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extended press information

Asta Gröting

The travelling carriage of Goethe the Mercedes of Adenauer and my smart

March 3 - April 14, 2012

Opening: Friday, March 2, 6-9pm

carlier | gebauer is pleased to announce the second solo exhibition by German artist Asta Gröting. Creating enigmatic sculptures, Asta Gröting's work explores the expressive properties of various materials (silicon, bronze, polyester, polyurethan) and their relationship to form through a complex system that intertwines intimacy, history and memory.

For this exhibition, Asta Gröting features three new large-scale sculptures - produced from traditional sculptural casts with material such as polyurethan - entitled: *Die Reisekutsche von Goethe*, *Der Mercedes von Adenauer* and *Mein smart*. The exhibition also includes two older works *Space between two people having sex* (2008, silicon, 77 x 52 x 106 cm) and *Abformung einer Familie* (2011, bronze, 56 x 90 x 90 cm), which delicately map the character and thematic development of this exhibition. These works invite the visitor to wander in the maze of memory where all the works metaphorically refer to the «human proportions» according to Asta Gröting's words.

In her artistic practices, which she has developed since the middle of the 1980s, Asta Gröting works through the diversity of these tangible forms and materials, showing us the evolution and complexity of social forms of life, whether romantic, familial, cultural or mechanical as many meetings of bodies in space. As she said, in *Space between two people having sex*, the visitor faces «the void between two people along with all the unexpressed, inexpressible and hidden issues that relationships involve».

With her most recent works, the underside casted of Goethe's travelling carriage (2012, 60 x 140 x 330 cm, polyurethan), Adenauer's Mercedes (2012, 45 x 200 x 520 cm, polyurethan) and the own ride of the artist's smart (2012, 50 x 155 x 260 cm, polyurethan), she keeps creating physical representation of normally unseen elements «in order to be able to focus on the immaterial» that we can't see because we can't or don't want to perceive them in daily life. Thus, in this exhibition, we discover that the objects can just live by their absence, by the void and the print they left, by the solitude they provoke.

Frozen in the materiality of polyurethan, lying in the space like immobilised, these three means of transport that represent the carriage, the mercedes and the smart refer us to times, activities (literary, political and artistic) and figures of German culture eminently different, respectively associated to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Konrad Adenauer and Asta Gröting. Beyond a simple representation of history of wheeled vehicles, it is a fragment of German culture that is given to us to see here in the form of a dark gripping triptych, three tombs, three monuments whom the uncanny violent and calm amplifies the tension of the installation and

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transports us into a more sensitive area, a zone of silence where times mingle and disappear at the same time.

In the continuity of her organic works, these three negative car frames refer us to our own internal organ, the belly, place of all emotions, well known to be our second brain or place of soul, part of our body particularly sensitive and fragile that we protect in case of any attack or fight ; this is from where we can die but it is also, in the animal kingdom, the most intimate part that is given to us, to caress in privileged moments of tenderness and complete confidence with someone. In the Middle Ages believes - which thought the soul as an organ - we could see the three casts of Goethe's travelling carriage, Adenauer's official car and the own ride of the artist as autopsies to find their soul. In this way, her works keeps combining the inside and the outside, making the invisible visible always related to the human psyche.

Above the huge materiality of these sculptures, the evanescent silicon of two lovers, the bronze stability of the family and the weak density of the rubber of the internal machinery of the massive vehicles, Asta Grötting keeps showing us things that can't normally be seen and also perhaps those which we don't really want to see, the intimate moments of two people or family relationships, or the car frames, the invisibility of material elements, of unspoken feelings. Both in the former than in the new works, the artist puts the visitor in presence of the «hidden processes visible», of the tension of the installation and reveals her inexhaustible questioning of the psychic and emotive depth of self-construction and the underlying conditions of human existence.

Working in a scale simultaneously monumental and intimate, Asta Gröttings' sculptures explore the below and the beyond and show how «beauty consists of tension and wealth of associations».

Born in 1961 in Herford, Germany, lives and works in Berlin, Asta Grötting has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions both nationally and internationally at museums including: Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, Germany; Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz, Austria; Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, United Kingdom; MARTa, Herford, Germany ; Freud Museum, London, United Kingdom; among other international venues. Selected group exhibitions include: Vehbi Koç Foundation contemporary art collection, Istanbul, Turkey; The Alderich Art Museum, Ridgefield, United States; Kunsthau Baselland, Switzerland; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany.