

GEORG BASELITZ

VERDUNKELUNG (BLACK OUT)

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

18 Saturday - 19 Saturday



We are pleased to be able to announce the forthcoming exhibition of a new series of works by the German painter, Georg Baselitz. This is the first cycle to be produced in Georg Baselitz's new studio at Ammersee (Bavaria), into which the artist moved on its completion last year at the time of his 70th birthday. Its title, Verdunkelung [Collusion] refers to the blacking out of windows during World War II and places the depicted characters within a fictional narrative context. In Baselitz's work former political protagonists, who were once revered and feared, become monuments to the banality of evil, and are thus related in atmospheric terms to the caricatures of Otto Dix and Georg Grosz.

The exhibition will comprise thirteen works on canvas, a series of watercolours executed pictorially, and a monumental sculpture. The black-and-white paintings exhibit a very subtle graphic quality which Baselitz combines with eruptive traces of colour recalling Jackson Pollock's Drippings. A large proportion of the works belonging to this series relate in terms of motif to the famous paintings, Lenin in the Smolny (1930) by Isaak Brodsky and In the Days of War by Geli M. Korzhev (1953/54). Here Baselitz links the heroising iconography of Socialist Realism with streaks of white paint which could be associated with bodily fluids of varying kinds. These works make reference to Georg Baselitz's own past - to the controversial reception of his painting, Die Grosse Nacht im Eimer [The Big Night Down the Drain] (1962/63) which unleashed the first major art scandal in the recently created FRG, and to the propaganda art that surrounded him during his years in the GDR. At times these works are reminiscent of Francis Bacon's grimaces and body fragments.

Among these new works are to be found two images of eagles and a depiction of a forest painted in a similar style and with the same palette of colours as the Lenin paintings, again taking up two important themes in Baselitz's oeuvre. In addition, Baselitz has just completed work on a monumental wooden sculpture of a seated man which resembles wooden sculptures of the Man of Sorrows (Le Christ Dolent, The Sorrowful Christ) type, prevalent in south-eastern European folk art of the 19th century.

Born in 1938 in Deutschbaselitz (Saxony) as Hans-Georg Kern, Georg Baselitz is without doubt one of the most important German artists. He represented Germany at the Venice Biennale in 1980 and participated in documenta V, VI, and VII in Kassel in the years 1972, 1977, and 1982. In 1995 the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York hosted the first comprehensive retrospective of Georg Baselitz's work, which was subsequently shown at the Los Angeles County Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington DC, the Nationalgalerie, Berlin, and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. A second key retrospective was organised in 2007 by the Royal Academy of Art in London. His Remix cycle, self-referential re-workings of historical works of the past to which the works in our exhibition are also stylistically indebted, was exhibited for the first time in 2006 and 2007 at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich and the Albertina in Vienna.

A book with an essay by Carla Schulz-Hoffmann will be published to accompany the exhibition.