

Pro Choice
Zedlitzgasse 3
1010 Wien
www.prochoice.at

Opening 09.03.10, 20:00
10.03.10 - 11.04.10

Josef Strau and Clegg&Guttman

Vienna and Jerusalem

The exhibition Vienna and Jerusalem is the first step in an ongoing work by Josef Strau and Martin Clegg & Guttman. They will write a collaborative autobiography. Pro Choice is pleased to present the first installment of this project with a performance by Lucy Indiana Dodd and Sergei Tcherepnin.

The work itself is an attempt to bring forth private ideational elements, weave them together and present them in an embodied material form as a collaborative ideational construction - a sculpture of ideas.

Vienna and Jerusalem is the outcome of a process crystalized by a convergence of sympathy - the countless hours of conversation and exchange between the artists which created solid bridges between separate inner worlds and resulted in mental connections strong and stable enough to acquire a visible form.

The two stories which form the core of the project bear similarities to each other as they do to many other adolescent narratives. The basic story line concerns adolescents from comfortable, sheltered backgrounds who lead successful if conventional lives who revolt against their teachers and their families and become bohemians. The transgressions were neither violent nor extreme but were sufficient in uprooting the adolescents from their earlier social environments.

The similarities between the two stories form a basis around which they can be weaved together, providing the artists to 'crossbreed' their respective memories. The chief operation was to exchange aspects of their memories, namely, to delete some of the specifics of one of them and replace them with "equivalent" details from the other.

A certain asymmetry entered the work due to the fact that it is developed for an exhibition in Vienna where one of the childhood stories takes place. And that the former child of Jerusalem is currently in Jerusalem whereas the ex-Viennese in the meantime has developed a strong interest in Jewish mysticism which he discovered in Brooklyn, New York. These factors form an added layer of complexity into this attempt at memory exchange and shared histrionics.

The aim of Vienna and Jerusalem is not merely to create a specific assemblage of memories but to explore the processes underlying such things, namely the possibility of creating collective ideational constructions. In the end, the combination of the ideational materials will be presented in a manner that provides the viewer with insight into the mechanics of extra-mental constructions.