

‘Connecting Sound Etc. Cable Works, Cable Sounds, Cables Everywhere’: Exhibition at quartier21/MuseumsQuartier Wien

As a central contribution to the MQ Summer of Sounds, 'Connecting Sound Etc. Cable Works, Cable Sounds, Cables Everywhere' is the first exhibition dedicated explicitly to cables in art. Works by more than fifty international artists provide an insight into the wide range of contemporary approaches to this apparently simple material. Often reduced to their pure functionality, artistic trends of recent years have elevated our appreciation of cables. Curated by Georg Weckwerth, this interdisciplinary show at freiraum quartier21 INTERNATIONAL has a public preview on 4 June at 7pm, with a preview of the exhibition and the outdoor and satellite installations for the press at 11am on the same day.

“‘Connecting Sound Etc. Cable Works, Cable Sounds, Cables Everywhere’ pays tribute to cables in all their facets. A commonplace material all over the world, and actually a high-tech product, cable is particularly fascinating for artists these days,” says curator Georg Weckwerth.

Dr. Christian Strasser, Director of the MuseumsQuartier Wien, adds: “We invite our visitors to discover the many creative possibilities and contextual references associated with cable. I am sure the works presented will open their eyes and above all their ears.”

Site-specific cable interventions, sound and light installations, mixed media and video installations, visual works, photographs and contextual works provide an insight into the breadth of artistic interpretation, and experientially demonstrate how cables function as “connecting” elements and conductors of light, sound, movement, data flow etc. Early and Classic examples of cable-based art are juxtaposed with contemporary works in the disciplines of visual art, sound art, and media art, and presented in the exhibition at freiraum as well as on Electric Avenue and in public space at the MQ. The result will be a deliberately extreme, synesthetic experiential space that is ultimately intended to inspire a formal aesthetic investigation of present-day art.

One of the central works in the exhibition is the site-specific electromagnetic sound installation 'CLOUD' by the key German sound artist Christina Kubisch. A giant cloud made of 1,500 meters of rigid blue mono cable hovers at head height in the centre of the large exhibition hall. The title of the work plays on the now ubiquitous concept of the cloud for invisible data storage. In Kubisch's version, the storage becomes a highly visible sculpture while the acoustic world concealed within it can only be explored using special headphones.

This is contrasted in the fascinating and compelling light installation 'Lyrical Lights' by the winner of the Tyrolean Prize for Contemporary Art 2011 and the author of the Austrian contribution to the Architecture Biennial in Venice 2012, Rens Veltman, which makes various media immediately and directly tangible. It is as if one were entering a cinema or theatre: this aesthetically outstanding work consisting of twice 456 glass fibre optic cables that the artist and "proto-scientific thinker" developed and produced in collaboration with the Innsbruck lighting manufacturers HALOTECH is no less than a filmic narrative in 4D comprised of animated light, text, music and laser projection.

The self-styled “total artist” Timm Ulrichs is represented with three works, each of which is exemplary in character: In 'Teile und herrsche' (Divide and rule, 1969/1972), a telecommunications cable becomes a visual interpretation of the Latin expression ‘divide et impera’; 'Höhlengleichnis' (Allegory of the cave, 1984), a site-specific, figurative and narrative cable mural drawing with an integrated TV set is freely based on Plato's eponymous parable from ancient philosophy; and 'Laokoon' (1986/2009), a football-sized tangle of black cable with light (in the form of a light bulb in the centre) engaging in an endless struggle with the cable (cable a metaphor for the serpent).

Snake is also a central concept for the contribution by Peter Weibel, media artist and recent winner of the Oskar Kokoschka Prize (2014). His solo exhibition 'Der elektrische Krieg' (The Electric War) in 1983 featured, among other things, a poisonous snake behind glass inside an exposed cable shaft in the wall. The show at freiraum revisits the original exhibition and reconstructs an element of the installation.

Also reinstalled are early cable installations and cable sculptures from the 1990s by the Austrian Werner Reiterer. All untitled, they satirize and personify cable, plug sockets and plugs in inimitable fashion. While his 'Universal Measuring Tape' (2006) is metaphorical for 'cables encompassing the world': "According to the most recent calculations, the universe is approximately 13.5 billion years old. Werner Reiterer transfers

this period of time proportionally to a cable 270 metres long and places time markers on it to show key stages of evolution."

German media art pioneer and performance artist Jürgen Klauke, presented together with EIKON, will be showing four large photographic works in the exhibition and as a satellite in the EIKON showcase on Electric Avenue at quartier21. Robert Mathy's site-specific sound installation on Electric Avenue is a joint contribution by SCHAURAUM Angewandte and freiraum quartier21 INTERNATIONAL. 'Volume' consists of 800 meters of audio cable and 30 modified motors that cause the materials in the exhibition space to produce sound and invite visitors to engage in an acoustic perception of space. Another key work in the exhibition was created by Austrian Leopold Kessler, who in 2004 laid a one-and-a-half-kilometre-long electric cable between his studio and his apartment near Praterstern in Vienna. He documented the dismantling of this cable as a process of 'severing the umbilical cord' connecting him to his years of studying at the Academy of Fine Arts.

