

Styrian Cultural Initiative and Gallery Sigm. Freud present

Interspaces. Art Brut from the Hannah Rieger Collection

The Sigmund Freud Gallery is showing Art Brut for the first time. Prof. Michael Lehofer, psychiatrist: "The aim of our exhibition is that interested people in Graz come into contact with Art Brut for the first time." As art by self-taught artists from the periphery of society, Art Brut is increasingly attracting worldwide attention, for example at the Venice Biennale.

In the space between Freud's unconscious, psychiatry and contemporary art, Art Brut can only be understood in its extreme individualization. Each artist follows an "individual mythology" (Harald Szeemann), i.e. creative impulses from within, a mission, often an obsession or a vision. The French artist and wine merchant Jean Dubuffet (1901 - 1985) found the term Art Brut for this genre beyond the art mainstream - quite in analogy to champagne.

The focus is on the quality of the art, on the individual language of form and not on the social status or the psychological condition of the artists. Sometimes the biographical background is useful to understand the works (biographies see www.livinginartbrut.com). Essentially, this is art by people with psychiatric experiences or art by social outsiders.

The exhibition is curated by Nicole Pruckermayr, executive director of the Styrian Cultural Initiative since February. It features 47 works by 24 artists from 9 countries: "It is important to us to respect the artists with their very individual lifestyles and to make their great works visible to a broader audience as low-threshold as possible."

Art from Gugging - the Austrian Art Brut model - is the special focus of the exhibition, with 21 works of 11 male artists and Laila Bachtiar.

Without Sigmund Freud and his insights into the unconscious, the world-famous Austrian Art Brut model as the men's department of a psychiatric clinic in Maria Gugging near Vienna would probably not have been possible in this form. A culture in which the unconscious counts and in which art from the periphery can also be associated with the unconscious pays special attention to integration and participation. The artists' residential community (Haus der Künstler) in Gugging, initiated by Leo Navratil in 1981, was spun off from the psychiatric hospital in 2007 and transformed into a modern institution with art production (Haus der Künstler and studio), museum and gallery.

With Oswald Tschirtner (1920 - 2007), one of Gugging's stars, and his power of reduction, the Art Brut passion of collector Hannah Rieger began in 1980. The three drawings on display show typical cephalopods, mostly humans, and an animal. The artist was a master of minimalist imagery. Oswald Tschirtner's story is also an entrepreneurial success story. An outsider who would have liked to become a priest, and a resident of a psychiatric hospital and later a social welfare institution, he managed to become part of the economic and social system as a freelance artist. To work and earn money are essential criteria for inclusion.

Laila Bachtiar (*1971) has been working regularly at atelier gugging since 2003 and is represented with six works. Drawing is her vocation. Her compositions, which are based on orders in the form of net-like structures of lines and surfaces, create a dynamic density of her animals, self-portraits or people of her surroundings. Thus, "Ramona" features contemporary artist Ramona Schnekenburger, who is one of her caregivers in Gugging. Laila Bachtiar was the first woman and first artist in residence to come irregularly to the Haus der Künstler in Gugging as early as 1990. Laila Bachtiar will be present at the opening of the exhibition.

Born in Cuba in 1985, Misleidys Castillo Pedroso is currently being hyped from Paris to New York to Gugging. The artist is developing her own form of visual language. She paints muscular, colorful people reminiscent of bodybuilders in small to larger-than-life formats. She cuts out the finished figures or even body parts and attaches them to the walls with brown tape. She presumably sees them as friends and protectors and works exclusively in a family context near Havana. The artist was socially excluded from an early age, not least because of her greatly reduced hearing. She had to leave an institution she entered at the age of five due to diagnosed autism.

Who is an artist is constantly being renegotiated. Since the art market is affected by the socio-economic

dynamics of change just like all other areas of society, art from the periphery is also increasingly becoming a global business. The boundaries between Art Brut and academic contemporary art are also shifting due to commercial/business considerations. In the emancipatory quest for acceptance, the historically more unadulterated Art Brut is increasingly in danger of being appropriated by the global art market. The spaces between equal participation and uncritical appropriation have become narrow. This is another reason why the perspectives on Art Brut are permanently changing.

Hannah Rieger has been collecting Art Brut since 1991 and lives in Vienna and the Weinviertel. With over 500 works, her collection is one of the larger private collections in Austria specialized in Art Brut (www.livinginartbrut.com). "It is high time to show Art Brut in Graz. The special space of the Sigmund Freud Gallery speaks for itself and for this genre of art."

The 10 female and 14 male artists in the exhibition:

Laila Bachtiar (Austria), Thérèse Bonnelalbay (France), Johann Fischer (Austria), Franz Gableck (Austria), Jill Galliéni (France), Johann Garber (Austria), Madge Gill (United Kingdom), Martha Grunenwaldt (Belgium), Johann Hauser (Austria), Gertrude Honzatko-Mediz (Austria), Josef Hofer (Austria), Franz Kamlander (Austria), Johann Korec (Austria), Latefa Noorzai (Afghanistan/USA), Misleidys Castillo Pedroso (Cuba), Marilena Pelosi (Brazil/France), Michaela Polacek (Austria), Heinrich Reisenbauer (Austria), Karl Reisenbauer (Austria), Philippe Saxer (Switzerland), Takuya Tamura (Japan), Oswald Tschirtner (Austria), Karl Vondal (Austria), August Walla (Austria).

Opening: June 21, 2023, 7 p.m.

Music

Sandy Lopičić & Vesna Petković

Words

Michael Lehofer, Medical Director LKH Graz II
Nicole Pruckermayr, curator
Hannah Rieger, Art Brut collector
Christopher Drexler, Governor of the Province of Styria

Guided tour through the exhibition with Hannah Rieger and Nicole Pruckermayr
Friday, July 21, 2023, 1 p.m.

June 22 - September 20, 2023

Opening hours:

Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (excluding bank holidays).

Gallery Sigm. Freud

LKH Graz II, Standort Süd, Wagner-Jauregg-Platz 1, A-8053 Graz

Online catalog at: www.livinginartbrut.com/index.php/de/projekte/publikationen/zwischenraeume

A cooperation between the Styrian Cultural Initiative, Hannah Rieger and the Gallery Sigm. Freud.