

G E O R G K A R G L F I N E A R T S

Press Release

DAVID MALJKOVIĆ

Exhibition duration: 16 May – 21 June 2014

The current exhibition by David Maljković presents the broad spectrum of his artistic working in different media ranging from animation, film installation, sound works and display forms, along with collaged inkjet prints to a slide projection. The artist's sophisticated use of aesthetic and display strategies, his interest in codes of exhibition set-ups, and his concern with the relationship between form and content are well known not least since his exhibition at the Viennese Secession in 2011. At first view the present show readily connects with such a reading. White plinths in various shapes and sizes have left their function as architectural exhibition support and advanced from presentational background to being a part of the artwork on view. This engagement with display strategies however needs to be complemented by a reading of the sources David Maljković employs and the temporal games he plays.

In *Untitled 2004* a digital clock with manipulated display is inserted into a floor pedestal. It only provides a defunct, malleable, circular sense of time in a form stripped bare of its function. It speaks of Maljković's recurrent artistic exploration of time which manifests itself in his works engaging with multiple readings of the past, present and potential future. In this exhibition, the temporal amalgamations are grounded in the layered reality of exhibition making and find its correspondence in the virtual use of layers from different contexts and temporalities in his actual works. This becomes visible not only in the wallpaper works that are applied directly to the wall dealing with the artist's exhibition history at Georg Kargl Fine Arts, but even more so in the five large-format collages *New Reproductions 2014*: inkjet prints of various artistic levels have been laid on top of one another to evoke Maljković's past artistic involvement with form. The lowermost layer of the works is a digitally processed image of a man's wristwatch on top of which Maljković collages depictions of earlier works. The techniques involved range from exposure, digital reworking, decollage and combined or partial covering of the works. By literally discarding the prints he simultaneously examines them anew for the present day, and leads the seductive nature of bricolage to its own reduction. The work's ambivalent title points into two opposite directions time-wise and suggests that a rereading of the past may provide new insights. The layered reproductions examine what it means to attempt to read again without needing to create new content and invite the viewers to make multiple interpretations.

This interest in ever-new interpretations also is apparent in David Maljković's most recent version of *A long Day for the Form 2012-2014*. The idea for the work was originally developed for an exhibition at Kunsthalle Basel, where a wooden construction of the same shape as the bronze sculpture was placed into a corner and accompanied by the sound of chirping crickets. Here, the bronze sculpture becomes an artifact immersed into a plinth and only seems to render partial information. As the installation blocks the way into further exhibition rooms, it asks for an interaction with the gallery visitor and invites to step onto the plinth leading the beholder to leave behind footprints on the white surface. This piece highlights a less discussed but not least relevant aspect of Maljković's work. As the artist already explored in his previous exhibition at the gallery in 2011, there is a strong element of structuring the encounter of the viewer with Maljković's work – a viewer who is following and not watching, who is participating in the artist's thought process.

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To render apparent and reflect on the artist's practice is also one of the key features of the animation *Afterform*, shown in the skylight room of the gallery, for which Maljković uses characters from a cartoon published in an architectural magazine from the 1960s. The original cartoon satirized modernism and by animating the characters and incorporating his own works into the animation, Maljković contributes to and expands on the early commentary made by the cartoon. The building blocks of his works seem to loop seamlessly with constructions and ideas of the historical avant-garde. David Maljković's reworking of these visual historical forms – a collage in time, as it seems – is also employed for the 16mm film projection *Undated* 2013. In it the 90-year old Croatian sculptor Ivan Kožarić creates with his hands a nondescript form that Maljković isolated and digitally manipulated in post-production. The distortion of the image is accompanied by the amplification and distortion of the sound made by the film projector. This incorporation of Kožarić's work exemplifies again the artist's fundamental concern with sourcing forms from a relevant past to accentuate a present situation. With the distortion of sound the artist seems to comment on his own use of film and again loops both through form and content in new reproductions about his practice.

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