CERITH WYN EVANS: THE WHAT IF?… SCENARIO (after LG)
July 5–November 3, 2013
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary–Augarten, Vienna, Austria

Press Conference: July 4, 2013, 12 pm
Opening: Thursday, July 4, 2013, 7 pm

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary’s fourth exhibition at Vienna’s Augarten, Cerith Wyn Evans: The What If?… Scenario (after LG) borrows its title from Liam Gillick’s eponymous 1996 exhibition and resumes the latter’s speculative character, projecting a precarious and notional sense of the future. The Welsh artist’s luminous and mesmerizing works have been collected by TBA21 over the past ten years and are shown together for the very first time, supplemented by a newly commissioned abstract neon, titled A Community Predicated on the Basic Fact Nothing Really Matters. Bordering on the magical, these radiant works offer a unique assembly of the artist’s oeuvre and unfold an array of questions and propositions that can be posed and poised together at TBA21–Augarten. ‘Speaking’ chandeliers, apparatuses emitting Morse code, installations that dramatize our perceptual habits and neon works with interleaving references disclose a web of artistic, literary and intertextual pointers waiting to be glimpsed, grasped and decoded by the beholders. They are haunted and innervated by their patrons and predecessors, from Pier Paolo Pasolini and James Merrill to John Cage, from particle physics to astrophotography.
In the tradition of TBA21’s Augarten exhibitions, which operate in essentially monographic yet specifically dialogical form and are projected as artistic encounters, the show features the second iteration of Wyn Evans’ collaboration with the German artist Florian Hecker, *No night No day* (2009), originally commissioned by TBA21 for the Teatro Goldoni on occasion of the 53rd Venice Biennale. The work, a conjunction of two independently produced parts—a film edited by Wyn Evans and a pluriphonic sound piece by Hecker—is as much argument as it is dialogue. For this exhibition, *No night No day* will be configured for the first time as an installation, adapted to the spatial settings of the Augarten.

The new work, *A Community Predicated on the Basic Fact Nothing Really Matters*, takes its departure from representations of the trajectories of high energetic particle beams colliding at CERN’s particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider, superimposed with the chemical formula for LSD as synthesized by Albert Hofmann. Experience, vision and (speculative) perception introduced into notions of science, heuristics and faith, communication and illustration, give rise to an abstract geometrical figure essential for the formation and theortetization of a universal sub-atomic particle, the Higgs boson, whose provisional “discovery” was announced exactly one year prior to the exhibition’s opening, namely on July 4, 2012.

*Cerith Wyn Evans, One evening late in the war... 2008*

The *What If?... Scenario (after LG)* creates a platform for a multitude of potentialities, contingencies and uncertainties about given conditions and structures of what we see, what we know and how we come to know. Rather than concretizing speculations into form, the scenarios offered remain suspended in “weak connections”. Wyn Evans’s artistic strategy interrupts our habitual access to the world of objects and meanings by disrupting our associative and cognitive recognition patterns, locating gaps, hinting at subliminal associations, anecdotal slippages, contingencies and errors in translation. “Contingency”, writes Robin Mackay, “implies a particular relation to thought: contingency, real contingency, is that which thinking can grasp only as event, not as proceeding from a rational necessity—as having been in some sense, “already written” and thus in principle, if not in actuality, is predictable.”

Cerith Wyn Evans, however, uses almost exclusively the “already written”, stages it as event, “queers it”, displaces it and makes it truly unpredictable and contingent. Working mostly with film, light, communication technologies such as Morse code, literature and quotations, the
artist complicates the materiality and structural aspects of coded communication and text at the threshold of installation. Exploring and exploiting the limits of vision, the reticence of the retina and the analytical processes of structural film, he plays with the viewers’ psychophysical condition, approaching their sensorium in multiple audiovisual languages that are waiting to be translated, decoded and examined within an open horizon of meaning, without ever fully losing control of the frame of interpretation.

Catalogue
The catalogue The What If?... Scenario (after LG) weaves together a diversity of threads and voices of radical contemporary thinkers in an attempt to (re)create the architecture of an argument of polyphonic ideas that inhabit Cerith Wyn Evans's complex œuvre, which in itself forages shadows and trails, hints and references and, in doing so, attempts to arguably (re) construct something of “a notional sense of the future.”

