

INTERVIEW WITH STEPHANIE PFLAUM.

EXHIBITION AT TRESOR,
BANK AUSTRIA KUNSTFORUM, VIENNA 2014

The “Tresor” [i.e. the exhibition space in the former vault] – the form taken by the proposal – was perfectly suited to my circumstances at that time. It was perfect. The decision was perfect because this seclusion, this stillness, this secureness offers the perfect surroundings for what we could call this treasure ... For my situation as well – emerging after a hiatus, uncompromisingly presenting something – the “Tresor” was the best solution. And then I ... I had this space placed at my disposal and began to form this room. And yes ... and I completely threw myself into it and this room grew and turned out the way I wanted.

In my studio you can see the light rise and fall so beautifully, and I feel that light makes or breaks my work. It's a very important factor. But it's also clear that we always have to create a light installation, and that is now around 6 1/2 minutes in duration, where there is daylight at first – from morning to noon to evening – and then the evening sequence, where the individual lights go on, just as a person gets ready for the evening: reading lamp, chandelier, dressing table and the wardrobe and such. And then there's an evening ambience and then it goes back into the morning, where the person turns the lights back out.

The theme in itself, the main theme encompassing everything, is building and destruction and what lies between them, what we call life. It is the form of a prettification: for me the plastic flowers and plastic plants are all a form of building, that is, of prettification ... a form of yearning to create something for ourselves, a symbol. Everything has a symbol and, for me, these are the symbol of beautification. Many people also see the destruction, the burning or the breaking – the deliberate destruction – of the objects. And lots of hair, the hair then reflects that all of this only takes place because it takes place in my head. It is, so to speak, ... it shows that the whole thing is also a self-portrait.

In my time away I occupied myself a lot with other things: with death, near-death experiences and things like that – I found these incredibly interesting, and the essence of this whole period is a few points of thought which are, I believe, repeatedly reflected. People that think and feel concentrate a lot within the individual moments that gather within them and I have, so to speak, reflected and captured each of these forces with all of these things. In *Jetztten* [i.e. *Ein Ort aus Jetztten*; *A Place from Now*], I examine values, that which remains, that which is important, that which would be the last thing I would keep for myself before my death, that which forms the essence of life. What is very important – and I think and I also hope that this is seen – is that there is a humour overlaying everything.

Thus, when I'm in this room myself, 6 1/2 minutes, then I'm happy that it has found such a good place and I am curious whether it stimulates something in people – in this or that viewer.