

MARKUS SCHINWALD

16th February – 18th May 2008

The psychological debate between space and body, the uncanny and the disquieting, the deficits and the irrational depths of the individual and collective being – all are themes at play in the works of Markus Schinwald (born 1973, Salzburg). The most varied media are fused with apparent lightness in his work – from nightmarish films and puppet-like sculptures to re-worked history painting, and prosthetic design and clothes creations, which are subtly choreographed with one another. In his largest solo museum exhibition to date, Schinwald has created an architectonic overall production, which in the form of its display is oriented to the spatial designs of Austro-American stage designer and artist, Friedrich Kiesler (1890-1965).

The human body, in its inadequacy and uncanniness, serves Schinwald as both a starting and an observation point. He does not exhibit a firm, stable body whose function as controlled exterior is out of control, but instead a diaphanous, osmotic body stage, a projection surface for psychologically charged inner worlds, which constantly seek their path to the outside and manifest themselves there. In the film *1st Part Conditional* (2004), a classic Biedermeier apartment becomes the stage of a psychologically charged architecture. A female figure in a grey uniform moves with spastic motions through the room while an “off” voice recites fragments of scientific and literary texts. An observer of unknown power forces the puppet-like woman to collapse. The disquieting breakdown appears to be alien and self-controlled in equal measure. The effect is similar when Schinwald makes subtle interventions in the subjects featured in old engravings and paintings, equipping them with (un)canny attributes, such as ambiguous gadgetry and prosthetic accessories. Through a temporal break(through) the apparently consolidated historical body is given a different bodily surface.

In Foucauldian terms the body is the point zero at which all paths and spaces cross. In Schinwald's works the body reacts symptomatically to its inner conditions, and mirrors the outer experience in its pose. The scenarios Schinwald develops do not follow a linear narration with a beginning and end, but instead circulate obsessively and repetitively mid-content. With their cool minimal staging, at first glance the films, images and sculptures condense themselves into a complex structure of effect, permitting a multiplicity of possibilities and stories, fed from our collective unconscious. They hijack the observer in a self-supporting cosmos, in an uncanny surreal system, where normative limits are abrogated in favour of the enigmatic and the marvellous.

Thus the presentation of the works in the exhibition is not constricted to a simple arrangement. In its isolation the white cube departs from the environment of its alienated location, but through an auratic, psychological element it is supplemented and weaves the space into the narration. For the exhibition, Schinwald has constructed a modular wood construction in the manner of the architect, stage designer and artist Frederick Kiesler, which draws one through the space like a guide. The exhibition display is determined by a *Trager and Leger system*, which integrates the observer into the spatial and temporal framework. Kiesler developed the *T+L System* in 1924 for the *Internationale Ausstellung neuer Theatertechnik* (International Exhibition of New Theatre Technology) in Vienna, and it makes for a flexible, free-standing construction for the presentation of objects and images, which at the same time reconsiders the attempt to reform antiquated exhibition presentations. This modernist wood construction enables the artist to play a refined game of the visible and concealed. The observer is once more made conscious of his/her role as an “active viewer”, and is offered the chance to develop and follow his/her own analogies and narrative threads.

Most recently works by Markus Schinwald were on view at his solo exhibition at the Belvedere, Vienna or the group exhibitions *The World is a Stage* at the Tate Modern, London (2007) and at the 3rd Berlin Biennale (2006).

Curator of the exhibition, Heike Munder

An exhibition catalogue is published by JRP|Ringier in collaboration with the migros museum für gegenwartskunst, Zürich and the Belvedere, Vienna.

!PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS!

Guided tours: Sundays 17th February, 2nd & 16th March, 6th & 27th April, 18th May at 3pm, and Thursday 6th March at 6.30pm.

Opening hours: Tues / Wed / Fri Midday–6pm, Thurs Midday–8pm, Sat / Sun 11am–5pm.
Entrance to the museum is free from 5pm to 8pm every Thursday.

Holidays: the museum will be closed on Friday 21st March. On Thursday 20th March the museum will be open from Midday-6pm. On Thursday 1st May the museum will be open from 11am-5pm.

migros museum für gegenwartskunst
Limmatstrasse 270
8005 Zürich

T. +41 44 277 20 50
info@migrosmuseum.ch

F. +41 44 277 62 86
www.migrosmuseum.ch

The migros museum für gegenwartskunst is an Institution of the Migros Culture Percentage.
www.kulturprozent.ch