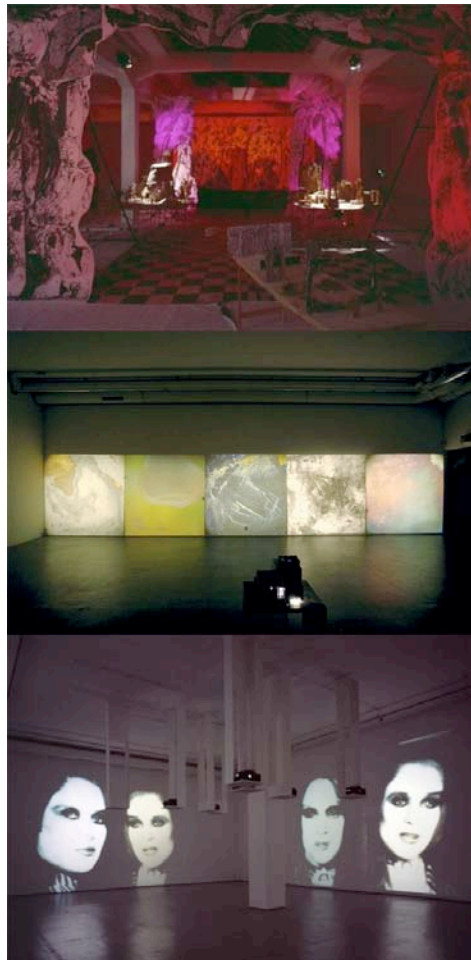


DOCUMENTATION

COLLECTION:
SPARTACUS CHETWYND
GUSTAV METZGER
KATHARINA SIEVERDING

13th June – 1st August 2010
migros museum für gegenwartskunst



PRESS RELEASE

COLLECTION: **SPARTACUS CHETWYND** **GUSTAV METZGER** **KATHARINA SIEVERDING**

13th June – 1st August 2010

Press conference: Friday, 11th June 2010, 11.30am

Opening: Saturday, 12th June 2010, 6pm

This collection presentation emphasizes on its space-filling, performative installations. Purchasing for the collection has resulted largely from exhibition productions, or working with the artist. In this way it has been possible to acquire various large installative works.

For the performance of *The Fall of Man, A Puppet Extravaganza*, first shown at the Tate Triennial in 2006, **Spartacus Chetwynd** (*1973 London) constructed a complex stage installation. As a reference point she used a traditional theatrical set with a central perspective, a style that was at its peak in the theater of the Baroque period; by curtailing the perspective it creates an illusion of spatial depth. In the center of Chetwynd's work stand two tables with models of landscapes, each referring to a literary source – one to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), the other to *Die deutsche Ideologie* (1845/1846) by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. One depicts a vision of Paradise together with the implication of the lapse into sin (The Fall of Man), the other the city of Utopia, the dwelling-place of the ideal society. The entire stage set is constructed using simple bricolage – ordinary materials like cardboard, plastic pipes and photocopies are dominant. Here the concept of bricolage is understood not only in its traditionally artistic, formal and esthetic function, but as in Lévi-Strauss's treatise *La Pensée Sauvage* (1962) as a process in which an object with a specific socio-cultural connotation is conveyed, acquiring to a new cultural identity. The concept also implies that prefabricated, formal instruments are not readily available, but that the approach is based on an explicit delight in experimentation – thus "savage thinking" is a mental function that does not (yet) have rational and analytical capacities, but does have combinatory ones. Hence the performance did not use traditional puppets, but was "performed" by vegetables, fulfilling an abstracted representative function. With her "savage thoughts," Chetwynd not only reconstructs and deconstructs elements of theatrical history, but takes the virtual representation of power and culture as her theme.

Gustav Metzger's (*1926 Nuremberg) *Liquid Crystal Environment* (1965–1998) was premièred at a rock concert by The Who at the Round House in London in 1966. His kaleidoscopic liquid crystal structures provided a psychedelic stage set. Metzger developed his idea of "Auto-Destructive Art" in the 1960s atmosphere of social upheaval. He produced five manifestos discussing the state art was in and where it might go after the Holocaust and Hiroshima. Metzger was faced with the possibility of his own annihilation even as a child: he was born in Nuremberg in 1926 to Polish Jewish parents. He managed to escape from Fascist Germany with his brother in 1939, but almost all his family were murdered by the National Socialists in subsequent years. Metzger trained as a cabinet-maker and studied at various European art colleges. He has lived in London almost continuously since then. His strategy for winning back some territory for art lay initially in creating "Auto-Destructive Art": art with a self-destruction mechanism built into it, which constitutes itself in this way. He later extended the idea by adding the dimension of auto-creative art, of which *Liquid Crystals* is an example. Behind such works is the concept of a work that can create in its own right, without the artist's guiding hand. The artistic act, although set in motion by a human being, is afterwards left to chance. At the end of the 1990s, the *Liquid Crystal Environment* was reconstructed for the first time. By means of manipulated slide projectors fitted with rotating devices, the work is now projected over a large surface onto the walls of the exhibition area.

Katharina Sieverding's (*1945 Prague) work *Transformer* (1973–74) circles around the complex and multi-layered question of individual identity and its relation to existing social structures. As in many of her works, the artist's self-reflecting gaze at her own physiognomy is the point of departure for an artistic interpretation of prevailing social conditions. *Transformer* is a compelling installation of slides

with eight projectors alternating simultaneously at random intervals. It was created for the legendary exhibition of the same title at the Museum of Art Lucerne in 1974. Its theme was travesty, and Sieverding was the only female artist included in it. On a variety of slides, each differing in lighting, poses and contrasts, double exposures show the artist's face overlaid with that of her partner Klaus Mettig – thus creating a fictitious, androgynous face that looks sphinx-like and spectral. Each minimal change produces a new expression, in a continuous transformation of changing identities.

PRESS: for visual material and further information please contact presse@migrosmuseum.ch

CATALOGUE: A comprehensive collection catalogue with text contributions by Lionel Bovier, Dan Fox, Gisèle Girgis & Hedy Graber, Raphael Gygax, Tom Holert, Heike Munder, Bettina Steinbrügge, Philip Ursprung, Astrid Wege, Judith Welter, Jan Verwoert, Tirdad Zolghadr has been published by JRP|Ringier. This itemises the core inventory of the collection for the first time.

PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS: Sunday, 20th and 27th June, 11th and 25th July, 3pm and Thursday, 17th June und 29th July, 6.30pm.

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

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Please see our new homepage: www.migrosmuseum.ch

The migros museum für gegenwartskunst is an institution of the Migros Culture Percentage.
Please see our new homepage: www.migros-kulturprozent.ch



Spartacus Chetwynd

The Fall of Man, A Puppet Extravaganza

2006

Cardboard, glue, paper, plastic tubes,
sandbags, spotlight
Dimensions variable

Collection migros museum für gegenwartskunst Zürich
Foto: A. Burger, Zürich



Gustav Metzger

Liquid Crystal Environment

1965-1998

5 slide projectors, liquid crystals,
glass slides, mechanical control

Dimensions variable

Permanent loan of the artist

Photo: A. Burger, Zürich



Katharina Sieverding

Transformer

1973–1974

Dia installation

(8 slide projectors with 80 slides each)

Dimensions variable

Collection migros museum für gegenwartskunst Zürich

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Photo: A. Burger, Zürich