

Pressinformation

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary presents works from the foundation's collection at the Kunsthaus Graz.

A comparative reading of the complex literary oeuvre of the Argentinian writer **Jorge Luis Borges** lies at the point of departure for the exhibition **Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary. Collection as Aleph**. Borges's oeuvre and its conceptual as well as narrative landscape is used as a methodology to build up a sequence of potential narratives (and fictions), continued (as if) en abîme in a collective archive of visual imaginary, based upon the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection. Within this labyrinthine context, the collection takes on a mode of one of the most enigmatic Borges's symbols, Aleph – the point that includes all the times and all the spaces of the universe, an abstract and at the same time concrete sphere where they are contained. It cannot be grasped through "normal" perception because it encloses infinity but anyone who gazes into it can see everything in the universe from every angle simultaneously, without distortion, overlapping or confusion. As such, the collection is a model, a primary structure, unfolded into infinity, in a circular choreography of fiction and reality.

Furthermore, the exhibition considers Borges's favourite stylistic trope, structure en abîme as a spatial metaphor and rhizomatic device: here, the structural (and symbolic) endlessness of Kunsthaus Graz's architecture connects with an attempt to (mentally) navigate through temporal and spatial layers of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary collection.

Structure en abîme belonged to the writer's preferred visual arrangements of images: as a narrative structure, a trope and a spatial model, it poses a philosophical question about infinity or infinite periodic repetitions and by means of a baroque organization of space, it establishes an order that is in itself a visual paradox. According to a principle of endless inclusion, it modifies our belief in the truth of our perceptions and sets up a tension between what can be conceived logically and what can be concretely, materially or sensorily perceived. Like a well-drawn labyrinth, it is endless and, like a labyrinth, it sets up against the order of the world, which is impossible to discern, the conceptual order of the trope that corrects the imperfect notions that "realistic" thought has fostered. The notion of endless circularity is present in labyrinths as well as in mirrors and in dreams that include other dreams or the dreamer.

The exhibition **Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary. Collection as Aleph** is organized within the sequence of potential structures and possible fictions: from the issues concerned with the principles of identity and meanders of authorship through paradoxes of language and space-time

confluences down to conjunctions of universe and utopia, reality and fiction, mirror and encyclopaedia ... as such, the exhibition emphasizes the processual reading of the act of collecting as practice(s), in which combinations and permutations of arrangements create ever new meanings, contexts and relationships between artworks.

The exhibition consists of three narrative chapters – themselves subdivided in multiple rearrangements – staged in a sequence of approximately two months duration each, and dramatized within an architectural setting developed by Vienna-based architectural office, the nextENTERprise (Marie-Therese Harnoncourt and Ernst J. Fuchs). The architecture spatializes the exhibition gallery as a inversed horizon, reinforcing both endlessness and simultaneity by means of displacement and fractal vision and activating the powers of memory and imagination, embedded at the very core of the Aleph. Such concept aims at generating a dynamic of the entire show, introducing a flux and changeability into a narrative structure and guaranteeing its performative and theatrical potential.

The exhibition includes art works by **Haluk Akakçe, Darren Almond, Monica Bonvicini, Janet Cardiff, Los Carpinteros, Olafur Eliasson, Douglas Gordon, Carsten Höller, Paul McCarthy, Ernesto Neto, Rivane Neuenschwander, Hans Schabus, Catherine Sullivan** and others.

Founded in Vienna in 2002 by Francesca von Habsburg, **Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary** represents the fourth generation of the Thyssen family's dedication to the arts. Committed to supporting the production of contemporary art and actively engaged in commissioning and disseminating unconventional projects that defy traditional disciplinary categorizations, the foundation sustains a far-reaching regional and international orientation and explores modes or presentation that are intended to broaden the way viewers perceive and experience art.

Collaborations have also been a focus of the foundation's work, namely with the New York Public Art Fund, Art Angel and Wiener Festwochen. In 2006, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary organized an itinerant exhibition – **Küba: Journey Against the Current** – that travelled on a barge up the Danube River through seven countries.

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary and sponsorship

The partnership of Wiener Städtische Versicherung AG Vienna Insurance Group with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary was initiated in 2005. The Vienna Insurance Group is the leading Austrian insurance group in Central and Eastern Europe, supporting numerous projects in the fields of art and culture that encourage the cultural understanding over nations' boundaries.

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary. Collection as Aleph

Curators: Adam Budak (Kunsthhaus Graz)
Daniela Zyman (Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary)

Press Conference: Wednesday, March 5, 2008, 11am

Opening: Wednesday, March 5, 2008, 7pm

Afterparty: Live concert
NAKED LUNCH
DJs Florian Hecker (GER), Jim Lambie (UK)
Wednesday, March 5, 2008
Time: 10pm
Venue: Dom im Berg, Schlossbergplatz, 8010 Graz
Tickets: Euro 5
Ticket info: www.doclx.com, +43 1 4787 255

Duration: March 6 – October 26, 2008
Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 6pm
Kunsthhaus Graz, Space02

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