

BERNARD SCHULTZE – COUNTER-REALITIES

Press conference: Thursday, October 18, 2012, 11.00 am

Duration: October 19, 2012 – January 20, 2013

Opens: Thursday, October 18, 2012, 7 pm

MKM Museum Küppersmühle
für Moderne Kunst
Philosophenweg 55
47051 Duisburg (Innenhafen)
www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de
Telefon 02 03/30 19 48-10/-11
Telefax 02 03/30 19 48-21
office@museum-kueppersmuehle.de

Curated by Eva Müller-Remmert and staged by MKM in honour of an outstanding artist, this show marks the first major retrospective dedicated to Bernard Schultze in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia for 18 years. One of the foremost representatives of the German post-war avantgarde, Bernard Schultze (1915-2005) ranks as among the fathers of the Art Informel movement. On show are around 70 paintings, drawings, "Migof" creatures and spatial installations from his over 60 years of intensive artistic creativity. Seminal works loaned from numerous museums and private collections complement the selection of important pieces by Bernard Schultze from the Ströher Collection, which is housed in the MKM.

This retrospective unveils not only the full breadth of a multidisciplinary oeuvre, but also showcases the rich diversity of the intellectual world inhabited by Bernard Schultze. Following the figurative paintings of the 1940s, Schultze embraced the emergent international styles of action painting and tachism with his "Informel" works. From these beginnings, the artist went on to forge a highly individual, lyrical style. His intensely coloured and meticulously fashioned works address themes such as growth and decay, and symbolise cosmic systems and natural processes. Distributed across seven rooms, the works invite visitors to embark on a visual journey through the painterly adventures and "counter-realities" of Bernard Schultze.

Starting off with three of the few remaining surreal figurative paintings, including the portrait "Sonja" (1945/46), the exhibition guides us directly into Bernard Schultze's "informal" pictorial world of the 1950s. The Art Informel movement propagated the liberation of colour from the constraints of form, and of conceptual, compositional production. The founding of the artists' group Quadriga in 1952 by K.O. Götz, Bernard Schultze, Otto Greis and Heinz Kreutz, considerably enhanced the international profile of the artists. Already by the end of this decade it had become apparent that two-dimensional surfaces were no longer sufficient for Schultze. His paintings were thrusting out into space. Reliefs such as "Oksis" (1958) and "lynth" (1960) attest vividly to this, and prefigure the birth of Bernard Schultze's famous

Press / Public Relations:

Kerstin Weinhold / Nina Westphal

Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. +++ Viktoriastr. 26 +++ 53173 Bonn +++ Tel 0228-934 55 -18/-15 +++ Fax -20
+++ k.weinhold@stiftungkunst.de / n.westphal@stiftungkunst.de +++ www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de/presse

"Migofs" in the early 1960s. With these fantastical, often bizarre, hybrid creatures, poised at the interface of art, nature and human beings, the artist transports his paintings into the third dimension.

The "Migofs" creatures are encountered in the various exhibition rooms, each of which is dedicated to a specific theme. For example, the large-scale, colour-rich canvases from the 1980s reveal the cosmic expanses of Bernard Schultze's "counter-realities", eg. "E.T.A. Hoffmann's Eskapaden" (1988), which, as Schultze's most monumental painting, forms a special highlight of the show. Together with a series of striking Grisaille works, Schultze's rare bronze "Migofs" conjure a quite different effect – one of tranquil introspection, self-immersion and inner contemplation. Among the other key works featured in this retrospective are two environments: the major "Migof-Gruppe, Verdorrt und von den Wäldern verschlungen" (1970-76) is a searing critique of the consumer society, which depicts a deeply haunting scene of devastation and decay. Yet, as evinced in the large-scale spatial installation "Migof-Picknick" (1969), this decay is always attended by fresh growth.

The retrospective is rounded off with a selection of Schultze's so-called tabuskris (tabulae scriptae), tongue collages and a number of large-format paper works which vividly demonstrate the artist's extraordinary draughtsmanship. Following works drawn from the final two decades of his creative output, the exhibition tour concludes with a documentary photo wall, featuring some 25 biographical photos from the life and work of the artist.

Highly creative as a painter, graphic artist, sculptor, stage-set designer, and poet, Bernard Schultze bequeathed a wonderfully diverse and extensive artistic legacy. He is also represented in the museum's permanent exhibition section as an artist, who both established and has continued to occupy his autonomous positions within the history of art and amongst his contemporaries until the present day.

Organisation

"BERNARD SCHULTZE – COUNTER-REALITIES" is an exhibition staged by the Foundation for Art and Culture, Bonn. Curator is Eva Müller-Remmert.

Catalogue: Wienand Verlag, 2012, 150 pages, € 29.80 (Museum edition), ISBN 978-3-86832-125-8

Illustrated material: <http://www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de/presse/pressebilder/bernard-schultze-gegenwelten/>

Press / Public Relations:

Kerstin Weinhold / Nina Westphal

Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. +++ Viktoriastr. 26 +++ 53173 Bonn +++ Tel 0228-934 55 -18/-15 +++ Fax -20
+++ k.weinhold@stiftungkunst.de / n.westphal@stiftungkunst.de +++ www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de/presse