

Press Release

CHRISTOPH SCHLINGENSIEF: Fear at the Core of Things

BAK Utrecht

presents in cooperation with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

“The Animatograph - Iceland-Edition. (House of Parliament/House of Obsession) Destroy Thingvellir”



Opening: Saturday, 4 February 2012

Followed by the film presentation “The African Twin Towers (2009)”, ‘t Hoogt, 7.30 pm

In cooperation with T-B A21, BAK Utrecht presents one of the most representative works of the artistic oeuvre of the theatre director, filmmaker, author, and artist Christoph Schlingensiefel (1960-2010) - *The Animatograph - Iceland-Edition. (House of Parliament/House of Obsession) Destroy Thingvellir* from the collection of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary.

“Christoph Schlingensiefel - Fear at the Core of Things”, curated by Kathrin Rhomberg, is the first solo exhibition of the artist in a Dutch museum. Apart from the central complex multimedia-installation *The Animatograph - Iceland-Edition*, the exhibition also presents the project *Ausländer raus – Bitte liebt Österreich [Foreigners out – Please love Austria]*, 2000, reconstructed by research documents; and the film *Das deutsche Kettensägenmassaker [The German Chainsaw Massacre]*, 1990.

The Animatograph is a many-faceted installation that refigures the gaze as an all-seeing eye, providing a metaphor for a universal ur-narration in form of a rotating apparatus, through which the visitor must navigate. First shown in 2005 at Klink og Bank in Reykjavik, Iceland, as well as in exhibitions at Kampnagel Hamburg 2009 and at T-B A21 2010/11, the *Animatograph* can be seen as the most important corpus of Schlingensiefel’s preserved works.

The Animatograph, originally the term for a projection apparatus from early film history, combines elements of the visual and performing arts into a new format. The basic element of the *Animatograph* is a revolving stage construction – an original invention of Richard Wagner’s, serving here

as an “actionist photo plate” used both as a recorder and as a film and sound projector, equipped with building elements and props. Schlingensief’s provocative view of the paranoid, claustrophobic, and obsessive inclinations of human nature shows in man’s confrontation with higher powers such as spirits, gods, and mythical heroes and is an expression of this struggle of rituals of purification and symbolical metamorphosis. Schlingensief draws on, and combines, Nordic-European, African and Asian spiritual traditions and interweaves filmic visions of the Wagnerian interpretation of the legend of the Holy Grail in the form of a technical “Gesamtkunstwerk” with shamanistic traditions and Nordic sagas such as the *Edda*.

As part of the public program for the exhibition, Matthias Lilienthal (director of the theatre Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin) presents the lecture *Ausländer raus – Bitte liebt Österreich*, as well as Christoph Schlingensief’s *Big Brother container* on 8 March 2012, 8 pm at Het Utrechts Archief (Hamburgerstraat 28, Utrecht). In addition, the film program provides comprehensive insight into Schlingensief’s filmic oeuvre:

The African Twin Towers (2009), 4 February, 7.30 pm

100 Jahre Adolf Hitler-Die letzte Stunde im Führerbunker [100 Years Adolf Hitler–The Last Hour in the Führerbunker] (1989) and *My Wife in Five* (1985), 22 February, 7.30 pm

Terror 2000-Intensivstation Deutschland [Terror 2000–Germany out of Control] (1992), 29 February, 7.30 pm

Freakstars 3000 (2003), 14 March, 7.30 pm

Für *Elise* (1982) and *Egomania* (1986), 28 March, 7.30 pm

The film program takes place at Film Theatre ‘t Hoogt (Hoogt 4, Utrecht) and is realized in collaboration with Theatre ‘t Hoogt and Filmgalerie 451, Berlin. The program is subject to change; for more information please visit: www.hoogt.nl.

The exhibition *Christoph Schlingensief: Fear at the Core of Things* and the accompanying public program are organized within the framework of the project FORMER WEST (www.formerwest.org).

The project has been made possible by the generous support of the Goethe-Institut, Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Den Haag and last but not least Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna.

EXHIBITION Christoph Schlingensief: *The Animatograph*
Commissioned by Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Presented in the exhibition: *Fear at the Core of Things*

EXHIBITION SPACE

BAK, basis voor actuele kunst
Lange Nieuwstraat 4
3512 PH Utrecht
www.bak-utrecht.nl

OPENING

Saturday, 4 February 2012, 4 pm

EXHIBITION PERIOD

5 February 2012 – 29 April 2012

OPENING HOURS

Wednesday-Saturday noon-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm

For further information please contact:

BAK, basis voor actuele kunst
Lange Nieuwstraat 4
3512 PH Utrecht
T +31 (0)30 2316125
F +31 (0)30 2304866
info@bak-utrecht.nl
www.bak-utrecht.nl

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Himmelpfortgasse 13, 1010 Wien

T +43 1 513 98 56 - 12

F +43 1 513 98 56 22

E press@tba21.org / www.tba21.org



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Photocredit

Christoph Schlingensief

Animatograph - Iceland-Edition. (House of Parliament / House of Obsession) Destroy Thingvellir, 2005

Installation view: BAK Utrecht, 2012

Photo: Victor Nieuwenhuijs