

**GALERIE KRINZINGER · SEILERSTÄTTE 16 · 1010 WIEN**

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**THOMAS ZIPP**

**A PSYCHOPHYSICAL BASIS FOR UTILITARIAN COMPARISONS  
(THE LAERDAL EXPERIMENTS)**

**OPENING: 18 November, 7 p.m.**

**Dr. Zdenek Felix will speak about the exhibition.**

**DURATION OF THE EXHIBITION: 19 November 2014 – 10 January 2015**

**Thomas Zipp will be present at the opening.**

For this exhibition at the Galerie Krinzinger, his meanwhile third one, Thomas Zipp has created a 'space within a space'. The entire installation encompasses several living spaces that recall a flat-share situation, one that opens up to the viewer like a stage set. A bedroom featuring several single beds follows a berth-like kitchen. An array of musical instruments, standing ready to be used, has been placed in the center of the rooms. The paintings hanging in the exhibition space are intended to be read as various references to the theme of the entire installation.

The backdrop the artist has set up resembles a lab. As is typical of Thomas Zipp's work, this exhibition deals with scientific writings on the psyche. The works that he studied are based mainly on theories from the last century, the age of innovation and the discovery of disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis. His spatial settings allude to artists, the sanatoriums, university halls and labs from the first half of the last century.

The performance that takes place in the rooms of the exhibition is fascinating. Actors donning white protective suits and with their faces covered move and bring back to life reanimation dolls. There is no fixed plan for the performance. A free play emerges with spontaneous interaction with the lifeless dolls. Asmund Laerdal, the inventor of these dolls, based them on the faces of death masks of the so-called "happy dead". This is a female corpse, which was pulled out of the Seine around 1900. The facial expression of the dead woman was interpreted as a smile – thus the unusual name.

The complex title of the exhibition refers to the source of this experiment, which is re-enacted here in artistic form. The theory of utilitarianism describes the connection between a sense of happiness and utility. In a more limited sense, it is the positive feeling a person has following an act that is meaningful for the collective. Psychophysics refers to the interrelationships between subjective psychological experience and objectively verifiable physical stimuli, with the latter being seen as a phenomenon preceding the former. The artist's goal is not to motivate the viewer to engage in a study of psychophysics. The tension between these theories can be experienced in the encounter with art. The music, which is part of the performance, provides stimuli that appeal directly to the senses. The interplay of the lifeless doll's bodies, the actors with their shrouded faces and the music create a mesmerizing confusion from which the viewers can hardly extricate themselves.

Since 2008 Thomas Zipp has been professor at the Universität der Künste in Berlin and in 2013 he was visiting professor at the University of Applied Art in Vienna.

Zipp's works were shown at the 55<sup>th</sup> Biennale in Venice and have been featured in one-man and group exhibitions, as, for instance, at the Museum Dhondt Daehnens in Deuerle, Belgium, the Städtische Kunsthalle Mannheim, the Belvedere Wien, the Kunsthalle Nürnberg, the Irish Museum of Modern Art Dublin, and at the Tate Modern, London.