



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : press release

Berlin, 30th June 2009

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to invite you to the following events:

ANDRÉ SOUSA FABEL (Fábula / Fable)

10 – 26 July 2009, Studio 2

Wed – Sun, 2 – 7 pm

Opening: Thursday, 9th July 2009, from 7 pm

In addition: **Special sale of publications** by Künstlerhaus Bethanien
(Studio 3)

Open Studios of the artists in the International Studio Programme
(1st + 2nd floors)

André Sousa brings together a tremendous range of extremely different objects in his spatial installations: minimal sculptures reminiscent of architecture, posters detached from billboards, empty beer bottles, photographs of car stickers or graffiti slogans, and small-format drawings in a childish “stick men” style. In his installations the unspectacular, everyday objects – which Sousa generally finds in the cultural environment of the place where he is currently living – are combined into a complex network of reciprocal references and systems of meaning.

Abstracted axes oriented on the existing architecture always develop in the spaces where André Sousa arranges his work; along these axes, he mirrors the external world of public space in the internal world of the exhibition space. Here, he presents and groups his found objects and materials in a way that manifests the diverse meanings which may be acquired by unassuming objects in a specific context.

Sousa has constructed two large wooden sculptures reminiscent of shop counters along the course of the diagonals in Studio 2; with these, he deliberately leaves the centre of the space empty. Numerous small-format oil paintings, which Sousa displays on one of the large wooden

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counters, resemble an anthology of abstract painting and play with the concepts of axis and centre. On the second counter, he arranges found objects from the surrounding environment in Kreuzberg and from elsewhere – in this way, a screw-top lid takes on the significance of a 'purse' because a street musician collects his coins in it, or empty beer bottles become bright, shimmering markers along the boundaries of an improvised allotment garden: unassuming objects become bearers of meaning in man's striving for a little happiness.

Like at the till in the supermarket around the corner, André Sousa has hung mirrors from the ceiling above the counter. They show the viewer of his installation that nothing is concealed behind the art object and the artist is playing with his "cards on the table". In his works, Sousa functions not so much as an "author", but as a mediator of highly diverse pictorial repertoires within an infinite network of references. He 'reflects' the world in the exhibition space and sharpens the viewer's perception "for all the contemporaneities, synchronicities and coexistences, for all the stories that the things, all together, tell." (Dominikus Müller, BE Magazin #16).

An artist's book of the same name will be appearing for the exhibition *FABEL (Fábula/Fable)*; conceived by **André Sousa** and **Tobias Hering**, this publication also includes an essay by Tobias Hering (German/English/Portuguese). It is being produced with generous support from the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon and the Portuguese Embassy Berlin/Instituto Camões.

André Sousa – born in 1980 – lives and works in Porto, Portugal. He studied painting at the Faculdade de Belas Artes, Universidade do Porto. Exhibitions incl.: *XYZLAND*, Spike Island Project Space, Bristol (2007); *Império*, Chiado 8, Lisbon (2007); *Prémio EDP Novos Artistas*, CACE Cultural, Porto (2007), *Desexpor*, Centro Cultural Franca-Moçambicano, Maputo (2007); *Busca Pólos*, Pavilhão Centro de Portugal, Coimbra (2006). André Sousa currently holds the João Hogan Fellowship from the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and is staying at Künstlerhaus Bethanien as a guest in the context of our International Studio Programme.

OPEN STUDIOS: from 7 pm to circa 10 pm, the following artists will be opening their studios to visitors: **Wafae Ahalouch el Keria** (NL), **Dafni Barbageorgopoulou** (GR), **Manolo Bautista** (E), **Patrick Bernatchez** (Québec), **Rossella Biscotti** (I), **Soo Jung Choi** (ROK), **Romeo Gongora** (CA), **Ane Graff** (N), **Sara Hughes** (NZ), **Jost Kirsten** (NA), **Tomasz Kowalski** (PL), **Michael Kutschbach** (AUS), **Christodoulos Panayiotou** (CY), **Björn Perborg** (S), **Thomas Leroy** (B), **André Sousa** (P) and **Guy Zagursky** (IL).

SPECIAL SALE OF PUBLICATIONS by Künstlerhaus Bethanien

Due to the lively interest shown at our last sales event, on the evening of the opening of *FABEL (Fábula/Fable)* we will be offering another special sale of (almost) all publications that have been produced during the Künstlerhaus's many years of publishing activity. Again, you will have the opportunity to acquire valuable catalogues and books including contributions by well-known authors at extremely reasonable, special prices.

The special sale is only on the opening night: 9th July 2009 (Studio 3, as from 7 pm).

Best regards,

Künstlerhaus Bethanien