

GALERIE NÄCHST ST. STEPHAN ROSEMARIE SCHWARZWÄLDER

SONIA LEIMER
TOBIAS PILS
HANS SCHABUS

15 NOV 2024 – 25 JAN 2025

Gezeiten [Ebb & Flow]

Opening: Friday, November 15, 2024, 6 p.m.
Vienna 1, Domgasse 6

How do we cope with existential uncertainties? With the tensions they create and the limbo they leave us in? These are some of the questions that spring to mind at the *Gezeiten* [Ebb & Flow] exhibition, which brings together for the first time works by Sonia Leimer, Tobias Pils and Hans Schabus at the gallery at Domgasse 6.

Sonia Leimer's artistic work explores the spaces we inhabit, their condition and their future; here she is showing two sculptures from the *Space Junks* group of works. Each of the stainless steel objects placed on the floor is composed of two hemispheres connected by a cylindrical ring. The symmetry of the sculptures with their grooved and meticulously handcrafted surfaces contrasts with the tarnishing of the welds and the holes that tear open the outer shell to reveal the dark interior of these spherical shapes. As the title of the work intimates, these technolook structures are reminiscent of space debris that has impacted the surface of the planet instead of burning up on re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. The dented objects bear testimony to a change of direction, to an unplanned journey charted by the complex relationship between humankind, technology and nature.

Tobias Pils's enigmatic paintings address the universal themes of transience and temporality. He combines figurative and surreal motifs to create an idiosyncratic and ambiguous imagery that allows all manner of interpretations. At its centre are figures whose relationships to one another and their surroundings remain unclear. They are positioned vertically and horizontally within the image space or captured against backgrounds of different colors that also serve to set them apart. The titles of the paintings – *von innen nach außen* [From the Inside Out] and *von außen nach innen* [From the Outside In] – refer to changes of perspective and displacements that maintain their protagonists in a state of ambivalence. But Pils also uses his color palette to suggest a certain latitude for his figures. Indeed, that palette is usually scaled back to mere black, white and shades of grey, but here it is enhanced to include a vivid blue and a lush green. These splashes of color are used to highlight the hands and feet of his figures, parts of the body that play a pivotal role in shaping actions and directions.

Sculptor's Studio is the name of a constellation in the Southern Sky. And, indeed, Hans Schabus's large-scale mobile *Sculptor's Studio (my house is on fire)* does float within the gallery space like a constellation, but one composed of a tyre, a door and a section of staircase. Indeed, space with its history and infrastructure as well as its relationship to the viewer is the focal point of Schabus's sculptural and installation work. With *Sculptor's Studio (my house is on fire)*, he combines the private space of creative artistic output with the space in which it is assembled and showcased to the public. The additional title *my house is on fire* is disconcerting, suggesting an existential threat that literally hangs in the air while the absence of context leaves us in the dark. The charred-looking elements of the mobile may provide a clue. Their appearance is due to a creosote treatment, evoking associations with the end of the fossil age and a concomitant transformation as yet unspecified.

Ebb and flow, that recurring movement of the ocean's waves, is predicated on regularities. Yet its dynamics and therefore its influence on nature and our habitats elude our control and our certainties. That is true, too, of the works of Sonia Leimer, Tobias Pils and Hans Schabus, which can also be read as an expression of a certain loss of control, a state of limbo seeking orientation. Understanding the uncertain as certainty manifests itself in these works, a slightly illusory yet encouraging prospect nonetheless.

SONIA LEIMER was born 1977 in Meran, Italy. She lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Leimer studied architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

She was invited to participate in the 2023 Industry Art Biennale in Croatia, in the 2021 Venice Architecture Biennale and the Vienna Biennale for Change at the MAK Museum for Applied Arts in Vienna. She took part in the Vladivostok Biennale for Visual Arts in 2017, the Moscow Biennale in 2013 and 2015, and the Manifesta 7 in Rovereto in 2008. Leimer designed the display for the exhibition *Visionary Spaces. Walter Pichler meets Frederick Kiesler* (2024) at the Belvedere 21, Vienna.

Selected solo exhibitions: The Cosmic House, Jencks Foundation, London, UK (2024); NKW – Neuer Kunstverein, Vienna, AT (2022); MAN_Museo d'Arte Provincia di Nuoro, Sardinia, IT (2021); KOW, Berlin, DE (2021), Museion, Bolzano, IT (2020); Soravia – The Brick, Vienna, AT (2020); Arbeiterkammer Wien, Vienna, AT (2019); ISCP, International Studio & Curatorial Program, New York, NY, US (2019); Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, AT (2017); Commonwealth & Council, Los Angeles, CA, US (2017); Austrian Cultural Forum, Istanbul, TR (2017); LAMOA Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, US (2014); Artothek, Cologne, DE (2012); MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles, CA, US (2012); Kunstverein Basis, Frankfurt/Main, DE (2011); Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, AT (2011).

TOBIAS PILS was born 1971 in Linz, Austria. He lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Tobias Pils was an artist in residence of the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX, US in 2016 and received a ISCP Scholarship in New York, NY, US in 2014.

Selected solo exhibitions: Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, CH (2024); Bibliotheca Reiner Speck, Oswald-Mathias Ungers Haus am Kämpchensweg, Cologne, DE (2023); Galerie Eva Presenhuber (featuring Gerwald Rockenschaub), Vienna, AT (2022); Capitain Petzel, Berlin, DE (2021); David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US (2019); Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, DE (permanente Installation) (2020); École Normale Supérieure Paris-Saclay, Gif-sur-Yvette, FR (permanente Installation) (2020); Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne, DE (2019); Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, DE (mit Bernhard Fuchs, Justin Matherly) (2018); Kunsthalle Krems, Krems, AT (2017); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York, NY, US (2017); Josef Albers Museum, Bottrop, DE (2017); Le Consortium, Dijon, FR (mit Michael Williams) (2017); Chinati Foundation, John Chamberlain Building, Marfa, TX, US (2016); Secession, Vienna, AT (2013); Gironcoli Museum, St. Johann bei Herberstein, AT (2009).

HANS SCHABUS was born 1970 in Watschig, Austria. He lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Schabus studied sculpture with Bruno Gironcoli at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Since 2012, he has been teaching at the University of Applied Arts, where he heads the Department of Sculpture and Space.

He represented Austria at the 51st Venice Biennale. His works were exhibited at the Biennale de Lyon 2024, the Colombo Art Biennale 2012, the Berlin Biennale 2010, the Biennale of Sydney 2008, the Liverpool Biennale 2006, and the Manifesta 4 in Frankfurt am Main 2002.

Selected solo exhibitions: Kollegienkirche Salzburg, Salzburg, AT (2024); Galleria Zero..., Milan, IT (2024); Kunstforum Montafon, Schruns, AT (2022); Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, AT (2021); Kunstraum München, Munich, DE (2021); Cafe Hansi, mumok – Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, AT (2017); Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Darmstadt, DE (2017); Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, AT (2016); Kunstraum Weikendorf, Weikendorf, AT (2015); MAK Center – Mackey Garage Top, Los Angeles, CA, US (2012); 21er Haus – Museum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Vienna, AT (2012); Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, GB (2011); Culturgest, Lissabon, PT (2011); IAC – Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne, Rhône-Alpes, FR (2011); Museo d'Arte Contemporanea della Sicilia, Castello Bastione, Capo D'Orlando, IT (2010).