

RONA PONDICK

NEW WORK

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

13 Saturday - 15 Saturday



Hybridity is in many ways a characteristic of Rona Pondick's works – in technical, iconographic and material-aesthetic respects. Half-man, half-animal or plant, precisely hand-crafted or aided by state-of-the-art computer technology, with surfaces partly cold and shiny, partly matt and hyper-realistic, Pondick's sculptures often make a disturbing impression. The element of metamorphosis is a central theme. Pondick seems to link the ancient world of Egyptian sphinxes, Greek centaurs and Ovidian mythology with the psycho-surrealist drama of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*.

In our Salzburg exhibition, Pondick presents her new "Bonsai" works – objects which from a distance look like real bonsai trees, but which on closer inspection turn out to be extremely detailed sculptures cast in steel or bronze, with tiny knobs sprouting like buds on the ends of the branches. These knobs are in fact miniatures of Pondick's own face, created with incredible technical brilliance.

The dark dreams of artists such as Goya or Odilon Redons mingle in Pondick's work with unsettling premonitions of the future of modern gene technology. One's own person is always the subject of these experiments (a link here with Tony Cragg).

Besides the "Bonsai" set, we are showing the sculpture *Otter*, cast in stainless steel. This creature standing on its hind legs has a sleek cylindrical body, and is apparently formed out of mercury. Enthroned on this body is a reproduction of Pondick's own head, wearing a mournful expression. The creature has also a miniature human hand, the only humanoid element apart from the head.

In 2002, the Galleria d'Arte Moderna Bologna, the DeCordova Museum in Massachusetts and the Groninger Museum showed a cross-section of Rona Pondick's work between 1986 and 2001. For 2007, a further exhibition tour of three European museums is planned, for which there will be a catalogue initialised by the Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts.