

PRESS RELEASE

JOSEF STRAU

May 5th – June 3rd 2007

***Why Doesn't My Plant Grow Any More? and other works of
lament***
by Josef Strau

and

A Year-In-Review-Lamp-Installation by Galerie Meerrettich.

With contributions from Bernadette Corporation, Lukas Duwenhögger, Sergej Jensen, Josephine Pryde, Nora Schultz, John Kelsey, Gareth James and Susanne Winterling.

Vilma Gold is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Josef Strau, and a curated/collaborative exhibition of works by artists previously shown at Galerie Meerrettich in the second gallery space. Both exhibitions will run from 5th May – 3rd June in Vilma Gold's new location on Minerva Street, E2.

Josef Strau has worked in the past in different practices, mostly as an artist, but also as gallerist, curator and writer. For four years he organized Galerie Meerrettich in the pavilion of the Volksbühne, one of the main theatres in Berlin on Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz. He concluded its program of exhibitions in the pavilion last December with a performance night at the theatre including more than 20 artists. Galerie Meerrettich will still occasionally continue to organize different exhibition projects.

Josef Strau's writings were initially more conventional, in the form of art catalogue texts and art magazine contributions, but later they turned into more freewheeling expressions and narratives, often produced as brochures and posters within the context of art exhibition, mostly being part of an ongoing novel.

During the past two years, several exhibitions by Strau included lamp sculptures, built of found material connecting his texts and images. Whilst primarily a literary effort, 'reading' is here relocated within a sculptural installation. The original texts, sometimes including merciless subjective content, become images or original drawings of almost automatic writing and are sometimes also in the form of posters available for the viewer to take away.

The current exhibition at Vilma Gold includes several of the reading lamps, but will also present some new small heavy sculptures, so called 'paper-weight' metal sculptures which weigh down upon posters of lamentation writings, confessional narrations and fractured restitutions of the almost disappeared form of lament - a

form of lament over the loss of time and sometimes a mourning over the fact that many live, as if time would be available unlimited and forever.

In a similar procedure of relating texts to presented objects, works from some of the artists who have previously shown at Galerie Meerrettich will be presented in the second gallery of Vilma Gold. The presented works will be connected with texts on the artists, written by Josef Strau, partly already published, partly in a more fragmented form of some collected notes. It will include artists such Bernadette Corporation, Lukas Duwenhögger, Sergej Jensen, Josephine Pryde, Nora Schultz, John Kelsey, Gareth James and Susanne Winterling, with more to be confirmed.

Josef Strau's work had been presented in the last year in solo shows at Greene Naftali, New York and Dépendance, Brussels, and in group exhibitions. He is currently in *Shandyism* curated by Helmut Draxler at Secession, Vienna, and has recently exhibited in (...) curated by Michael Krebber, Portikus, Frankfurt, *Looking Back* curated by Matthew Higgs, White Columns New York and *Next To Kin* at Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Köln.

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