
ANDREAS SLOMINSKI

OEUVRES RÉCENTES

PARIS DEBELLEYME

04 Feb 2012 - 29 Feb 2012



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is delighted to announce its second exhibition of works by artist Andreas Slominski, who lives between Berlin, Hamburg and Werder (near Potsdam). This will be Slominski's first solo show in France.

Born in Meppen (Germany) in 1959, Slominski attended the Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts from 1983 until 1986. After teaching in Karlsruhe, he succeeded Franz Erhardt Walther at the Hamburg Academy in 2004. Important solo exhibitions in the Deutsche Guggenheim Museum in Berlin (1999), the Fondazione Prada in Milan (2003) and the Serpentine Gallery in London (2005) were followed by a comprehensive retrospective in the Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art (2006-07). In 2010, the Goetz Collection in Munich held an exhibition of their extensive range of the artist's works.

Since the mid-1980s, Slominski has pursued his aesthetic exploration of random perceptions of everyday life.

"There is often something insidious, even impish, in the inconspicuousness of the selected objects and materialities. The function, the context and the contents are always reversed. [...] Randomness becomes a strategy. The works often have a double meaning, and the viewer sometimes lands in a trap" (Mario Kramer).

Slominski has always pursued the principle of the *trap* with encyclopaedic and almost scientific precision. His trap sculptures actually work; they take many forms, and are probably his most popular series of works.

The Paris exhibition will centre on his series of *polystyrene pictures*, which he first exhibited in 2005. Stylised naturalistic patterns and geometric structures are carved into huge chunks of snow-white polystyrene, rather like icebergs. On these often brightly spray-painted picture supports – reminiscent of graffiti, while appearing to profane the genre of the classic marble relief – are applied toy-like cut-outs with the simplicity of illustrations in children's books. The artist's personal style almost vanishes in the illustrative character of these works, which are presented like a herbarium in a plexiglass box, as a persiflage of the *Nouveaux Réalistes'* claim to realism. As if the works were the product of a mysterious, spontaneous *chemical transformation*.

Slominski's works evince an extremely democratic view of the subjects he uses. He finds beauty in objects that are generally considered in *bad taste*, and fondly adopts them in his works. Thus an industrially made rubber doormat resembling cast-iron becomes a template for the spray-painted parts of the paintings. Slominski's use of the mundane motif of a doormat could be developed into a complex Christian view of the world, where the value of work is judged differently from the way it is in today's global business environment, rife with virtual financial speculation. Tiny objects and details in Slominski's polystyrene pictures – whether coins, buttons, screws, shoes or ties – can become the starting-point for intellectual discussion, or simply count as an expression of a positive and optimistic world view. These polystyrene pictures in particular are open to either interpretation.

Boris Groys remarked on Slominski's work: "I thus have the impression that everything Andreas Slominski does is a reference to something else. This is where the actual power lies. Fundamentally, the power to direct attention is absolute power." In connection with the polystyrene pictures, Stephan Urbaschek quotes a very apt remark made by Max Ernst in 1962, when talking about the technique of collage: it is "the systematic exploitation of the random or the artificially provoked encounter of two or more completely alien realities at a seemingly unsuitable level – and the spark of poetry that flashes when these approach each other".