

## **40 Years Galerie Bob Gysin** **August - 2011**

An anniversary wants to be celebrated and needs reflection. In the following short outline, 40 years history of the gallery Bob Gysin are to be reflected - and it will remain an attempt, the framework will not even nearly live up to the organisation.

We want to stop briefly and look back, take a look at the present and express the thoughts and visions for the future. In the 40 years of the gallery's history a lot has happened, the times changed: the art world, the art market as well as the gallery locations look different. What remained is the consistency and the seriousness, with which the Gallery Bob Gysin lives on. The demand and the originally formulated goal to show the works of young, unknown artists, to support them and make them more known, has been fulfilled. The chance for important solo exhibitions for very notable artists today has been provided at Bob Gysin, in the previously called 'Galerie Arte Arena' in Dübendorf: Nelly Rudin, Christian Herdeg, Martin Disler, Flavio Paolucci, Christian Rothacher, Silvie and Chérif Defraoui, Hannah Villiger, Günter Brus, Roman Signer, Adrian Schiess and many more. The list is long, also established artists such as Matthias Bosshart, Carmen Perrin and Andrea Wolfensberger, who are still regularly present with exhibitions, as well as Bessie Nager (1962-2009), to whom a retrospective will be devoted in 2012, share years of history with the gallery.

The complete list of the artists with exact data is listed in the anniversary publication '40 years Gallery Bob Gysin'. Consistency and commitment are the important terms in the vocabulary of the Gallery Bob Gysin. To show Swiss art and to work together with Swiss artists, this is still an important aspect of the gallery's concept.

Different reasons lead to the opening of the gallery in 1971: first of all, an affinity and interest for art due to the origin, secondly big rooms have been available at the on the outskirts of Dübendorf in the old farm house, following the trend back then 'out of the city, to the countryside'. Thirdly, the environment consisted for a major part of artists. So in 1971, the gallery has been launched in an altered farm house in Dübendorf. For many years, exhibitions and installations of young Swiss artists have been presented there. The engagement in current Swiss art and the commitment was central for them. The gallery started with a small budget and a lot of enthusiasm.

As it was back then, the exhibition openings - to which a large audience interested in art came from Zurich - turned into proper happenings. The number of galleries was still low at that time, the visitors open to new art were interested in the innovative location. A brisk programme of cultural events such as concerts, readings and movie screenings accompanied the exhibitions.

Before the turn of the millennium something became clear: the art scene had changed, the time of happenings and communes was over, the art audience had become more demanding and comfortable, the competition bigger. It became important to be 'on the pulse'. This signified the move to Zurich, to one of the most central locations in the city, in close proximity to the main train station.

Not only was the building perfect to combine the new gallery rooms and the architecture office Bob Gysin & Partner under one roof, the location is really extraordinary. At the beginning of the art mile, next to the museum for design, not far away from the Löwenbräu with its numerous galleries, the Gallery Bob Gysin was opened on June 16, 2000 in Zurich.

With the move to Zurich, young art historians were appointed as support for the administration. The additional, interdivisional framework programme was continued. A documenta-artist, Stephen Craig, was there now and young artists at the beginning of their career

came to the programme, such as Niklaus Rüegg, Bob Gramsma, Christoph Schreiber and Teresa Chen.

That was the time when the Art Basel arose, the art scene became bigger, being interested in the contemporary art was considered good form and when the art itself became an object of prestige for some. The art market saw an incomparable boom. The gallery programme experienced some changes, photography became a fixed part represented by Georg Aerni, Guido Baselgia and Eberli Mantel. Positions in painting have been re-integrated by Christoph Hänsli and Dominique Lämmli, whose works are considered as hybrid between painting, photography and drawing. The gallery participated at international art fairs and just like it has been for years, a little publication always comes with every exhibition.

Under the new management, some new innovations came at the end of 2009. The programme was enriched by a video position with Anina Schenker, the balance between painting, sculpture and photography was still to be guaranteed. Through the painting of Karin Schwarzbek and the graphic and installative creations of Miriam Sturzenegger, that component was covered increasingly. Installation and sculpture with a component of sound are represented in the work of Christoph Brünggel, also a young artist new to the program. Positions of young artists are presented, consequently also a diversity by age can be covered. It is about big responsibility, in the traditional gallery as well as to the artists, to combine an interesting, exciting combination of experienced artists and young, unknown ones in a programme.

„Position“ has been launched new as addition to the gallery programme. Once a year, a group exhibition with young, mainly unknown artists is shown. In these multi-exhibitions, also works of internationally active artists are to be shown in the future.

Every artist will regularly have a single exhibition also in the future, furthermore there is going to be a close collaboration with museums and curators. The support of the gallery artists is an important concern of the gallery management. To guarantee this, the number of artists will also be limited in the future. Goal will be not only to look over the Swiss borders, but also to make international contacts and build an adequate network.

Marion Wild, July 2011