out meticulously: after his escape from the prison in Zurich a few hours earlier, all Sollmann had to do was organise a safe passage to the airport, where a hijacked plane was due to arrive at any moment to take him to Congotanga in Africa. Carl Rittner would be expecting him. While the operation in the hotel was being carried out with almost military precision, Sollmann examined the picture above the desk. It was a reproduction of a 17th-century painting, possibly a Ruysdael, but there wasn't a name on it. It depicted a wooded landscape with a river or a small lake. Sollmann recalled having seen the work before, in Berlin, perhaps, or Vienna.

For a moment he forgot where he was and what was happening all around him, and imagined himself in 17th-century Holland. A man was standing at the water's edge. He was wearing a hood, but if you looked closely you could see that his face was deformed. Sollmann had never noticed that before. As soon as this whole thing was over, he thought, he'd write an article about it.

The telephone rang. Apparently things were going to take longer than expected. There were problems at the airport and the bus with tinted windows had been delayed. It occurred to Sollmann that the authorities might be trying to stall the operation.

It was time to make a move.

The Hotel, Part 3

The Restaurant

Sollmann spoke into the telephone, his voice soft but firm: Get everyone to the restaurant. Guests and staff. He put the receiver down, rose from his chair and left the room. Two guards posted at the door escorted him to the lift.

The hostages crowded into the restaurant – frightened, angry or resigned to their fate – under the chilling gaze of men armed with machine guns.

There was some consternation at the back of the room as Sollmann entered the restaurant. It seems there was a man hiding behind a pillar in a dark corner. The gunmen had spotted him and were trying to herd him back to the group. Sollmann strode towards him.

The man turned and looked at Sollmann. They hadn't seen each other for more than ten years and it was gloomy indoors, but Sollmann recognised him immediately. He took the man aside.

I should have finished you off long ago, Sollmann, Anton Tijtgat said, but you've been worth it to me. Drawings by Grunewald for sale in Walvis Bay, remember? Paid for all right, but I got them back. What a shame, I thought.

Was it Daube? Sollmann asked. Yes, that might be the name, Tijtgat replied. Remember Waregem in 1917, Sollmann? Do you know what it's like to see your little brother hanging in shreds from a tree?

Right, said Sollmann, I think we're done. He led Tijtgat back to the restaurant and held a pistol to his temple. The hostages recoiled in fear. Sollmann started to squeeze the trigger, right in the middle of the room. Tijtgat opened his mouth to speak, but blood spattered on the tables. His legs gave way and he died on the spot.

15 August 1956, 20:00.
Press conference, Police Headquarters, Zurich

We regret to inform you that the incident at Hotel xxx has claimed at least one life. A bus with tinted windows, one of the captors' demands, is waiting in front of the hotel. It will transport them and presumably some of the hostages to the airport. That's all for now. We'll keep you informed of further developments. The commissioner of police picked up his papers and walked out before the journalists could ask any questions.

In the meantime, Sollmann was preparing to leave the hotel