

SILENT ALIEN GHOST MACHINE MUSEUM Norbert Pfaffenbichler



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, Vampyr,
1979/2009. Photo, 59,5 x 84,1 cm

Opening: March 4, 2010, 7 p.m.

Press talk: March 4, 2010, 11 a.m.; press download: <http://medienturm.at/presse>

Period: March 5 – May 22, 2010, Tue – Sat 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. & Wed – Fri 3 – 6 p.m.

Location: Kunstverein Medienturm, Josefigasse 1, A-8020 Graz, www.medienturm.at

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Curator: Sandro Droschl

Cooperation: Diagonale. Festival des österreichischen Films, series CONCEPT FILM

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Diagonale March 18, 2010, 7 p.m.

2nd opening & catalogue presentation

March 17 – 21, 2010, 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

aktuelle kunst in graz April 17, 2010, 3 p.m.

Artist talk with Martin Sturm (OK Linz, director)

April 16 – 18, 2010, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Lendwirlbel 7. 5. 2010, 7 p.m.

10YEARSATER PARTY

Wer macht Stadt? May 7, 2010, 3 p.m.

May 7 – 8, 2010, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

In the solo show SILENT ALIEN GHOST MACHINE MUSEUM, the conceptual artist and experimental film maker Norbert Pfaffenbichler (*1967 Steyr, lives in Vienna) exclusively presents new works which were conceived especially for the exhibition at the Graz-based Kunstverein Medienturm: a series of video- and spatial installations as well as photo works are on display.

Norbert Pfaffenbichler deals with the "other", the dark, grotesque and sinister aspect of Modernity. Central to his analysis are, in this context, the "historical" media of film and photography. These "key media" of the twentieth century are experimentally questioned with respect to their efficiency and validity in the present by use of today's digital production means. Pfaffenbichler particularly is concerned with the "spatialisation" of these two-dimensional image media. He systematically deals with phenomena which inevitably occur when (moving) images are presented within a three-dimensional (art) space. The artist uses different forms of expression and media which range from painting, photography, video, collage and assemblage up to cross-media, extensive installations. All works have decided historical references with interwoven personal biographical instants. His utterly subjective re-reading of the twentieth century's history of film, art and ideas turns out conceptual and sensual alike.

The exhibition title SILENT ALIEN GHOST MACHINE MUSEUM refers to the medium of film which, here, is titled „ghost machine“. The mechanical apparatus presents "ghosts", meaning disembodied, moving images of individuals who often died a long time ago. The characters are, at the same time, (visually) present and (physically) absent. In early times of film, the cinematographic apparatus was also employed by magicians in order to let appear ghosts on an open stage. It is not a coincidence that the great pioneer George Méliès pursued the profession of an illusionist before he made his career as film maker. The cinematic ghosts are



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, *Dough and Dynamite*, 2009. Stills from video installation on wall drawing



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, *Glasses*, 2009. Diptych, Gelatin silver print on baryta paper, 9 x 9 cm

not our own, but aliens arriving on the scene from "remote worlds and times". The added term "silent" refers, on the one hand, to the silent movies. Films, in early times of the cinema were, however, never screened silently, but always were accompanied by music and/or narrations. The "silent" screenings of early films is a museum practice, which corresponds by no means to the original screening practice. In addition, "silent" denotes also the actual setting in the exhibition spaces, since all works will be screened or showcased without sound. The ironical addition "museum" terms, on the one hand, the historical dimension of the exhibition project and refers, in addition to that, also concretely to the spatial, "museum" staging of the individual works in the framing of the show.

The history of the medium of film which has characterized the twentieth century like no other is reviewed with respect to the political and artistic developments of the era of Modernism. The first decades of the twentieth century are of special interest. The character of Charlie Chaplin, for example, appears in the context of several works.

