

05.04_P (cf. 07.03_V)

Tableaux Vivants

Concept: *Tableaux Vivants* is a performative concept and a project that is being implemented in different countries and on different continents. It relates to the richly traditional practice of reconstructing and presenting paintings and sculptures in a living picture and can be classed as an autonomous art form lying between theatre, performance and image. The project throws up questions about cultural memory and reflects or envisions the pictorial vocabulary in question.

Through the performative practice of reconstruction *Tableaux Vivants* attempts a new interpretation of values. The participants and the public enter into an energetic dialogue. On the one hand, part of the project is the process of finding a picture with a group of local artists, while another part is the public performance of the tableau vivant and its recording on video for about thirty minutes.

Tableaux Vivants has already been produced in Asia: Myanmar, Yangon, 2005 (picture: *Untitled*, Cho Cho Aung, a participant in the workshop, app. 2003); South America: Bolivia, Chochabamba, 2006 (picture: *Ultima Cena*, Jacopo Bassano, 1548); Europe: Switzerland, Basle, 2007 (picture: *Die Nacht*, Ferdinand Hodler, 1889); the next tableau vivant will be carried out in India in October 2009, at Bangalore. A further tableau is planned on the continent of Africa.

Material: various props and superstructures depending on the picture being modelled and the decisions of the performers, film setting: spotlights, video camera, tripod

Duration: app. 30 minutes

Situation: In the workshop held in the context of an international performance festival at a cultural centre in Yangon (Myanmar) the participants agreed to reconstruct a painting by a female participant. It shows a ritual still practised in Burma where small boys are handed over to the care of the monasteries for a certain period.

In Chochabamba (Bolivia) the tableau vivant could likewise be elaborated and shown in the context of a performance workshop at the mARTadero, an abattoir that has been transformed into a cultural centre. The group chose the painting *Ultima Cena* by Jacopo Bassano for a free reconstruction, and attached great importance to being able to design their own figures individually.

Grau made the Swiss tableau vivant with eight artist friends in Basle; they decided to reconstruct *Die Nacht* by Ferdinand Hodler, and concentrated on a formal correspondence that was as exact as possible. Additionally, the group tried to produce a new interpretation of Hodler's work where the content was concerned.

Comment:

"In an admirably democratic process people agreed on a representation of the Last Supper. Starting from the concept of active self-presentation in which each artist portrays his/her own position by means of an individual performance, they decided to group all those represented round a table; and thus – through quoting a well-known work of art – also to inscribe a gesture typical of postmodern art production into the process." (Angelika Heckl, Chochabamba, 2006)