



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : pressemitteilung

Berlin, 27th June 2008

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to the opening of the following exhibitions:

**MARKUS DEGERMAN**

**No matter how hard you work to bring things up,  
there's someone out there working just as hard,  
to bring them down...**

11 – 27 July 2008, Studio 3

**ULRICH POLSTER  
CHRISTINE SCHERRER**

**ZAUM MATERIAL II**

11 – 27 July 2008, Studio 2

Wed – Sun, 2 – 7 pm

**JOINT OPENING:**

Thursday, 10th July 2008, from 7 pm

In his works, **MARKUS DEGERMAN** experiments with elements of architecture and design in different surroundings; his interventions reprocess public, urban or institutional space. By changing or adding to these environments, he directs attention to the social and political implications that are inscribed into the architecture of the space.

To create his installation *No matter how hard you work...* in Studio 3 Markus Degerman reconstructed, close to their original size, three different architectonic elements from different environments and set them into the exhibition space in the form of sculptural objects. As an accessible sculpture, a u-shaped metal grid ramp encircles the two pillars in the centre of the room: similar ramps may often be found as functional structures built onto public buildings at a later date - enabling access to wheelchair users, for example. By constructing a round-arch doorway of MDF, laminated chipboard and roughcast, Degerman picks out a popular design element of the past that is now primarily associated with the 'grotto' style in some pizzerias. By contrast, when separated from this conceptual context, the element of the doorway arch in Degerman's installation seems like a cool, functional design object. A third component of the exhibition are window elements made of various types of wood. While for some a symbol of stylish living in old buildings, they have for others become poor taste: as according to today's attitude, 'good' design should be kept simple.

b.w.

Markus Degerman uses such examples of style to draw the viewer's attention to the fact that architecture and design always interrelate with current political and social discourse, and so experience the same permanent discussion and change. Like many of Degerman's works, *No matter how hard you work...* also intends to sound out the potential for differing approaches to concepts like 'quality' or 'value' within the framework of specific aesthetic and political contexts.

**MARKUS DEGERMAN** was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972; he lives in Stockholm and Berlin. He studied sculpture at Konstfack University College of Arts, Craft and Design, Stockholm and at University College of Fine Arts, Umeå (MFA), and architecture at the Royal University College of Fine Arts, Stockholm. Exhibitions incl.: *Undersöka Form*, Stockholm 2008; *Home Cinema*, Mariabel López Gallery Berlin 2008; *Multiple Choices*, Oslo Kunstforening 2008; *Exteriors*, CCA, Kiev 2007. Degerman also works together with the artist Jonas Nobel, the architect Fredrik Stenberg, and the designer Andreas Nobel in the group **Uglycute**.

Markus Degerman is currently a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien as a fellowship holder of the International Artists Studio Program in Sweden (IASPIS), Stockholm.

**ULRICH POLSTER**, born in Frankenberg (GDR) in 1963, lives and works in Leipzig.

In the 1980s, Polster was an active protagonist in the underground film scene in Leipzig and Berlin; he has been developing his multimedia collages and installations consistently since 1987. **ZAUM MATERIAL II** is the further development of his multimedia installation **ZAUM MATERIAL**, which was shown in the gallery Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, in 2007. The soundtrack for the installation was created in collaboration with the artist **CHRISTINE SCHERRER**.

**ZAUM MATERIAL II** is a 10-channel video/sound installation divided into 3 x 3 visual spaces and one projection. The individual visual spaces are oriented on the classical format of the triptych, which is realised digitally in this context. The work is a choreography of found components and fragments concerning the indefinable quality of memory – e.g. the destruction of sites of collective memory or the blurring and fading of individual memories.

In formal terms, the installation is close to the art form of opera. In interplay with sound, the video sequences provide reflections of the ambivalence of human feelings and the moment when they waver, even turning into their opposite and revealing emotional abysses. The visual beauty is thus broken by the acoustic level, being dramatically underpinned by opulent string music or disturbed by noises. The movement between pictorial fragments and sound parts constantly adds new meanings in the iconography of the individual elements; the unleashed images are 'restrained', and it becomes possible to experience the sound almost physically.

The way that Polster stages emotional isolation and a search for community and participation in society despite the decline of social institutions makes **ZAUM MATERIAL II** into a highly conflicting aesthetic experience, but also highlights the beauty of memory.

The exhibition **ZAUM MATERIAL II** is being realised with generous support from the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Senate Offices – Cultural Affairs.

Best Regards  
Künstlerhaus Bethanien