"Charlie Chaplin is the emblematic figure of the cinema and to a certain extent also the figure of the good guy, the human who does not strive for power, nor has any. At the same time, however, through metamorphosis the other one exists, appearing from behind, meaning the absolute dread, Hitler, who dwells not outside but inside the humans." Youssef Ishaghpour

Film is a historical medium and right this historicity makes it that attractive for current media artistic operations. With its „primitive“ forms of narration and anarchistic contents, the early cinema virtually comes to mind. A grammar for the moving images still had to be developed, formal aesthetical conventions were not defined to an extent than they are today.

The operational starting point of the entire show is the systematic analysis of the cinematic means and procedures. The construction of the cinematic space and the proportion of the montage in this process are of particular relevance. The result of the heuristic work process is not a theoretical text, but are conceptual spatial installations and photographic works. Here, the entire human body is addressed; its proportions, the possible positions in space and the relation to the showcased works become part of the staging. The exhibition is conceived as walkable spatial installation, whereas the arrangement of the singular works follows a calculated dramaturgy of a particularly arranged course where relations of body, space and image are topicalised by means of changing shapes and materials. The visitors are encouraged to observe themselves when perceiving the works in order to question trained habits of perception and patterns of reception.

The exhibition SILENT ALIEN GHOST MACHINE MUSEUM is documented by a homonymous, richly illustrated catalogue published by Verlag Folio. The publication in German and English comprises texts by Nina Schedlmayer, Marc Ries, Norbert Pfaffenbichler and a preface by Sandro Droschl.

Norbert Pfaffenbichler's exhibition is the third part of the series CONCEPT FILM presenting cinematic procedures and strategies within the exhibition context, which was started in the frame of the Diagonale 2009 with the homonymous exhibition of Dorit Margreiter and Ursula Mayer. CONCEPT FILM (II) took place at Arti et Amicitiae in Amsterdam presenting works of the artists Dariusz Kowalski, Ben Pointeker, Lotte Schreiber und Gebhard Sengmüller.



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, Portrait of the artist as a squid, 2009. Photo montage, 59,4 x 84,1 cm



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, Notes on Fire, 2009. Triptych, Gelatin silver print on baryta paper, Sulphide toned, 15,7 x 16,9 cm

BIOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

*1967 in Steyr

lives in Vienna, artist and curator

1992 – 1994 dramatics, media studies, University of Vienna

1994 – 2001 visual media creation, University of Applied Arts, Vienna

Filmography

2007 "MOSAİK MÉCANIQUE"

2006 "a1b2c3" (with Lotte Schreiber)

"Notes on Film 02"

2004 "Piano Phase" (with Lotte Schreiber)

2003 "notes on MAZY"

2002 "notes on film 01 else"

2001 "36" (with Lotte Schreiber)

1998 "traxdata" (with Jürgen Moritz)

1997 "santora" (with Jürgen Moritz)

1996 "Wirehead" (with Timo Novotny)

Projects

2008 "BARCODE BUILDING", Kunst am Bau, Linz

2005 "Stippels&Pixels", Zebrstraat, Ghent

"SCHRIFT:RAUM:FORM", Kubus Export – der Transparente Raum, Vienna

2004 "Music for 18 Musicians", performance, ars electronica, Linz

"24!", O.K. Centrum, ars electronica, Linz

2002 "not at all", stage videos for Cie. Willi Dorner, Wiener Tanzwochen, Vienna

Video Edition Austria, DVD, Medienwerkstatt, Vienna

"72 dpi anime", book and DVD, Die Gestalten Verlag, Berlin

"void02", Forum Stadtpark, Graz

2001 "notes", Huis an der Werf, Utrecht

"Moving Out", MMK, Vienna

"notes on color", CD-Rom

"3seconds", stage videos for Cie. Willi Dorner, Wiener Tanzwochen, Vienna

2000 "notes01", CD-Rom

"back to return", stage videos for Cie. Willi Dorner, Wiener Festwochen, Vienna

"Le Théâtre de L'Usine", Geneva

"onloc", solo show, Kunstverein Medienturm, Graz

"live-forms", DVD

1999 "mazy", stage videos for Cie. Willi Dorner, Wiener Tanzwochen, Vienna

"v++", net project: <http://thing.at/v++>

1998 "aus:ein/ander", stage videos for Cie. Willi Dorner, Wiener Tanzwochen, Vienna

1997 "vinyl-studies", vinyl video

"chambers", Klangturm, St. Pölten

1996 "notes", CD-Rom

Group shows

2009 "CINEPLEX", Secession Wien, Vienna

"SEE THIS SOUND", Lentos, Linz 09, Linz

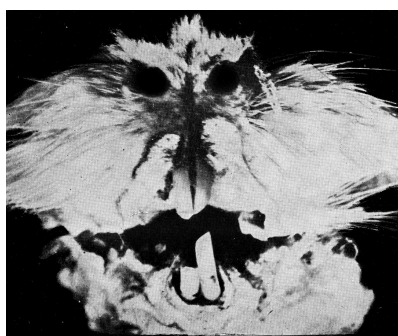
2006 "THEAUSTRIANABSTRACTS", Arti et Amicitiae, Amsterdam

"DIGITAL TRANSIT", ARCO, Medialab Madrid

2005 "Now's the time", Kunsthaus Graz



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, Organ, 2010.
Sculpture (detail)



Norbert Pfaffenbichler, Die Verhütung des
Unheilbaren, 2009. Diptych, digital UV print
on aluminium, 120 x 100 cm, 80 x 80 cm

- "BLANK", Kunstverein Medienturm, Graz
- 2004 "Hängende Gärten", Vienna
- "Base", MAK CAT, Vienna
- 2003 "RAW DIGITS", Kunstverein Medienturm, Graz
- "ABSTRACTION NOW", Künstlerhaus, Vienna
- 2002 "compiler", Kunstverein Medienturm, Graz

Festivals

- 2010 Digital Formalism, Austrian Filmmuseum, Vienna
- A Bafici Festival, Buenos Aires
- 2009 VISIONary, film tour program
- 2008 Austrian Filmmuseum, Vienna
- Filmfestival Rotterdam, Rotterdam
- Experiments in Cinema V.3.0, Albuquerque
- Diagonale, Graz
- Crossing Europe, Linz
- European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück
- Indielisboa, Lisbon
- IFF ArtFilm, Bratislava
- Edinburgh International Film Festival, Edinburgh
- Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen
- 24. Internationales KurzFilmFestival Hamburg
- Crossing Europe, Linz
- Osnabrück 08 – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück
- Indielisboa 08, Lisbon
- 24. Internationales KurzFilmFestival Hamburg
- Sonar, Barcelona
- Melbourne International Film Festival, Melbourne
- Rencontres Internationales, Berlin
- Wavelengths, Toronto International Film Festival, Toronto
- Austrian Filmmuseum, Vienna
- 18th Madrid Experimental Cinema Week, Madrid
- 2007 Rencontres Berlin/Paris/Madrid, Paris
- Rehearsal ... , Kunstverein Rosenheim
- Österreichisches Filmmuseum, Wien
- 2006 Diagonale, Graz
- UNDERDOX Festival, Munich
- Rencontres Berlin/Paris
- 2005 Dance Screen, Vienna
- Wand 5 / 2005 – 18. Filmwinter, Stuttgart
- Int. Videofestival Bochum
- 2004 Festival Internationale de Cine Independiente, Buenos Aires
- AniFest Film Festival, Trebo
- Underground Film Festival, Washington
- Sonar, Barcelona
- Némo Film Festival, Paris
- Internationale Kurzfilmtage, Istanbul
- International Film Festival of Fine Arts, Szolnok
- Cinessone Film Festival, Ris-Orange
- Avanto – Helsinki Media Art Festival, Helsinki
- Videofestival One Minute, Aarau (Jury Award)