

GALERIE KRINZINGER · SEILERSTÄTTE 16 · 1010 WIEN

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**THOMAS ZIPP
BEYOND THE SUPEREGO**

Opening on Monday, November 14, 2011

On view from November 15, 2011 to January 28, 2012

Thomas Zipp's exhibition at the Galerie Krinzinger stands under the following motto "FLECTERE SI NEQUEO SUPEROS ACHERONTA MOVEBO", which in German could read as: "If I cannot move the gods of the upper world, I will be able to move the underworld." (Quote taken from Vergil's Aeneid). Zipp took this Latin motto from Sigmund Freud's classic work "The Interpretation of Dreams" of 1900, a study based largely on his own experience of sleep and dream research.

The abbreviation F.S.N.S.M., which appears on some of the photographic works, refers to the Latin version of the Freudian motto.

Thomas Zipp has placed a strange scribble that resembles the writing of a psychopath in the entrance area of the gallery. The text written in English is an excerpt from Freud's 1935 essay with the title "Civilization and its Discontents". :

"It is impossible to resist the impression that people commonly apply false standards, seeking power, success and wealth for themselves and admiring them in others, while underrating what is truly valuable in life. Yet in passing such a general judgment one is danger in forgetting the rich variety of the human world and its mental life. There are some individuals who are venerated by their contemporaries, but whose greatness rests of qualities and achievements that are quite foreign to the aims and ideals of many. One may be inclined to suppose that these great men are appreciated after all only by a minority, while the great majority have no interest in them. However, it is probably not as simple as that, owing to the discrepancies between people's thoughts and actions and the diversity of their desires."

With this exhibition titled "Beyond the Superego" Thomas Zipp takes up his last two projects, in Kassel in 2010 and in Innsbruck in 2011, continuing his artistic explorations in psychology and the workings of the mind. At the Friedericianum in Kassel, one of the first museums and research centers in Germany, he transforms the rooms into a virtual psychiatric ward with a number of 'functional' rooms such as the common dorms for the patients, dining halls, bathrooms and toilets as well as the corridors and the director's office. And of course there is also a library with psychiatric literature. Even special facilities such as a padded cell leave no doubt what purpose the building serves. The entire installation is a reflection on the limits between the so-called normalcy and madness, between what is socially acceptable and so-called insanity. Here the focus is mechanisms used to control individuals who oppose or subvert the norms.

In his exhibition "The World's Most Complete Congress of Ritalin Treatments", which

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took place this year in April/May at the Kunstraum Innsbruck, Thomas Zipp went one step further. While at the show in Kassel the visitors could experience themselves the "psychiatric ward" while strolling through it, in Innsbruck Zipp had created a sort of functioning lab for expanding consciousness. An installation with benches, chairs, sculptures, pictures, Hammond organs provided the setting for compelling performance accompanied by music, in which young "female priests" donning masks played an active role. In the middle the visitor found the so-called God helmet, a device that transmitted the brave impulses controlled by the computer.

In his Viennese installation Thomas Zipp embarked upon a more in-depth study by broadening the scope of his artistic strategy. In two rooms that faced each other the artist created two lab mock-ups with "God helmets" which could each be used to stimulate an individual with electromagnetic waves. The device is connected to a computer in an experiment that is based on telepathy. A lecture hall that looks like one found in a typical university setting, a veritable center of knowledge, has a certain impact on the virtual students who suck into their minds everything that is taught to them. The artist has created a clinical lab with desks, chairs, benches, books and lamps that emit a cool light.

The exhibited photographs depict the experiments that artist performed with actors at the Kunstraum Innsbruck and at Galerie Krinzinger. The performer wore suits and masks to protect their anonymity, which created a more relaxed atmosphere in an experiment that played with telepathy. It illustrated the fear people have of machines making inroads into their own consciousness.

Zipp's interest in neurological processes also reflects his recurring exploration of human psychology. The brain as the center of the senses, feelings and motivations is unmatched in its complexity among living beings. For Thomas Zipp it is important to address these issues and to show the possibilities for experience and thought. He also touches upon the dangers of their misuse.

Zdenek Felix
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