

Press release

Exhibitions

03.01.2006

## Urban Creatures

Hall 27.1. – 28.5. 2006 and Project room 27.1.-12.3.2006

Tiedotuspäivä torstaina 26.1. klo 10.00 – 14.00 välisenä aikana.

Taiteilijat ja kuraattori ovat paikalla koko päivän.

Yleisölle avoin tiedotustilaisuus perjantaina 27.1. klo 12.00.

***Urban Creatures* shows installations, sculptures, painting, videos and photography by nine artists of different nationalities living in Berlin. The artists investigate phenomena such as the mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion, the relationship between public and private space, or the medialisation of our perception of reality and concepts of the ego.**

*Urban Creatures* is concerned with the social and cultural phenomena that characterise modern big cities and the people who live in them. Isolation, uncertainty and disrupted communication are the negative aspects of a mass urban society defined by hustle and bustle; a society in which, superficially, each individual seems able to realise her- or himself. The cultural diversity of the city offers freedom for individualism, but paradoxically, it also intensifies the need for a sense of affiliation with groups or scenes that function according to their own rules and regulations. At the same time, the notion of self and of the groupings to which one belongs is greatly influenced by the media and their sign systems.

**Ulf Aminde's** work "Weiter" (Keep On) - which will be shown in the project room - functions as a prologue to the exhibition. In front of a typical Berlin house listed for demolition, punks play "Musical Chairs", a game that reflects social hierarchies perhaps better than any other: people elbow each other out of the way and only one person is left as the winner. Here, the social 'rebels' illustrate the game and simultaneously contradict it, turning it into a kind of Happening.

The exhibition in the hall represents two opposite poles: in the front area, where the dominant atmosphere is a rather melancholy one, the emphasis is on the effects of various civilising phenomena on social structures and everyday life. **Rémy Markowitsch's** installation "You are not alone" is concerned with alcohol as a drug in an ambivalent position between acceptance and prohibition, **Mathilde ter Heijne's** female figure examines loneliness and the division of the ego, while **Shahram Entekhabi** reflects on the role of the migrant in urban society. By contrast to these works, in **Sergio Belinchon's** photos - which are concerned with the disparity between ruined natural and constructed cultural spaces - man is only indirectly present, as a 'perpetrator'.

In the rear section of the exhibition, the focus is on the interrelations between 'reality' and the virtual world. **Michaela Schweiger's** installation is assembled city panorama with cartoon films whose dialogues are taken from the chat-communication of virtual 3-D cities. **Bjørn Melhus** slips for his parodying work "The Oral Thing" into various roles from a daytime talkshow: The 'guests' – led by a talkmaster who resembles a priest – reveal private and intimate information in a public context. **Maya Roos** adopts the opposite approach, using her new mural painting to develop an abstract, but personal portrait of a computer user from impersonal files.

A "walk-in" sculpture devised especially for Pori Art Museum by **Kai Schiemenz** resembles a recently-landed UFO with creatures from another world. The 'UFO' has rows of seats like a stadium and houses a projection screen and a film archive, where visitors can select and watch films on the subject of "Urban Creatures".

Exhibition is curated by Dorothee Bienert, Berlin. Exhibition is supported by: A-Pullo Oy, Goethe-Institut Helsinki, Pro Helvetia, Mondriaan Stichting, SEACEX, VäriÄssät Ltd and Würth.

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