

**Nic Hess – Trader Joe and Albert's Son
Exhibition from 19th of April to 2nd of June 2007**

Hess is well known for his space evoking wall drawings with adhesive foil. Besides two installations, which differ in size, he was showing objects and also - for the first time – light boxes.

At first sight the title of the exhibition *Trader Joe and Albert's Son* evokes associations of stories from the Wild West of the USA, but in fact introduces us right away to the oeuvre of Hess. Indeed, these impressive names do not belong to adventurous pioneers but to two of the biggest supermarket chains in California. By taking these brand names out of their context, connecting them in the title of his exhibition in this stylised way, the artist brings these words, which are reprobated in the common American life and used only as sheer brand names, back to their original significance.

This process could be described as a strategy of deconstruction and recontextualisation, which determines Hess' whole oeuvre, regarding its content.

Despite the title of his exhibition, he uses rather infrequently sheer brand names. His sculptural archive is the cosmos of symbols, logos and icons, which shows us, like a universal language in daily life, the way to the next escalator or reminds us with just a glimpse of the whole image of a brand. At the same time, brand and logo are often affiliated in a way that the brand takes completely over the significance of the logo. The crocodile of Lacoste, for example, will make you think only of the French clothing company, but not of the powerful predaceous animal. In his installations Hess detects our habits according to the universal pictures of information and their resulting dislocation of significance. His intuitive style of collage, taking signs out of the usual context and composing them to a space evoking drawing, creates a connection of the revealed immediate meaning of the picture and the architecture of the individual exhibition space. This analysis of space and architecture determines the formal level in the work of Nic Hess.

Similar to the use of his motifs the artist follows the same concealed dynamic in the use of architecture. His interventions pick up the rhythm of the architecture, increase or resist with the help of the perspective flow of the lines, when his motifs are reaching over corners and ledges and so nearly neglect what is given.

The Swiss artist increases the meaning of space as a medium in his work by using architectural forms as a motive of content, done so in his exhibition *Guten Morgen Deutschland* in Haus der Kunst in Munich, 2004, where in one of his drawings he allows a cable railway find its station down the valley on a door lintel.

By enlarging his two-dimensional drawings into the exhibition space, Hess developed objects, which can be understood as an extension of his drawings: Independent architectural forms in which the playful composition of colour and sign of the world of brands find their continuity.

In the exhibition *Trader Joe and Albert's Son* we are glad to show you the whole spectrum of Nic Hess' work, including reviews and his latest inventions.

Next to various *in situ* installations, we get an insight into Hess' archive of plastic foils presented on one big wall. These logos and signs are always used as starting points of his drawings.

His sculpture, an oversized red and blue chair by Rietveld, on which he worked with adhesive foil, refers - next to the symbol of modern design – to Hess' period at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, where he studied from 1992 to 1996. With a series of light boxes, Hess found a new medium, to give his by then fixed drawings the possibility of being portable and lasting.

If you are interested in photographs, further detailed information or an interview with the artist, please contact the gallery.