

SUPPORTICO LOPEZ

JAN PETER HAMMER

The Fable of the Bees

opening friday the 13th of January 2012

from 18.30 until 21.30. the show will be on until the 11th of February

Supportico Lopez in occasion of this exhibition will be open from wednesday to saturday h 14,00 to 18,00

Supportico Lopez is pleased to announce the second solo exhibition of German artist Jan Peter Hammer.

The Fable of the Bees by Jan Peter Hammer is an exhibition based on the 1705 poem by Bernard Mandeville "The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Public Benefits." In his poem and ancillary prose Mandeville brings into being the counter-intuitive argument that better people make the world a worse place, since so-called vices such as egoism or greed stimulate social prosperity, whilst altruism or honesty result in collective atavism and disinvestment. In spite of the harsh reception of Mandeville's work, which gave great offense to contemporary readers, his core idea that private vices lead to an increase in public benefits was later recovered and popularized by the British Utilitarian School. Adam Smith's "invisible hand" parable is an off-shoot of Mandeville's fable minus the cynical crudeness, with an added veneer of scientific respectability that makes the argument much more palatable and less contentious. Fables and parables are moral tales whose aim is to instruct, each of which contains a lesson to be learnt by its readers. Though 18th century's classical political economy embraced a moralizing function, economics has since gone to great lengths to hide its ethical foundations.

In Jan Peter Hammer's eponymous video "The Fable of the Bees"—shot in the guise of a YouTube home-made production—an eager young professional unwittingly channels Mandeville's reasoning, providing a good illustration of the adage that "practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist." (J.M. Keynes)

The other work in the exhibition, "That Which Is Seen and That Which Is Unseen", is a performance in which a hired security guard sits idly by a lump of cash, during the gallery's opening hours for the whole length of the show. The guard's task is to survey the money, yet the sum he is guarding is his own wage, which he will collect at the end of the assignment. That is, whilst the guard's function is to watch over the money, the money's function is to pay the guard for watching it. In a Dadaist abstraction of the business cycle capital and labour cancel each other out. "That Which Is Seen and That Which Is Unseen" is a title borrowed from Frédéric Bastiat's 1850 text "Ce qu'on voit et ce qu'on ne voit pas", in which Bastiat states that, "In the economic sphere an act, a habit, an institution, a law produces not only one effect, but a series of effects. Of these effects, the first alone is immediate; it appears simultaneously with its cause; it is seen. The other effects emerge only subsequently; they are not seen; we are fortunate if we foresee them."

In our times of great economic uncertainty what remains largely unseen is that whilst money has no price, securing its value comes with a high social cost.

Jan Peter Hammer is an artist currently living and working in Berlin. His work has been exhibited regularly both in Germany and abroad.

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JAN PETER HAMMER

1970, Stuttgart (Germany)
Lives and works in Berlin

Education

1994–98 Sculpture, KHB, Berlin
2000–03 Sculpture, MFA-Program, Hunter College, MFA, NYC
2002–03 Film Theory, Graduate Program, New School, NYC

Solo shows

2010 The anarchist banker, Supportico Lopez, Berlin
2007 The end of love, COMA, Berlin
2006 Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin
2004 Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York
2001 The frozen sun, Gallery Clinica Aesthetica, NYC

Selected Group shows and Film Festival

2011 Based in Berlin, Berlin
Dani Gal and Jan Peter Hammer, Kunstverein Arnsberg
Indie Lisboa 8th International Independent Film Festival, Lisbon
Without Reality there is no Utopia, CAAC – Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Seville
IFFR 40th International Film Festival Rotterdam
2010 The Art of Camo / The Art of Comouflage, Cardi Black Box, Milan
Image-Movement, Centre d'Art Contemporain Geneva
Schermo dell'Arte Film Festival, Florence
Dok Leipzig, 53rd International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film
25FPS, International Festival for Experimental Film and Video, Zagreb
LISTE Art Basel 2010
Kulturen des Wirtschaftens / Cultures of Economics, Kulturstiftung des Bundes in collaboration with University Munich.
Novel, Limoncello, London
Novel, International Project Space, Birmingham
2009 The Moving Image, Radialsystem, Berlin
2006 Anonym, in the Future..., Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt
Music and Art, COMA Centre for Opinions in Music and Art, Berlin
2004 Tuesday is gone, Karvasla, Tbilisi
2003 All that was not then, Year Project, New York
2001 New White Biennial 2001, UCLA, Los Angeles
Market Place, Oni Gallery, Boston

Selected Bibliography

2010 Interview with Thomas Locher, Mousse Magazine
2010 The Anarchist Banker, Frieze magazine, Jörg Heiser
2010 The Anarchist Banker, Art Press, Thibaut de Ruyter
2010 Gieb ihm die Pistole!, Taz, April Lamm and Franz von Stauffenberg
2009 Light is a rhythm, Alena Williams
2007 The end of love, Ariane Beyn
2001 Notes to the frozen sun, Cletus Dalgbish-Schommer
1999 Suspensionen, Sebastian Egenhofer