



# MAUMAUS

## HEIMO ZOBERNIG

26.06 - 13.09.2015 (closed in August)

**27.06 | 15h30** Talk with Heimo Zobernig and Jürgen Bock at Culturgest (Lisbon)

**03.09 | 18h00** Guided tour by Rui Gonçalves

Heimo Zobernig articulates his art through objects in exhibitions, the exhibition itself, and by installing his exhibitions in a particular way, which allows him to appropriate the architectural aspects of the exhibition site. Zobernig's oeuvre creates a field of ambiguity between the work of art and the display system that we need to turn objects into art – display systems which become works of art in their own right in Zobernig's exhibition. By appropriating art historical discourse, he exposes the basic underlying narratives and ideological positions, thereby destabilizing and reinterpreting them with a light touch and an economy of means – using a methodology that viewers often experience as simultaneously unsettling, playful, dry, humorous and disarming. Zobernig is interested in what divides art from non art, renegotiating the significance of art in general, as well the notion of the exhibition as such in an exhibition practice that adds the significance of how these objects are presented to the significance of the objects themselves. He engages with both the concept of a sculpture and the floor it stands on, with both the painting on the wall and the architectural intervention supporting it.

For his exhibition at Lumiar Cité, Zobernig intervenes in the architecture of the upper level of the gallery, contextualizing his intervention by presenting earlier video and sculpture works, referring to the original, never executed, gallery project of the Spanish architect Marcos Corrales from 2008 and to an intervention by the South African artist Thomas Mulcaire at Lumiar Cité in 2011, allowing him to combine the history of his art practice with the history of the site of his exhibition. In video *Nr. 4* (1989), wearing dark jackets, jeans and sunglasses, Zobernig and Muki Pakesch – video artist and musician – sit on a sofa in a stereotypical talk-show setting. Zobernig performs movements and actions that Pakesch tries to carry out as simultaneously or symmetrically as possible. Video *Nr. 14* (1996) was produced in Krakow for Zobernig's show at the Potocka Gallery. The video combines the optical survey of an exhibition space with a view of its urban surroundings and refers, among other things, to the significance accorded to the space and its local context in the reception of art. The camera follows a mop washing the blue-screen painted floor of the Potocka Gallery. Using the chroma keying technique, the gallery floor was filtered out and replaced by footage of the pavement of Krakow's historic main boulevard, now being mopped. The concrete slabs of the boulevard pavement resemble those outside the rear of Lumiar Cité, which Zobernig, appropriating the Marcos Corrales project and in reference to the floor in the lower level of the gallery installed by Thomas Mulcaire as part of his exhibition, extend into the gallery space. The apparently same floor thus created is divided by the glass façade of the gallery, emphasizing the inside and outside of the space. The artist's gallery floor becomes at the same time the 'stage' for the table with the monitor we need to watch video *Nr. 14*. One original source of inspiration for the motif of this video was a television documentary which included a scene from a feature film showing women sweeping Moscow's Red Square with birch brooms as a symbol of the Soviet purges. Another was Joseph Beuys's Fluxus action 'Ausfegen des Grafenberger Waldes' (Sweeping Grafenberg Forest) in Düsseldorf in 1971.

Heimo Zobernig reflects on how the video is presented. He uses office tables, on top of which he installs 'professional' monitors and DVD players referring to the short history of this form of art: the appearance of video in museums accompanied the dematerialization of art in the 1960s/1970s and reappeared with the 'return' of the object in the form of video sculptures in the 1980s, offering the world of art not only the video tape or DVD but also an object to collect. Zobernig's video display is characteristically ambiguous. The aura lost through the use of common television monitors on museum floors in the early days of video art (Eleanor Antin, Martha Rosler) was recovered by these same museums through the use of high-quality professional monitors developed by companies such as Hantarex, Barco or Sony. Their

sophisticated, minimalist design – usually consisting of a black, straight-edged cube without any visible buttons – and their price prevented them becoming a product accessible to ordinary museum visitors. In the context of the exhibition, Zobernig emphasizes the use of the professional monitor as if it were a plinth (for the sculpture) or a frame (for a painting), duplicating this effect with the introduction of a simple mass produced table as a support – a ‘second plinth’ that raises the video from the floor. Through this simple display decision, the artist makes a gesture that can be understood as an act against ‘video sculpture’, but in favour of the video itself, of the dematerialization of the art object. Paradoxically though, a minimalist, almost unrecognizable video sculpture is being created at the same time.

**Heimo Zobernig** (Mauthen, Austria, 1958) lives and works in Vienna. He has participated in major international art events, such as: Venice Biennale (2001,1988); documenta, Kassel (1997, 1992); and Skulptur Projekte Münster (1997). Notable individual exhibitions include the Austrian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale (2015); Mudam Luxembourg and Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover (both 2014); Kunsthaus Graz (2013); and Palacio de Velázquez/ Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2012).

### List of works:

Lower level:

HZ1989-023  
*Untitled*, 1989  
Table, Hantarex monitor, DVD player  
127 x 78 x 78 cm

HZ1989-068  
*Nr. 4*, 1989  
Video, colour, sound, 20', loop

Upper level:

HZ2015-076  
*Untitled*, 2015  
Floor, concrete slabs  
890 x 1030 cm

HZ1993-036  
*Untitled*, 1993  
Reception table, particle board  
88 x 150 x 90 cm

HZ1989-023  
*Untitled*, 1989  
Table, Hantarex monitor, DVD player  
127 x 78 x 78 cm

HZ1996-039  
*Nr. 14*, 1996  
Video, colour, 30', loop

Lumiar Cité, Rua Tomás del Negro, 8A, 1750-105 Lisbon, Portugal  
Wednesday to Sunday, 15.00 to 19.00 or by appointment

Lumiar Cité is the exhibition space of Maumaus

Bus: 798 stop Rua Helena Vaz da Silva, 717 stop Av. Carlos Paredes  
Metro: Lumiar (exit Estrada da Torre)

Production:

**MAUMAUS**  
Residency Programme

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