

Strictly Berlin

"Our best ideas are often those that bridge between different worlds." (Marvin Minsky)

This concept is as good or as bad as any other. But it follows the maxims of certain validities established in the realm of history. Without getting tedious, let's start from the very beginning: As Aristotle said, when people wondered about things, they did so for the sake of knowledge, not utility. That is not what curators are dream of; rather, it is the belief that the future is the only goal; it is the confidence that we have been brought together for the sake of something larger than our differences: *vita brevis, ars longae*. It is the acknowledgement of a wealth that exists only because we are different. Let us play, but not because we want to win; rather, because we want to experience, enjoy, feel, learn and know.

This exhibition brings together a plethora of parallel approaches that take different expressive forms. In Berlin a formulation of similar concerns can be seen to pervade all spheres of art, be it music, the visual arts, film, theater or performance. Artists from many countries, not just from Germany, have made Berlin their home, at least for a time. Their goal is not the apparent reproduction of reality, but rather to liberate the depicted reality from its usual temporal and semantic contexts and to give it meaning in new combinations. Not the copy of reality, but concepts of reality, in which an interpretation reveals itself to be only one of many possibilities. The option of retelling is rarely applicable to these forms of expression, and identifying the recognizable usually does not get one very far either. The viewer is forced to think about himself and his own experiences; only then does the pleasure of viewing emerge, albeit without any guarantee that the enigma will be completely revealed. In one way or another, within the vortex of media conversion, whether as producers or as consumers, we are guinea pigs or beta testers of a process that is already underway. Unfortunately, in this situation contemporary art is often left holding the bag. While information technologies are generously subsidized and software engineers provide aesthetic guidelines to go along with their products, so to speak, there are no provisions for exploring the basics of medial experience, artistic creation and mediation. The artists whose work, whose contribution to the enrichment of our aesthetic and reflective experience and thought is supposed to be at stake are often degraded to producers of the environments or trends of the minute.

Today we are standing at the edge of the "worm hole", the black hole, which sucks up all the energy there is, stirring it up and rearranging it. Beyond the event horizon (the astronomical term for the boundary of the dimensions), an accepted category may turn out to be merely one among many possible ones which all have meaning and validity. Nam June Paik's prophetic aphorism from the year 1970 would be one such possibility: "The next is the direct connection of electrodes and brain cells, which will lead to electronic Zen". And this takes us to the dream, which can take on whatever personal note is desired with the aid of technology. The only question left is, who will provide the software?

This software will come from the wealth that transcends money.
That is this city's capital!

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