

Helmhaus Zürich
11 February – 10 April 2011

ZWISCHENLAGER

Acquisitions by the City of Zurich between 2006 and 2010

Showing works by Georg Aerni, Cristian Andersen, Domenico Angelica, Luigi Archetti/Marc Zeier, Hannes R. Bossert, Stella Brunner, Patricia Bucher, Stefan Burger, Barbara Davatz, Gabi Deutsch, Bettina Disler, Andreas Dobler, Marc Charles Victor Elsener, Nik Emch, Lisa Enderli, Klodin Erb, El Frauenfelder, Goran Galić/Gian-Reto Gredig, Thomas Galler, Marco Ganz, Federica Gärtner, Pier Geering, André Gelpke, Tatjana Gerhard, HR Giger, Clare Goodwin, Bob Gramsma, Marianne Halter/Susanne Hofer, Patrick Hari, Edi Hebeisen, Andrea Heller, huber.huber, Christine Hunold, Daniel Robert Hunziker, San Keller, Georg Keller, Jason Klimatsas, Patrick Klötzli, köppl/zacek, Gottlieb Kurfiss, Andreas Marti, Giuseppe Micciché, Minimetel, Jos Nöpflin, Cat Tuong Nguyen, Walter Pfeiffer, Fabio Marco Pirovino, Peter Regli, David Renggli, Roland Roos, Jenny Rova, Mario Sala, Daniel Schibli, Klaudia Schifferle, Christoph Schreiber, Sebastian Sieber, Loredana Sperini, Peter Storrer, Eva Stürmlin, Ursula Sulser, Lena Maria Thüring, Peter Tillessen, Costa Vece, Petra Köhle/Nicolas Vermot Petit-Outhenin, Gabi Vogt, Susann Walder, Raffael Waldner, Elsie Wyss, Cristina Zilioli, Daniel Zimmermann

With its self-explanatory title, the exhibition “Zwischenlager” unites in an overview of limited duration all works of art the City of Zurich has acquired since 2006, incited by its Visual Arts Committee. The title itself suggests a synoptic overview which is freed of any content-related concept. Therefore, the exhibition deliberately breaks with the tradition displayed in museums in order to have such a “temporary repository” installed. With works by 72 Zurich-related artists, the exhibition wants to show the diversity of a still incredibly proliferous City of Art, as which Zurich has deservedly achieved a high reputation; much more so than to claim this exhibition to be a representative cross-section of its artists.

The Art Collection of the City of Zurich has been in existence since 1903, encompasses presently about 34'000 pieces of art and is increasing every year by one to two hundred new works. Different municipal offices contribute to this collection by purchasing new works, which are usually project-related or bound to a specific building. These works remain therefore at their respective site for many years. It is the duty of the municipal art collection to place these existing works in public and semi-public spaces of the city's administration as well as to put them at the disposition of professional curators.

A project team of the municipal visual arts committee suggests the acquisition of works of art free of restrictions such as location or positioning. The only requirement to be fulfilled by the artist is the proof of somehow being related to the City of Zurich, be it through his/her birth-place, residence or main focus of artistic work. The annual budget for the acquisition of their works amounts to CHF 150,000.-. The project team commissioned for the exhibition in this respective period of purchase (2006 – 2010) consisted – in varying formations – of the Zurich-related artists and people engaged in the arts Ian Anüll, Giovanni Carmine, Katrin Freisager, Pietro Mattioli, Brita Polzer und Andreas Vogel.

Selected by the project team “acquisition”, artworks find admission to the collection which would hardly make it into a municipal art collection, if the main focus lay solely on its positioning – this, above all, holds true for installations or products of new media technologies (i.e. mainly video) but also for concepts of performance art. In this respect, the project team conscientiously benefits from its possibilities which allow a broader representation of the cultural landscape in and around Zurich and which is able, in its acquisition policy, to give room to thoughts such as advancement and support. Nevertheless, such an exhibition also shows clearly what could not be purchased, be it because a desired object has already reached an exorbitant price, be it because thrilling contemporary artists are already dominantly present in the City’s collection through earlier acquisitions. The necessary balancing of these and further criteria finally depend on each individual acquisition, regardless of the price of the work or the artist’s reputation.

Ian Anüll and Andreas Vogel, the two curators invited by the Helmhaus Zürich, show in a production which may be called unpretentious a variety of works which were not put together as a collective compilation. In such a “temporary repository”, showing works from the storages as well as already firmly installed ones, the curators unite the City’s acquisitions purchased since autumn 2006 and transfer them into an exhibition which basically does nothing else but simply put on display what The Art Collection of the City of Zurich has got: well-known works side equally qualified with unknown ones, the most recent exhibits with older ones, resulting in its ensemble in a rather uncommon view on Zurich’s cultural diversity.

With the following artists and musicians, the series of concerts at the Helmhaus Zürich will be continued: Marc Zeier (G*Park), Soundperformance «SUB»-psycho-acoustical musique concrète and «Primitive Musik» by MINIMETAL.

In addition to the official procuring of the Helmhaus, members of the former and present project team “acquisition” offer their expertise in guided tours through the exhibition. What is new is that there will be a guided tour for children aged 5 or older in which they can experience the exhibition in a playful way while their parents have the opportunity to take part in one of the guided tours themselves.

(English Translation by J.P. Keller, Ph.D.)