

Inauguration of the roundabout composition “O”

by Tarek Zaki

Sunday, October 20, 2013, 3:00 p.m.
Roundabout S1/L12/L1113
2102 Hagenbrunn



In the year 2006, ten municipalities (Enzersfeld, Großrußbach, Hagenbrunn, Harmannsdorf, Korneuburg, Langenzersdorf, Leobendorf, Spillern, Stetten, Stockerau) merged into the microregion “10 vor Wien” in order to further the autonomous development of the region and to develop a clear profile for tourism. In cooperation with Art in Public Space, one of the many initiatives undertaken was to invite international artists to design three roundabouts situated at the entries to chosen localities and on heavily traveled roads.

The jury decided to devote the three roundabouts to the theme of global mobility and therefore to invite artists from three different continents to participate (Asia, Latin America and Africa). The idea is to point to the fact, at central “nodes of mobility” (roundabouts) in Lower Austria, that apart from data streams, physical mobility continues to constitute a vital means of communication throughout the world and makes possible an important exchange between regions that are culturally so diverse.

The artists invited were Jitish Kallat, from India (Stockerau), Priscilla Monge, from Costa Rica (Korneuburg), and Tarek Zaki, from Egypt (Hagenbrunn). The roundabouts should not only serve as gateways to the microregion “10 vor Wien”, they should at the same time direct the eye outwards, towards the world in its entirety. A gateway, a door – this is to be seen as an opening through which one can pass in two directions and, consequently, as a double invitation. On the other hand, with their work, the artists invite us to enter their conceptual worlds surrounding these roundabouts, worlds that differ from each other both in form and in content.

In his sculptures, Tarek Zaki concerns himself with ways in which history is represented in monuments, museums and artifacts and also with the dynamic relationship between trivial objects and objects that carry a cultural or ideological load. In the work “O”, thirty-three sculptures of various dimensions are shown. These are fragmentary elements of everyday objects, monumentally transposed and at the same time true to detail (they are made of a mixture of synthetic materials with special surface finishing). At first glance, these seem to be museum artifacts, but upon closer observation we see that we are dealing here with ordinary wheels, plates, tumblers, CDs and other utensils of daily life that have acquired a strange aspect because of their unusual dimensions and the materials of which they are made. Placed at a roundabout, they remind us of historical cult sites like Stonehenge – circular form is present throughout the entire work.

The inaugurations of the two other roundabouts are planned for the spring and autumn of 2014.

Tarek Zaki, biographical:

Born in 1975. Lives and works in Cairo, (Egypt). Exhibitions include “Mythologies”, Haunch of Venison (London), “Collection Dubai”, SMART Project Space (Amsterdam), “New Ends, Old Beginnings”, “Monument X” Townhouse Gallery (Cairo), De Appel (Amsterdam), The New Museum (NY).

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