

Mythos

Joseph Beuys, Matthew Barney,
Douglas Gordon, Cy Twombly

June 2 thru September 9, 2007



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

Exhibition concept and curator: Eckhard Schneider

Opening: Friday, June 1, 2007, 8.00 p.m.

Press conference:

Thursday, May 31, 2007, 12 noon

“Mythos” is the second exhibition of a two-part series dedicated to two fundamental sources of artistic practice. Like the first exhibition “Re-Object,” “Mythos” also brings together one major historical position and three contemporary artists. With “Re-Object,” it was Marcel Duchamp whose selected works provided the thematic basis for the artistic strategies of Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons, and Gerhard Merz, whereas with the exhibition “Mythos,” which features work statements by Matthew Barney, Douglas Gordon, and Cy Twombly, Joseph Beuys will be assuming this role.

With the idea of the myth extends the world of a rationally comprehensible reality into the supernatural and superhuman realm. Packed into this idea are wishes, premonitions, and destinies. That myths do not describe truth but present it in another way and are among the primordial experiences and manners of expression of man became a basic premise for the work of Joseph Beuys in his quest to bring together art and life. Through the interaction of his person and work, Beuys himself embodies mythology, becoming the greatest individual myth since Duchamp. Beuys has created a work in which, through the transformation of materials, forces, and energies, mythical experiences are elevated again to the status of the main source of artistic creation and of life altogether. In this sense, his work is important especially to those artists who seek to blur the sharp boundaries separating a purely rational approach and the much broader human consciousness.

The crux of the works shown at the **Kunsthhaus Bregenz** is the death theme. With **Joseph Beuys** and his work “Straßenbahnhaltestelle” (Tramstop), which the artist originally created as an installation for the main room of the German

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Kunsthhaus Bregenz

pavilion at the Venice Biennial in 1976, reconstruction of an early childhood recollection of a historical monument gives rise to a mythical image of memory, suffering, and recognition in the form of iron casts of baroque mortar bombs, a section of tram rail, and a menacing head protruding from the barrel of a canon.

Running through **Douglas Gordon's** work is an underlying mythic-tragic mood of the personal dichotomy of man in the face of his other, dark self. Gordon works with different media, like film, video, text, and sculpture, and, as in his exhibition at the Kunsthhaus Bregenz in 2002, he has consistently created large-scale installations on the subject of the fragility of human existence. His new work created especially for the exhibition "Mythos," a skull perforated by forty star-shaped holes, becomes a symbol of death at the border between immortal art and the transience of human existence.

All elements in **Matthew Barney's** work, such as drawings, films, and objects, interact together like great sculptural systems. Their coded, narrative fundamental structure is based on the interweaving of different mythical sources of various cultures. "Mythos" presents Matthew Barney's large-scale sculpture "Cetacea," 2005, for the first time in Europe. It is a cast of Barney's famous "Field Emblem" in a state of destruction. The setting was the Japanese whaling ship "Nisshin Maru," the scene of his new film "Drawing Restraint 9." It is about the coming together and mixing of foreigners (played by Matthew Barney and his wife Björk) as Occidental guests in the Far Eastern culture of Japan and culminates in the mythic transformation of human beings into whale-like creatures.

With a sweeping gesture, **Cy Twombly** has brought mythology, literature, and history together in his work in the poetic flow of the scriptural, painted act. In his art, the idea of passage, the image of the ship and of the journey as a transforming transition between life and death all play a central role. This context also surfaces in the famous cycle of paintings "Lepanto," which Twombly created as his contribution for the Venice Biennial. Today, this cycle is part of the Udo and Anette Brandhorst collection in Munich. The cycle's twelve panels tell the story of one of history's most decisive and bloody naval battles, in which a coalition of Spanish, Venetian, and papal fleets defeated the Ottoman forces. Twombly takes the historical-narrative and ancient-mythic theme out of the traditional historical period painting setting, placing it in a picturesque panorama infused with the abstractly expressive tension between beauty and death.

KUB-10 Years Anniversary

7.7.2007

The Kunsthhaus Bregenz is celebrating its 10 years jubilee with an open day.

KUB-Projects

Paul Renner

Theatrum Anatomicum

07.07. – 13.07.2007

Under the title “Theatrum Anatomicum,” the Austrian artist Paul Renner will be presenting his four most important “Hell Fire” productions together on the KUB Plaza (The Travellers Club, London 2001; Fondazione Morra, Naples 2002; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna 2004; Galerie Leo Koenig Inc., New York 2006). A roughly twelve-meter-high structure will be fashioned after the Teatro Anatomico in Padua. It is a small oval opera house with tiered galleries that offers space for the audience and a kitchen at the center. The structure is furnished with objects from the four settings and seats 120 to 150 persons. The kitchen doubles as the stage, providing ample space for diverse shows, performances, concerts, and readings.

KUB-Facade

Karl-Heinz Ströhle

1x1x1

20./21.07.2007

Karl-Heinz Ströhle, who was born in Bregenz in 1957, has developed a multimedia video installation entitled “1x1x1” for the exterior façade of the Kunsthhaus Bregenz. The video, which will be projected onto the glass façade of the KUB, shows a dancer moving in a cube made of spring steel ribs. The montage of the individual images produces an overall picture that fills the entire façade. The electronic sound will be performed live by a.d.a.p.t.e.r. (Bernhard Zösmayr, Philipp Lammer, Clemens Torggler). Part of the sound patterns consist of the digitalized noises of the spring steel ribs. The music performance is an essential part of the work and will accompany the projections for the duration of the exhibition.

Publication and Edition accompanying the exhibitions “Re-Object” and “Mythos”

The Kunsthaus Bregenz regularly publishes high-quality exhibition catalogues and artist’s books.

KUB-Publication Re-Object - Mythos

German/English

Edited by Eckhard Schneider

Texts on “Re-Object” by Herbert Molderings, Gudrun Inboden, a.o. Texts on “Mythos” by Uwe Schneede, David Joselit, a.o.

Designed by Hans Werner Holzwarth

Publication dates: “Re-Object” April 2007; “Mythos” July 2007

Price for each volume: 48.00 euros, both volumes together:
90.00 euros

Each catalogue contains two general essays introducing the subject. Essays about the artists and large-format installation views document the exhibition, the artists’ common ground, and their work statements.

Editions Re-Object - Mythos

Close collaboration with the artists at the work and production stages makes it possible to produce special editions designed exclusively for the Kunsthaus Bregenz. A portfolio with editions by the artists participating in the exhibitions “Re-Object” and “Mythos” is currently being compiled. Tentative publication date: June 2007.

Orders may be placed at the KUB online shop www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at



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Daily 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.