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GOTTFRIED BECHTOLD – Panamera / Ready Maids / REZ – project

OPENING: on Tuesday November 19, 2013, from 7 p.m.

EXHIBITION DURATION: November 20, 2013 – January 11, 2014

Part of the exhibition can be viewed at the Palais Coburg.

In 1971, the “Betonprotosche” (Concrete Porsche), one of Gottfried Bechtold’s main pieces, was the first ‘outsourced’ sculpture in the history of the Galerie Krinzinger. Since then the automobile has on many an occasion resurfaced in his work. 42 years later, Gottfried Bechtold is once again ‘outsourcing’ his Panamera Sculpture – on view at the Palais Coburg.

The *Panamera Sculpture* (2009-12) is Bechtold’s most recent Porsche project – a really hybrid artifact which oscillates between a classical sculpture and the functional object of the automobile. A car-like sculpture or a sculpture-like car – or a car covered with sculptural applications or a sculpture that has a 500 horsepower engine added to it. Bechtold has been interested for a long time in researching the expansion of the notion of sculpture. Sculptures are generally site-specific, static works. Even mobiles remain at one site apart from their movements within a certain range. The *Panamera Sculpture* could – depending on police permission – move throughout Europe in one day. The point of departure of the sculpture is the pre-series model no. 12 of a Porsche Panamera Turbo. What interest Bechtold – and has inspired him to action – is not just highlighting the car sculpture as a hybrid but also investigating the increasingly higher rated computer, sensor, video and radar backed operating structure of cars. The significant parts of the sculpture relating to visibility are cast in bronze, the classical material of sculpture: that is, all the transparent parts of the *Panamera* (windshields, headlights, turn signals, etc.) are executed in about 1 cm thick contingents (series) of bronze sculptures that have been hand-sanded, polished and then precisely implanted in the car. Bechtold suppresses the direct visual connection from the inside to the outside and from the outside to the inside. The lost visibility is compensated for by 4 video cameras, which transfer the surroundings relevant for operating and driving the car to the inside on a video screen. Thus the classical (bronze) sculpture (car) has also been transferred into a real driving simulator, producing a category of simulator which shows the real effects. (copyright Sylvia Taraba)

In the rooms of the gallery, Bechtold will also be presenting his most recent sculptures from the Ready Maids series, one of which was monumentally placed in front of the Bregenzer Festspielhaus. The forms of these sculptures are created from trees that have cut down, the surfaces of which have only been minimally idealized. The title of the sculptures alludes to ready-made forms, both in the Duchampian sense and to the English word “maid”.

In the Parterre Galerie, the REZ project finds a further base. This immaterial sculpture keeps inventing itself anew. Gottfried Bechtold has been running this project together with Hubert Matt since 1994. They defined title, intentions and constitutive conditions of an artwork to be realized as well as the central criteria of its design within a fixed framework limited in both a temporal and spatial sense. Since then the two Vorarlberg artists have been working under the strictest confidentiality on an IMMATERIAL SCULPTURE, which will gradually reveal itself to the public. The necessity of confidentiality is based not just on the blatant fascination of acting secretly, which makes the art producers allies and gives their action an aura of mystery. More significantly, it is based on the fragile construction of the work to be created, whose materialization would be endangered if its construction principles were to be revealed.