

Yves Netzhammer

The Refuge for Drawbacks

November 5, 2010 – February 27, 2011

Following presentations of his works overseas as well as in the Helmhaus Zürich (2003) and in the Kunsthalle Winterthur (2009), *The Refuge for Drawbacks* is Yves Netzhammer's first large one-man exhibition in a Swiss museum of art. The trigger for the current exhibition is the installation *Subjectivation of Repetition: Project B* (2007). This artwork can be viewed in the Kunstmuseum Bern for the next five years after being acquired in 2009 by the GegenwART Foundation and its patron Dr.h.c. Hansjörg Wyss.

Born in 1970 in Schaffhausen and now living in Zürich, Yves Netzhammer has won all the key Swiss art awards. He has now conceived an installation for the ceremonial room in the Stettler building that fills the entire space. This task posed a plethora of sculptural challenges for the artist, such as the elongated rectangular ground plan and the very high ceiling. Furthermore, he was faced with the almost impossible problem of darkening a classical picture gallery constructed to let in a generous amount of daylight. Such a problem is especially acute for an artist like Yves Netzhammer, who is famous for video projections and installations highlighted with spotlights. He dealt with the situation by constructing a mobile piece of architecture comprised of various seemingly surreal objects. Two videos, *Adresses of Impossible Places/Adressen unmöglicher Orte* (2009, color, sound, 32 mins. 32 secs.) and *Furniture of Proportions/Die Möbel der Proportionen* (2008, color, sound, 27 mins. 36 secs.), are shown in small, separate closets on either side. Netzhammer has developed a three-dimensional cosmos amid digital motion-picture worlds – creating a Gesamtkunstwerk composed of images, objects, sound, and movement. The underlying structure of the installation is made of curtains moving as if guided by spectral hands, constantly proffering different views of the many objects in perpetually shifting new compositional arrangements. In this way the artist undermines an unequivocal and instant orientation on the part of his viewers. In the center of the room a further, third video is shown. Bearing the title *Dialogic Abrasion/Dialogischer Abrieb* (2010, color, sound, 18 mins. 34 secs.), this video was produced especially for the exhibition. Like Alice in Wonderland, visitors find themselves transposed into a world wherein fundamental laws and principles – such as the stability of architecture or specific function of objects – lose all validity. Taking as a starting point the idea that thinking about space resembles pondering on identity, Yves Netzhammer constructs his exhibition spaces in visual analogy to the self-awareness of a person who constantly transforms him- or herself like a chameleon. In this way, the artist indirectly asks not only in what relationship outward change stands to the mental images we have of ourselves, but also to what extent is identity something transitory and solely dependent on perception.

Meant to be understood symbolically, the exhibition title *The Refuge for Drawbacks* is saturated with allusions as well as deeper meaning. The installation and the videos have become allegories for human consciousness with all its unplumbed depths. Mysterious objects, wall paintings, and videos appear to be a meeting of probable or future encounters and experiences.

These medium-specific and very diverse elements can be technically comprehended as expanded notions of drawing. Drawing is to be understood as artistic comprehension of the world, where the probable and the improbable exist side by side and intersect, while not only reality but also its beholders are in a constant state of transformation. The cool colors, the alienated fragments of buildings and furniture, the ashen lighting, as well as the sinister background music (Bernd Schurer) all combine to form scenery in which hardly anything seems remotely familiar to us. Certainties disappear in Yves Netzhammer's refuge while a space is created in which purified perception of multi-layered reality is possible.

Kathleen Bühler

Catalogue (in German / English)



Yves Netzhammer. *Das Reservat der Nachteile / The Refuge for Drawbacks*, hrsg. Kunstmuseum Bern. Mit Texten von Kathleen Bühler und Matthias Frehner. Deutsch und Englisch. Gestaltung: Beat Cadruvi, Druck: Jordi AG Belp, 136 Seiten, Verlag für moderne Kunst Nürnberg. ISBN 978-3-86984-158-8. CHF 38.-

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Special Events (in German)

Öffentliche Führungen

Sonntag, 11h:

7. November, 5. Dezember, 16. Januar, 20. Februar

Dienstag, 19h:

9. November, 16. November, 14. Dezember, 4. Januar, 8. Februar

Reihe Zeitfenster: Einen Augenblick Zeit, um genauer hinzuschauen?

jeweils letzter Dienstag im Monat 18h bis 19h

25. Januar: Yves Netzhammer im Gespräch mit Kathleen Bühler, Kuratorin der Ausstellung

22. Februar: Offenes Werkgespräch

Vorankündigung

3./4. März: Tanzperformance Anna Huber/Yves Netzhammer, Dampfzentrale Bern

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