

Matts Leiderstam – Seen from Here

20 March – 24 May 2010

The Swedish installation artist Matts Leiderstam (*1956 in Göteborg) is interested in the portrait and landscape painting of the 18th and 19th centuries. After intensive art and cultural history research, Leiderstam takes paintings and graphic art out of their original collection and presentation contexts to position them anew within institutional exhibitions. With the aid of slide projections, computer animations, optical instruments (colour filters, magnifying glasses, binoculars, etc.) and his own reproductions of originals, the artist appropriates the material, offering the viewer alternative ways of looking at visual motifs and compositions. Attention thus focuses on incidental details and subtle codes that normally are hardly perceived owing to habitual patterns of seeing and interpreting. His scientific approach has made Leiderstam one of the few visual artists to gain a doctorate with his artistic work. He usually plans his exhibitions, which frequently take the form of archives or historical collections of paintings, for a specific location.

In the sidelight hall and foyer of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Matts Leiderstam presents older works from the period 1997 to 2008. In the context of his new installation *Neanderthal Landscape* he creates an archival situation for the gallery hall in which visitors can follow the development and results of his research on the Düsseldorf School of the 19th century. Through binoculars the visitor can examine the tiniest details of historical landscape paintings from the gallery, installed in unconventional arrangements on the large wall of the cinema. On exhibit are paintings from the collections of the museum kunst palast, Düsseldorf, the Stadtmuseum Düsseldorf, the Neanderthal Museum in Mettmann and the Malmö Museum of Art that have direct or indirect connections with the teachings of the landscape artist Johann Wilhelm Schirmer (1807-1863). As founder of the first landscape class at the Düsseldorf Academy of the Arts, Schirmer took his students to the nearby Valley of the Neander in the Niederbergisches Land to do open air studies. The influence of the Düsseldorf School can interestingly be followed back to Scandinavia.

For his solo exhibition *Matts Leidertsam – Seen From Here*, the artist followed the traces of J.W. Schirmer, researching in the local collections and archives. The show at the Kunsthalle is being presented at the same time as the *Schirmer Project 2010*, devoted to the work and times of the landscape artist, in which the museum kunst palast and five further institutions from the region are participating. The exhibition curated by Christoph Benjamin Schulz with the assistance of Jari Ortwig will subsequently be shown at the Malmö Museum of Art (June to September 2010), at the Turku Museum of Art in Finland (October 2010 to January 2011), and at the Vaasa Museum of Art in Finland (probably from February 2011).

A catalogue is available in German and English. In addition to a foreword by Ulrike Gross (director of the Stuttgart Museum of Art) and Gregor Jansen (artistic director of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), it presents an essay by Bettina Baumgärtel (director of the painting collection at the museum kunst palast, Düsseldorf) of the reception of landscape painting. There are also texts by Maria Lind (curator and art critic, Bard College, New York), Friedemann Malsch (director of the Liechtenstein Museum of Art), and Dieter Roelstraete (curator of the MuHKA, Antwerp) on various groups of the artist's works. The publication also contains an interview by Christoph Benjamin Schulz (curator) and Jari Ortwig (academic assistant, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf) with the artist about his most recent installation developed for the Kunsthalle. The numerous colour illustrations are accompanied by brief texts. Price: EUR 28.

Opening hours

Tuesday – Sunday, Holidays 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Admission

EUR 5.50 / reduced rate EUR 3.50

Disabled persons, children and young people up to 18: free

Groups of 10 or more: EUR 3.50

Free guided tours

Sundays, 12:30 p.m.

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