



The Sariev Gallery of Plovdiv

Presents:

IVAN MOUDOV SOLO SHOW

3 May – 17 June 2011

Opening: 3 May 2011

Ivan Moudov is a shrewd observer of the mechanisms operating in the art world today. In his simulation of a museum of contemporary art in Sofia, his wine tasting session at the opening of the Venice Biennial, as well as in other works, including the creation of entirely new collections, he scrutinizes the world's art institutions and their social codes, and plays around with them, using his own sets of rules.

His work is evidence of a new type of institutional critique coming from “peripheral” artists who have recently joined the “central” discourse of Western art and are keen to offer their own insights into the role of contemporary art in their countries, which is often a far cry from what is accepted in the West.

This new critique looks simultaneously at the power of the art institution in the West, as well as at the dominant position of Western social critique in a more general sense. It is, therefore, not coincidental that the gestures and artworks associated with it are often controversial, even scandalous. Moudov often mocks the self-critique of many Western artists as an attempt to assuage the guilt resulting from their cooperation with the existing market and power systems. *Fragments*, for example, is a collection of stolen pieces from artworks owned by some of the most prestigious art institutions in the world, in which the artist questions the history of Western art collections (many of which were assembled from artifacts acquired during war conflicts and archeological expeditions) and raises the issue of authorship and value attribution.

OGMS is one of the least provocative of Ivan Moudov's projects, but it also one of his most effective. With Kamen Stoyanov and Steven Geurmeur, Moudov has conceptualized a commercial art gallery in the shape and size of a drawer. The drawer has a symbiotic relationship with existing art spaces, making use of their furniture (e.g. a cupboard in the kitchen of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Sofia), as well as their program, communication channels and audience. The “gallery” presents mostly work by young artists – work which must fit the size of the drawer. For the exhibition at the Sariev Gallery in Plovdiv, OGMS has acquired a custom-made cupboard of its own – an art object in itself. It has four drawers, presenting the work of four young artists.

The appearance of OGMS as Moudov's solo exhibition at the Sariev Gallery can be interpreted in the light of his preference for complex situations, which often bewilders the audience and even the critics. The OGMS gallery has now turned into a OGMS artwork, and the artwork acquires an extraordinary significance. In addition to taking care of its own being and contextualization, it takes on the responsibility for the visibility and contextualization of the artworks it contains. OGMS is a working example for a mutual support system between artists.

The blurring of authorship in OGMS is intentional. The question about the show's author – whether it is Moudov himself, the three artists behind OGMS or the four artists presented in the drawers – remains open. It clearly worries none of the participants and could only become a source of confusion, if and when the artwork is socialized within a public or private collection, since the artist's name and signature continue to be a decisive factor in the attribution of artistic value.

Text: Dessislava Dimova

Ivan Moudov was born in 1975 in Sofia, where he lives and works. In 2002, he graduated from the National Art Academy in Sofia with a degree in Frescos.

Solo exhibitions:

2011

One Square Metre, Hilger Contemporary, Vienna

2010

Wine for Openings, Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich

Ivan Moudov, Binz 39, Zurich

2009

Romanian Trick, Artericambi, Verona

2008

Trick or Treat, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany

Welcome, prometeogallery di Ida Pisani, Milan

Ivan Moudov, The 1st at Moderna, Moderna Museet, Stockholm

Group exhibitions:

2011

HE, Alberta Pane, Paris

2010

Playing the City II, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt/Main

Dwelling In Travel, Center for Contemporary Art, Plovdiv

Watchmen, Liars, Dreamers (Edition concrete), FRAC – Ile de France, Le Plateau, Paris

Word for Word, Without Words, Mestna Galerija / City Museum Ljubljana, Ljubljana

2nd International Antakya Biennial, Antakya, Turkey

Contemporary Art and Mutual Trust, Antrepo 5, Istanbul

Languages and Experiments: Young Artists in a Contemporary Collection, MART, Rovereto, Italy

Studies and Theory, Kwadrat, Berlin

Electrified 02: Hacking Public Space, SMAK, Gent

2009

History, Memory, Identity: Contemporary Photography from Eastern Europe, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena, Modena

Harburger Berge, Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Hamburg

28th Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana

Collection Dubai, SMART Project Space, Amsterdam

Techniques, Institute for Contemporary Art, Sofia

Performing the East, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg