



ANDREA ZITTEL, MONIKA SOSNOWSKA. 1:1

26 April to 21 September 2008

MEDIA INFORMATION

The subjects of this year's exhibition are Monika Sosnowska (b. 1972, Poland) and Andrea Zittel (b. 1965, California). The exhibition includes a group of nine sculptures by Monika Sosnowska, some monumental in size, which occupy the open space on Schaulager's lower floor. Distributed on the upper floor is the diverse universe Andrea Zittel has been creating since 1992: a dense sequence of about a hundred furniture-like sculptures, spatial forms and objects as well as 120 gouaches, drawings and paintings on wood.

These two artistic positions are meeting at Schaulager for the first time. One position, Zittel's, adopts the form of a expansive narrative presentation of her strangely impressive, touchingly direct project. The other, Sosnowska's, takes the form of isolated sculptures offering momentary views into a flow of subversive thoughts and abolishing the logic of the large exhibition space.

All of the objects Andrea Zittel has included in her multipart installation at Schaulager recall contexts connected with forms of and spaces for housing. The constructions and objects are minimalist, beautiful and perfect in form. They usually look new and exemplary, but at the same time seem to be clearly related to specific individuals. Her colourful, picture-book-like gouaches and other paintings are sketches and illustrations which seem to document the emergence of Zittel's life plan in a fascinating mixture of the anonymous report and the diary. Never before have so many of them been shown together.

The sculptures which Monika Sosnowska has put together for a spacious installation at Schaulager are in part entirely new or set up in completely different ways. In terms of form and materials, they recall parts of unfinished – or dilapidated or never completed – buildings, and look as if a construction site was the starting point of their creation. In moving from the 'construction site' to the exhibition space, however, they have become autonomous and transformed into subjects that in some cases adopt fantastic forms.

Both artists are reacting to their specific surroundings, to architecture, living space, lifestyles and tradition: in New York and Los Angeles in Zittel's case, and in twenty-first-

century Warsaw in Sosnowska's. Andrea Zittel does so by designing and creating spaces, furniture and objects which are apparently meant to be used. Monika Sosnowska does so with fictional space forms, with mental explorations of space which have taken concrete form. Both are constructed on a one-to-one scale.

The exhibition's title, *1:1*, refers first literally to the actual scale of many works by Monika Sosnowska and Andrea Zittel, which is unusual and striking. However, it also emphasises the fact that the artistic creativity of Zittel and Sosnowska takes place in a space between art and reality, that their works in both cases, though under very different conditions, are often about testing the relationship of art and reality. It is thus no wonder, though still worth noting, that both artists show an interest in the modernist era, with its social utopias and concrete attempts to bring together life and art.

Eliminating the boundaries between different levels of reality is a distinguishing feature of the work of both Andrea Zittel and Monika Sosnowska. **Andrea Zittel** was born in Escondido, California. After completing secondary school, she attended San Diego State University, receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Painting and Sculpture in 1988. Zittel then moved to the East Coast to attend the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, where she received her Master of Arts in Sculpture in 1990. Her next stop – the first one on her own – was New York, where she settled in Brooklyn.

In New York in 1991, Zittel founded her A-Z art enterprise, a project which has provided the framework within which she has conducted her research and designed, produced and tested her works ever since. With A-Z, Zittel creates an experimental space for a parallel reality in which the difference between art and reality has become obsolete. During this period, too, her exhibition activity began, and it has since become part of her works. In the second half of the 1990s, Zittel left New York repeatedly for extended periods, during which she stayed in Europe and explored non-urban America on long trips. Her travels during these 'years of wandering' took her repeatedly to the West. Finally, in 2000, Zittel began a new chapter in and around Los Angeles. She purchased an abandoned home – a former so-called homestead cabin – and the associated property in Joshua Tree, in the desert east of Los Angeles. Zittel called it A-Z West and has made it her new site for experiment. Since then she has been living there and in Los Angeles

Born in Ryki, in south-east Poland, in 1972, Monika Sosnowska belongs to a different generation. From 1993 to 1998, she attended the Academy of Art in Poznan. Then in 1999–

2000, she spent two years in Amsterdam at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten. Sosnowska had her first exhibition in Amsterdam. Exhibitions are an important medium for her, as they often create the conditions necessary for her to realise a work in the first place. After her stay at the academy in Amsterdam, she returned to Poland. The Polish capital, Warsaw, became her new place of residence; an active, lively, widely appreciated art scene has evolved there since the end of the 1980s. As for many fellow artists, her own heritage and the upheaval of recent years are crucial influences on Sosnowska's creative work. The best venues for that are Poland's cities, above all Warsaw. The rapid change to which they have been subjected and its consequences, the numerous signs of breakdown and the traces of past utopias are the foundation from which Sosnowska develops her walk-in 'space images'. Sosnowska has attracted attention above all for the installation she created last summer for the Polish Pavilion of the Venice Biennale.

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