

INA WEBER "Desperanto"

Georg Kargl, Vienna, 3 March 2005 – 16 April 2005

To look at a thing as if it we had never seen it before - this is a way of discovering hitherto unknown aspects. The underlying principle requires us to forget about habits and experiences linked with certain things. However - as Vilém Flusser says – it is easier to learn than to forget, and so we are usually not entirely successful in applying this method. Nevertheless, it helps us perceive surprising elements just the same, or precisely for this reason, and the drawings and sculptures by Berlin artist Ina Weber, shown at Galerie Georg Kargl for the first time in Vienna are a case in point.

Most of Ina Weber's works start out as photographs taken on journeys. In this context, the artist does not focus so much on what is aesthetically exciting, she pays attention to the ordinary, to things which are the same or similar in many places. Then she filters individual motifs from an abundance of photographic scenes through the medium of drawing and eventually incorporates them in space as sculptures. This way, they leave their accustomed surroundings and start a new life vacillating between image, blueprint and pure imaginary.

The scale of her architecture is hard to classify, too small to be used by children and too big to qualify as a model, but it acquires suggestive monumentality in the exhibition space. Even sculptures which do not copy any "original", such as *Hochhaus* ("*Highrise*", 2005) with its "realistic surface" and deceptive getup, can suggest to our mind's eye that they are familiar, albeit for a brief moment. *Hochhaus* and another work on show, *Bad* ("*Bath*", 2003), are exemplary in the way they make the beholder experience how the ordinary, and thus seemingly familiar, mixes with individual memories, thus creating a subjective *mélange* so we can see that the images we all have inside our heads are to do with our personal pasts as much as with our present perceptions.

The central installation *Trümmerbahnen* ("*Debris Courses*") is obviously entirely different in nature. Sculpture and usable miniature golf course with 12 holes and kiosk at the same time, the architectural models which serve as obstacles tie in with the history of European landscape gardening with its follies and fancy sham buildings. Ina Weber originally designed this work for the Braunschweig Parcours 2004, turning to the lost architecture of what was formerly a splendid seat of princely power. She chose the miniature golf course, so typical of the 1950ies and 1960ies, because those were the decades when Braunschweig rose again from the rubble of its old town, to turn into a shopping zone easily accessible for cars so that eventually even the ruins of the palace in the city centre had to go.

However, those who jump to the conclusion that Ina Weber seeks to expose the thwarted utopias of the past century or the inhospitable environment of our cities fails to see the humour in her works. It is specially the drawings which reflect her sober yet serene view of the world as they record the strange and hand down the unstylish. These views add up in a kaleidoscope of possibilities, full of contradictions which give orientation to the artist.

Susanne Prinz