**Margot Pilz**

7. 6. – 30. 7. 2017

Curator Jana Vránová

Opening on 6 June, 2017 from 6 pm, press conference on 6 June, 2017 from 11 am

Jaroslav Král Gallery, The Brno House of Arts, Malinovského nám. 2, Brno, CZ

**The exhibition presents some of the multimedia oeuvre by Margot Pilz. She is known also as a proponent of feminist art, but her subjects include environmental issues or private, very personal experiences as well. The exhibition is organised in cooperation with the Department for Cultural Affairs of the City of Vienna, and is a follow-up of the show at the MUSA Museum in Vienna, *Margot Pilz Milestones. From Performative Photography to Digital Field Studies* from 2015, when the artist’s work was first comprehensively presented.**

The oeuvre by Margot Pilz embraces the media of photography, video, computer animation, media sculpture, performance, installation and digital art. The exhibition at Jaroslav Král Gallery shows the different aspects of her work, often described with the attributes *radical, experimental, action charged, feminist, conceptual* and typically exhibiting strong autobiographical traits. Characterising the artist as one of the proponents of feminist art would be too much of a simplification, as the subjects she explores are multi-faceted and complex. In the contemporary history of conceptual and media art in Austria and abroad Margot Pilz claims a position in the vanguard, being a pioneer both with regard to content and technology.

**Margot Pilz** (\*1936, Haarlem, the Netherlands, grew up in Indonesia, lives in Vienna) studied portrait and fashion photography, but in the 1970s began to diversify from commercial photography. Her early works concentrating on people in their familiar environment and everyday life are subtle, poetic and picturesque. Her work, characterised by a performative approach, sociological reports, happenings and their photographic documentation, got attuned to her becoming a member of the International Action Community of Women Artists, which fought against discrimination of female artists in the cultural sphere in Austria.

Margot Pilz’s work from the turn of the 1970s and 80s reflects her private, very personal experiences and impressions. An initiation moment for her creative endeavours was her confrontation with the police that occurred in 1978 in one of the women’s events. She depicts her experience of being arrested by the police, her feelings of helplessness and resignation over the mistakes of masculine state power, by means of expressive photographic sequences. In the photographs titled *Selbstauslöser – Selbstauslösung,* a name that she also chose for her first show, the emotional states are symbolised by her gestures and the clothes she wore at the moment of detention.

Margot Pilz searches for her position as a woman in society and her identity in her own marriage, she questions being assigned the role of mother, wife and housewife, just like the position of a female artist on the male-dominated art scene. These subjects are dealt with in her series *4th Dimension* (1978–1982), which is a result of precise calculation of long exposure time. The fourth dimension in her artistic explorations is time.

Speaking of her artistic approach, she says: *“I see in serial photography a method for realising my individual claims by means of a visual product. At the same time, I consider it to be a tool that enables me to depict processes of individuals in specific movement. I become a medium myself. I am the medium and simultaneously the one who uses the medium. I use myself to make a diagnosis of the social situation, performing an autopsy of my own mind.”*

This period of Margot Pilz’s self-reflecting oeuvre culminates in the project entitled *The White Cell* (1983–1985): She acts in a flexible space the size of which is proportionally adapted to the dimensions of her body.

Another subject resonating in the work of Margot Pilz is the environment as an important aspect of life. In 1982 she installed an artificial beach in the city centre as part of the Wiener Festwochen in Vienna: Directly in front of the Karlskirche church she had an area covered in sand and had palm trees and deckchairs arranged on it. From 1986 Margot Pilz reoriented herself to the most up-to-date technology and materials, and became one of the first artists in Austria to experiment with the alternatives offered by the world of digital imaging. At the Ars Electronica Festival in 1991 she presented, together with Roland Scheidl, the first internet project in Austria, *Delphi Digital*. This interactive sculpture is capable of answering environmental queries either drawing on pre-programmed memory or from the user forums of computer network pioneers; it can therefore be considered a predecessor of an internet browser.

At present Margot Pilz has been active mainly in performance a video art.

**Accompanying programme:**

22 June at 5 pm – Commented exhibition tour with curator Jana Vránová

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