

Artcenter Glarus 1. December - 5. January 2003

Opening, Saturday 30. November 2002/18.00

Tina Hauser (born 1967 in Canton Glarus) was studying art academics in Düsseldorf with Prof. Klaus Rinke (studies of sculpture). The art prize of Glarus was awarded to her in 2001 for her piece of work "The Beauty". In her focus exhibition at the Art Gallery Glarus she presents photographic work of her serie "A Garden of Pleasure". Together with her impressive installation, which extends from the foundation of the Gallery to the top of the Oberlichtsaal.

Tina Hauser does not only work in one specific medium, but she especially concentrates on photographic and installation art. In an unconventional way she lets process of storage. Things you store which do not have a direct use in today's world, but you do not want to, or cannot, let them vanish. The process of storage can be an article of value (think of an art collection or the reserves of gold in a bank) or something that increases in value (a wine cellar) or else something with a dramatic loss in value (remains of atomic permanent disposal). Therefore it is not astonishing that Tina Hauser has set her ideas around incineration plants in the last couple of years. They are a digestion system for our society. This is the downside which should concern us not only because of the ecological implications but also on ethical grounds.

Tina Hauser takes photos of the up to 25 meter high garbage mountains on site. Armed with a protective suit, two-way radio and camera before penetrating the contaminated bunker. During this performance, which requires full physical engagement, she captures the bunker as her temporary studio and declares certain garbage layers, according to a subjective but strict set of criteria, as "plastic art in time". The artist, whose starting point was traditional stone sculpture, questions the idea of "fundamental plastic art" and steers it in the direction of "asocial plastic art". She does not sculpt herself but rather adopts certain utilization and disposal processes as art work, which she then photographs.

In the Art Center of Glarus Tina Hauser not only shows photos of the serie "A Garden of Pleasure" but also the specially invented object for the Gallery "Schlacksbitt #4". The two kinds of art work, when initially viewed, do not appear to have anything in common aesthetically, however in regard to the content are in fact closely connected. The installation seems modest and reserved, remember that what is visible in the Oberlichtsaal is only the top segment, not the imposing whole statement. "Schlacksbitt #4" breaks through the architecture and forms a space like an imaginary shaft through the Art center. It begins down in the heating room and makes its way to the basement and then up to the ground floor, where it ends. The object does not fit into the architectural style of the Art Gallery but forces itself into the rooms. The three segments of the object are so heavy that the Art Center could collapse should the object not be able to maintain its static balance.

The construction which is based on grey stone blocks is not a customary cement mixture. It is a special finish of 90 % compacted cinders. This material is the remnant of our garbage after being burn at 720°.

The garbage mountains that Tina Hauser represents in her photos and declares as art in her serie "The Beauties", is to be admired in a different aggregate state - i.e. a three dimensional object in the present. What is depicted in the photos is now transformed into an abstract form. The origin of the starting material of "Schlacksbilt #4" is deeply configurated, but on second sight becomes visually apparent. On closer examination some things are revealed that have amazingly survived the burning process, for example a spoon, a porcelain fragment, wood, brick splitters and plastic.

The strength of Tina Hausers's art work is that , in spite of her social political themes, they are never moralizing and therefore have the potential to be read as symbols and portraits of our western consumer society.

Nadia Schneider

Art directresse - Kunsthaus Glarus