The young Norwegian artist Serina Erfjord makes cable short circuits visible and audible in 'Sparkle' (2008). In 'I Transcend Encapsulation' (2011), in turn, Austrian media artist Judith Fegerl removes an existing power outlet from the wall, embeds it in a sheet of plate glass leaning against the wall, and reconnects it to power. German sound artist Clara Oppel, who lives and works in Graz, creates a sound still life tapestry by connecting cables with each other in 'Die fernen Hügel sind grün' (The distant hills are green). While emerging artist Ulla Rauter uses delicate white cables as piano strings in her best-known work 'Lichtklavier' (Light piano, 2011). Light is also the central element in the magical installation 'Séance' (1999) by German artist Ursula Neugebauer (who teaches at Berlin University of the Arts), in which an old wooden table, secured by a cable, floats just above the floor. Sabine Groschup, winner of the Innsbruck Art Prize, is dedicating her two-part video installation produced especially for the exhibition 'Seelenbrand. In der Adern Erinnerung' (Soul fire. Memory in the arteries) to the unknown, dreamy soul of cable and to the familiar and dangerous phenomenon of cable fires.

Korean Young-Sup Kim, a master student of Christina Kubisch living in Seoul, will realize a specially developed version of his visually and auditorally unique floor installation 'Koexistenz'. For this work alone, the artist used three kilometres of white speaker cable to craft sound sculptures. American post-conceptual artist Warren Neidich is developing a complex diagram structure on the subject of the exhibition. It is realised as a large wall piece with multiple coloured neon elements, including three brains. Slovenian artist duo son:DA is using the entrance wall of the freiraum space for one of their inimitable cable installations tailored to the site. Embedded within the piece is a kind of archival presentation of their fantastic mouse computer drawings exploring partly grotesque and partly alarming links between human beings and cables.

quartier21 Artists-in-Residence who will live and work at the MQ in the course of the coming months include Serina Erfjord (NOR), Klaus Ferentschik (GER), Ina Hagen (NOR), Young-Sup Kim (KOR), Daisuke Kosugi (JPN), Emmanuel Madan (CAN), Ali Miharbi (TUR), Robin Minard (CAN), Warren Neidich (USA), and Slovenian artist duo Metka Golec & Miha Horvath alias son:DA (SLO).

The exhibition will be accompanied by an extensive supplementary programme with performances, lectures, presentations, artist talks, curator tours and workshops for children and young adults. The content is the product of a cooperation with the University of Applied Arts Vienna, Department of Digital Arts (Prof. Ruth Schnell, Wolfgang Fiel, and guest curator Isin Öno), and will be presented at SCHAURAUM Angewandte/quartier21, on Electric Avenue, in Raum D/quartier21, and at the Walther König bookstore in the MuseumsQuartier.

The appeal to the public: 'Please hang more cables on Norbert Math's cable rack' for the creative recycling of old cables will also promote a deeper exploration of this ubiquitous mass product.

Participating Artists:

Tyler Adams (USA), Dominique Blais (FRA), Nina Canell (SWE), Jozef Cseres (SVK/CZE), Julius Deutschbauer (AUT), Adam Donovan (AUS), William Eggleston (USA), Thomas Ehgartner (AUT/GER), Róza El-Hassan (HUN/SYR), Serina Erfjord (NOR), VALIE EXPORT/Peter Weibel (AUT), Judith Fegerl (AUT), Klaus Ferentschik (GER), Thomas Feuerstein (AUT), Sabine Groschup (AUT), Shilpa Gupta (IND), Ina Hagen (NOR), Tim Hawkinson (USA), Pieter Hugo (RSA), Leopold Kessler (AUT), Günther Kieser (GER), Young-Sup Kim (KOR), Jürgen Klauke (GER), Daisuke Kosugi (JPN/NOR), Christina Kubisch (GER), Mirko Lazović (SRB/NED), Paul Albert Leitner (AUT), Via Lewandowsky (GER), Maik + Dirk Löbber (GER), Emmanuel Madan (CAN/GER), Nicolas Mahler (AUT), Norbert Math (ITA/AUT), Robert Mathy (AUT), Ali Miharbi (TUR), Robin Minard (CAN), Warren Neidich (USA), Ursula Neugebauer (GER), Clara Oppel (GER/AUT), Ben Patterson (USA/GER), Ulla Rauter (AUT), Werner Reiterer (AUT), Marc Ries (LUX/AUT), Valentin Ruhry (AUT), Rudolf

Schwarzkogler (AUT), son:DA (SLO), Viktors Svikis (LAT), Atsuko Tanaka (JPN), Ulrich Troyer (AUT), Timm Ulrichs (GER), Rens Veltman (AUT), and Peter Weibel (AUT).

'Connecting Sound Etc. Cable Works, Cable Sounds, Cables Everywhere' is organised in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs.

An artist book on the exhibition is in the works, created by young Norwegian artist Ina Hagen in connection with her residency at the MQ. The Artist-in-Residence contribution by the Berlin-based writer and pataphysicist Klaus Ferentschik is, for its part, the first encyclopaedia of cables in the world. It contains definitions of 555 German words and phrases containing the word 'Kabel'. These include words ranging from *Kabelsystem* to *Kabeljau* and *Vokabel* — meaning respectively: wiring system, haddock and vocabulary. ('DER KONTERFEI 003' / paperback / German / 60 pages / ISBN 978-3-9503749-3-3 / to be published in June 2014)

Connecting Sound Etc. Cable Works, Cable Sounds, Cables Everywhere

Dates: 6 June to 24 August, Tue to Sun, 1–7pm, admission free

Press preview: Wed 4 Jun, 11am

Public preview: Wed 4 June, 7pm (outdoor and satellite installations open at 5pm)

Opening: Thu 5 June, 5pm

Location: freiraum quartier21 INTERNATIONAL/MuseumsQuartier Wien, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna

www.quartier21.at

<http://connectingsoundetc.tonspur.at>

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