Cerith Wyn Evans: The What If?... Scenario (after LG) published by Sternberg Press and edited by Eva Wilson and Daniela Zyman/TBA21. Essays and contributions by Liam Gillick, Florian Hecker, Carsten Höller, Robin Mackay, Jeannie Moser, Molly Nesbit, Olaf Nicolai, Martin Prinzhorn, Maria Spiropulu, Eva Wilson, Cerith Wyn Evans and Daniela Zyman. English, ca. 130 pages, € 29 online | 24€ at TBA21–Augarten | 21€ for students

Cerith Wyn Evans (*1958, Wales) lives and works in London. Wyn Evans graduated from the Royal College of Art in 1984. His artistic career can be traced back to the London underground scene of the late 1970s, where he studied with experimental filmmaker Peter Gidal, worked closely with Derek Jarman and John Maybury and was a protagonist in the avant-garde film movement known as the New Romantics. Between 1978 and 1989, Wyn Evans worked on a number of video, 8mm and 16mm films, for which he collaborated amongst others with the artist Leigh Bowery, choreographer Michael Clark, and bands such as Throbbing Gristle, The Smiths and The Fall. After his last film Degrees of Blindness, produced with the British Film Institute in 1989, the artist engaged predominantly with sculptural and installation works. Wyn Evans was a professor at the Architectural Association, London.


Florian Hecker (*1975, Germany) lives and works in Vienna and Kissing, Germany. He studied Computational Linguistics and Psycholinguistics at the Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich and Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, where he received his diploma in 2003.

Hecker uses computer-generated sounds for his multi-channel installations and live-performances which create a phantasmagoria of acoustic impressions. Since the mid-1990s, he has collaborated with software engineers and scientists to develop music programs that experiment with the medium’s potential and psychology of perception. In his ‘Psycho-Acoustics’, Hecker explores the structures and mechanisms of hearing, developing a level of intensity that surmount pioneering postmodern artists’ work as by Bruce Nauman or John Cage.

**About Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary**

Founded in 2002 by Francesca von Habsburg, TBA21 is committed to supporting the production of contemporary art and the commission of ambitious, interdisciplinary and unconventional projects that go beyond borders and defy traditional disciplinary categorizations. TBA21 shares its collection and commissions with major contemporary art exhibitions as well as with numerous international museums and public institutions. Exhibitions drawn from the foundation’s collection are also regularly presented to the public at TBA21—Augarten in Vienna. The new exhibition space that TBA21 occupies since May 2012 is devoted to art, performance, sound and film, with a contemporary multidisciplinary approach. In addition, the new AU Café offers visitors a contemporary mix of traditional Austrian cuisine.

**INFORMATION**

**Exhibition**

*Cerith Wyn Evans: The What If? Scenario… (after LG)*

**Location**

TBA21–Augarten, Scherzergasse 1A, 1020 Vienna, Austria

**Press conference**

Thursday, July 4, 12 pm

**Opening**

Thursday, July 4, 7 pm

**Duration**

July 5 - November 3, 2013

**Opening hours**

Wednesday–Thursday 12–5 pm, Friday–Sunday 12–7 pm

Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays

**Free Entry**

**Publication**

*Cerith Wyn Evans: The What If? Scenario… (after LG)*

Edited by TBA21 / Eva Wilson and Daniela Zyman

ca. 130 pages, in English

Sternberg Press, Berlin

Design by John McCusker and Sara Hartman

With essays and contributions by Liam Gillick, Florian Hecker, Carsten Höller, Robin Mackay, Jeannie Moser, Molly Nesbit, Olaf Nicolai, Martin Prinzhorn, Maria Spiropulu, Eva Wilson, Cerith Wyn Evans and Daniela Zyman
Installation images by Jens Ziehe
Publication date: July 4 (exhibition opening)
Price € 29 online | 24€ at TBA21–Augarten | 21€ for students

Visitor information
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary–Augarten
T +43 1 513 98 56 – 24

Contact
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
Köstlergasse 1, 1060 Vienna
T +43 1 513 98 56 0 / F +43 1 513 98 56 22
office@tba21.org, www.tba21.org

Press
Daniele Perra
Christina Werner
Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary
w.hoch.zwei.Kulturelles Projektmanagement
T +43 676 4879297
perra@tba21.org
F +43 1 524 96 32
werner@kunstnet.at


Credits

1. Cerith Wyn Evans
Chandelier (Luce Italia), flat screen monitor, computer with morse code unit and text by R. Bundell and W. J. Robert and S.N. Tritton
Chandelier: 220 x 260 cm
Overall dimensions site specific
Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Cerith Wyn Evans
Untitled, 2008
Fluorescent tubes, wood
402 x Ø 50 cm
Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Installation view: Cerith Wyn Evans “The What If?... Scenario (after LG), TBA21-Augarten
Photo: © Jens Ziehe / TBA21, 2013

2. Cerith Wyn Evans
One evening late in the war..., 2008
Mauve neon, steel structure, wire
110 x 472 cm
Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Installation view: Cerith Wyn Evans “The What If?... Scenario (after LG)”, TBA21-Augarten
Photo: © Jens Ziehe / TBA21, 2013
Supported by

As one of the leading insurance groups in Central and Eastern Europe, the Vienna Insurance Group and its main shareholder clearly perceive its social responsibilities and have been reliable sponsoring partners for Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary and other cultural projects for many years. Numerous museums and galleries have insured their collections with Vienna Insurance Group. The main objective for cooperating with cultural institutions is to promote the international exchange in the field of arts and culture.