

Michael Sailstorfer: *Antiherbst* [*Anti-Autumn*]

ST. AGNES

Alexandrinenstr. 118-121, 10969 Berlin

Running Time: 3 May - 7 May 2014

Opening Times: daily, 11am - 6 pm

Opening: 2 May 2014, 6 - 9 pm

Johann König
Dessauer Straße 6-7
10963 Berlin

Fon +49/30/26 10 30 80

Fax +49/30/26 10 30 811

info@johannkoenig.de

Johann König, Berlin is delighted to present over the forthcoming Gallery Weekend Michael Sailstorfer's *Antiherbst* [*Anti-Autumn*] – the fourth exhibition to be staged in the former ST. AGNES Church. The gallery-goer is here confronted with an extraordinary scenic spectacle: from a screen ostensibly hovering in the dark room-space a lone-standing, fully-grown tree shines forth resplendently. It is magnificent to behold, well-formed in its silhouette, the epitome of thriving Nature, changing its shape only imperceptibly, evidently under the influence of varying weather conditions. The rustling of its foliage fills the air.

For the primary space in ST. AGNES with its monumental simplicity Sailstorfer has chosen a large-format projection surface hung immediately in front of the former altar-area in the central nave, so that the beholder can walk up to the tree, his steps seeking as it were a dialogic rhythm matching the tree's movements. The origin of the work is Sailstorfer's public *Antiherbst* project, realized in the *Emscherkunst.2013* exhibition on the Rhine dyke near Duisburg. In a laborious and painstaking process, Sailstorfer and his team set to work on the tree over several weeks: as, during the autumn, the tree shed the first of its leaves, these were conserved, dyed green and re-attached to the tree with thin cable ties. This long-term performance was documented on film and post-edited so as to eliminate those sequences in which the ongoing work-processes were visible. In the final result, one sees – in Sailstorfer's words – "only the image of the tree, whose leaves change, move and seem ever more unreal and artificial, but, in contrast to the trees in the background, do not fall to the ground".

With *Antiherbst* Sailstorfer has achieved a further Sisyphan labour, which, at first glance, appears completely meaningless as a process, as a performance so to say, but then becomes all the more meaningful in its filmic, aesthetic documentation. Sailstorfer, it seems, is forever in search of the subtle in the banal, of the non-humdrum in the humdrum.

In the former Lady Chapel, Sailstorfer is exhibiting, for the first time in Germany, one of his latest works. *Reibungsverlust am Arbeitsplatz* [*Friction Losses at the Work-Place*] (2014) is a water-driven mill-wheel installed on a trailer, the mill-wheel's rotations setting a car-tyre turning. Continually driven forwards and yet compelled to stay in the same spot, the tyre is forever wearing down its rubber coating on the floor. The huge input of energy, visibly bodied forth in the space-dominating mill-wheel, has no creative effect but, as it were, visibly destroys and loses itself in nothingness. It is, one supposes, the tyre's fate that the mill which drives it on is the mill against which it fights in vain – an image that is not without its comedy but that nevertheless gives food for thought, applicable as it is to many situations in our own lives.

Michael Sailstorfer (b. 1979 Velden/Vils) lives and works in Berlin. He studied under Olaf Metzger at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich and at Goldsmiths College in London. His works are currently on display in his solo exhibition *Every piece is a new problem* in the Contemporary Art

Center, Cincinnati, Ohio and can be seen, from October 2014 on, in the Rochester Art Center, Minnesota. In Germany, Sailstorfer is this year opening solo presentations in the Haus am Waldsee, Berlin and in the Museum Kurhaus Kleve. Sailstorfer's works form part of important museum collections such as the Städtische Galerie in the Lenbachhaus, Munich, the Centre Pompidou Foundation, Paris, the Städelmuseum, Frankfurt-on-Main or the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.