

Nikolaus Gansterer | Monika Grzymala
Proxemia – The Co-creation of Space

Opening: Wednesday, December 9, 2015 | h 6.30 pm
 Galleria Marie-Laure Fleisch | Via di Pallacorda 15 | Roma
 From December 9, 2015 to February 6, 2016

Proxemics is the study of spatial proximities that individuals maintain in various social and interpersonal situations and how this behaviour varies depending on environmental and cultural factors.

Nikolaus Gansterer and Monika Grzymala first met during the recent exhibition *Drawing Now* at The Albertina Museum in Vienna, where they both were fascinated by the lines of connections between their work. It was then that they started to plan a joint exhibition project to be presented at Galleria Marie-Laure Fleisch for the first time. *PROXEMIA – The Co-creation of Space*, is an experimental project in which the two artists transform the exhibition space in Rome into an empirical entity researching on the significance of gestures and distances within non-verbal communication. Following philosopher Henri Lefebvre's thesis on space as a complex social construction (based on values and the social production of meaning), which affects our habits and spatial perception, the gallery is mapped and decoded as a social, physical and psychological structure.

Artist and performer, Nikolaus Gansterer is profoundly interested in the connection between drawing, thought and action. In his artistic research he draws on the intrinsic interconnecting structures between culture and science. Through a recombination of his own methods and approaches in both fields, he identifies distinct lines of interconnection and separation questioning the imaginary division between nature and culture, science and art. His research into *the act of drawing* results into a series of conceptual works, performances and aesthetic objects: blackboards with diagrams and graphs, laboratory settings, drawings on glass plates, sculptures reminiscent of models of chemical structures, three-dimensional scores and choreographic figures. Nikolaus Gansterer's fascination for the complex character of schematic figures and diagrams led him to create the book *Drawing a Hypothesis* (2011) dealing with the ontology of forms of visualization and the development of the diagrammatic perspective.

Monika Grzymala's dramatic and sinuous three-dimensional drawings unfold across tens of metres as swathes of linear or tangled adhesive tape, which connect arches, columns, corners and walls. Observing the lines traced in space, we perceive another dimension—as if enraptured by the very same drawing—within the confluence of its fundamental elements: line and paper, space and time, a space for awareness, a time for infinite transformation, even the ephemeral; in short, the beauty of the cycle of life. Grzymala's interest lies in the relation between objects rather than in the objects themselves, and in the exploration of the fundamental principles of the line and the sign. The performative aspect is a key part of her work; it expresses the constructive process from the very start of the work and continues also after, as the work loses its vitality and is transformed when subjected to the force of gravity. Sometimes the “remains” of the work are reused to create new sculptures, as a *memento mori* of our fleeting and temporary condition. The curator Catherine de Zegher gives an existential interpretation of Grzymala's work, identifying in it an attempt to lead mankind back to the cycle of life and a gradual recognition of beings linked like chiasmic lines to the surrounding human and non-human worlds.

Gansterer and Grzymala both explore the conditions of creation and perception of space by investigating into distance and proximity in their individual visual languages. These processes are shared by both artists and are translated through gestures and actions to co-create their joint exhibition: *PROXEMIA*. Forming, re-forming, de-forming, writing over, erasing, re-drawing and re-creating are all graphic representations which become visible traces of their on-going work. In order to explore individually and jointly the spatial dimension and to create new works, Galleria Marie-Laure Fleisch will be transformed for a week into a part of the artists' bodies and interpersonal interactions. The result of this experimental dialogue will establish a reciprocal relationship between the artists' bodies and the gallery space (as the theoretician Erin Manning would define a *Relationscape*) and between the art work and the visitors of the exhibition.

Nikolaus Gansterer (Austria, 1974) lives and works between Vienna and Berlin. He studied Anthropology at the University of Vienna and Transmedia Arts at the University of Applied Arts. Among the most important exhibitions: (2015) *The Bottom Line*, S.M.A.K., Gent, Belgium; *Between the Idea and the Experience*, 12th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba; *Drawing Now*, Albertina Museum, Vienna, Austria; (2014) *Beyond The Line*, Bonington Gallery, Nottingham; *Movement Matters*, Kunstverein Goettingen; *The Drawing Room*, Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck; (2013) *My Brain is in my Inkstand*, Cranbrook Museum, Detroit; *4th Athens Biennale*, Athens; *Drafts III*, The Drawing Center, New York; *Artists in Multifunctions*, Gallery Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; *The Drawing Room*, Blickle Foundation, Kraichtal; *When Thought becomes Matter*, *Matter turns into Thought*, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna.

Monika Grzymala (Germany, born in Poland, 1970) lives and works in Berlin. She studied Sculpture in Karlsruhe, Kassel and Hamburg / Germany. She has been an adjunct professor of Painting at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and of Experimental Drawing at the Braunschweig University of Art / Germany. Among the most important exhibitions: (2015) *Drawing Biennial*, The Drawing Room, London; *Drawing Now*, Albertina Museum, Vienna, Austria; *Raaklijnen / lines of tangency*, MSK Museum of Fine Art, Ghent, Belgium (2014) *The Making of Forming Something New*, Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus, Iceland; *Tree of Life* sculpture garden, long term project on the roof top, Woodner Company, Manhattan New York City, USA; (2013) *Mono Meros Saal* der Meisterzeichnung Kunsthalle Hamburg, Germany; *The River II 49 Nord 6 Est*, FRAC Lorraine, Metz, France; *Volumen*, The Morgan Library & Museum, New York, USA.