

Abendakt 19h Wally Salner

Duration: 05.12.19 – 08.02.2020

The Neue Galerie—a four-room suite on the ground floor of the historic Hofburg in Innsbruck, which was transformed into a neutral exhibition space for contemporary art a few years ago—provides the venue for Wally Salner's solo presentation *Abendakt 19h*. A few precise settings dissect the functional architecture of the gallery space and are integrated into the "total look" of her installation.

Exposing breaks, reversing inadequacies, and placing them at the centre of a new stylization are the approaches that Wally Salner also applies in her daily practice as a fashion designer. She employs a method of deconstructing social phenomenologies, splitting and creating styles from them, and developing staged productions at the interface between art and fashion. Playing with subject-specific terms and concepts leads to processual shifts in context between the genres. The (physical) tension of Wally Salner's works arises in the in-between, in the ambivalence of presence and absence. Thus, the question of dressing and undressing—also of spaces and objects—was also the starting point for her conceptual exploration of the Neue Galerie. It appears in nude. The "nude look" leads to a deconstruction of the spatial situation, a merciless exposure of the architectural conditions.

Abendakt 19h oscillates formally and in terms of its content between autobiographical flashbacks, initial confrontations with body studies at the beginning of her artistic career, and the know-how of a fashion designer who analyzes precise spatial and body structures, reinterprets dysfunctionalities and temporary arrangements, and elevates them into a stylistic device. Between these (temporal) levels lie a wealth of quotations and cross-references that hold the potential for misunderstanding that Wally Salner employs in a strategic manner. She negotiates the act of artistic creation as a practice of body, form, action, space and time within the spatial atmosphere of a classic exhibition.

The artist and designer challenges not only herself but also the recipients with her subtly provocative approach, described as the "potentiality of nothing"¹. For the "Performativity of embarrassment should be interpreted as a lustful moment full of relish, which is simultaneously active and passive"²—definitely permeated by dry humour. And so in the artist's concept text we also find parts that Wally Salner expresses as a joke: "She lies in Surrealism: The signifier and the signified meet. One says to the other, I can read you, you are significant. The other says: I am the *fatherland faker*. That's not deceptive. Susi Klocker set me. As safe as a bomb in petrol. Ouch. Ouch is an acronym and stands for ouch."³

Ingeborg Erhart

¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Bartleby oder die Kontingenz* gefolgt von *Die absolute Immanenz*, Berlin 1998, p. 13: Agamben, whose text is significant for Wally Salner's deliberations on the intellectual concept of "nothing", refers to Aristotle's teaching about potentiality, which creates an incapacity from directly within every capacity.

² Concept notes, Wally Salner

³ Ibid.; *fatherland faker* is the name given to the typography used on the invitation card and the print on cloth, *Glasses Cleaning Cloth A0*, in the exhibition. Susi Klocker is the name of the graphic designer.