

## Andreas Slominski

Fondazione Prada

Milan

10 April - 13 June 2003

On Thursday 10 April, the Fondazione Prada will inaugurate the first exhibition in Italy devoted entirely to the German artist Andreas Slominski (Meppen, 1959), in its space at Via Fogazzaro 36 in Milan.

The exhibition comprises a number of projects, from Christmas illuminations and traps to television films and constructions, created expressly for the occasion, and produced using a host of different materials and techniques. The project for this exhibition, as devised by Slominski for the Fondazione Prada, is not limited to the internal space but extends beyond to the urban territory through the execution of certain events. Thus the exhibition becomes a collection site, the final act of different processes initiated in different time phases: a fluid ensemble of large and small traps interwoven with videos of events that have already taken place in Milan, operations on walls and windows and actions that actually happen during the inauguration.

The show displays traps based on the models of those used for capturing such animals as rodents, birds, dogs and cats. Some of the constructions presented, such as *Vogelfangstation* (Birdstation, 1998-2002) and *Falle für Kampfhunde* (Trap for combat dogs, 2001-2002), can be extremely large and have a very aggressive appearance, while other smaller formats, such as *Vogelfalle* (Bird trap, 2000-2001), look like everyday objects and often actually seem like toys, such as a small model car or a rocking horse - *Lieferwagen für Mäuse* (Van for mice, 2001) and *Mausefalle* (Mousetrap, 2003) -, or are inspired by musical instruments: *Bass für Mäuse* (Double bass for mice, 2002). Each trap is the result of a mixture between playful object and dangerous instrument, and was designed for the capture of specific kinds of animal, such as leopards, snow-grouses, goshawks and marmots.

These objects are arranged on the floor of the space, which becomes a sort of minefield that compels visitors to tread with care. Dominating the entire arrangement is a piece that hangs from the ceiling, *Merry Christmas from Belfast* (2003), a series of Christmas illuminations and decorations that provide another trap, this time mental, because of their playful yet threatening associations which surprise visitors, catching them unawares with the combination of festivity and tragedy.

Other works involve public participation: in *Please call me* (2003), visitors are invited to dial a telephone number that appears on one of the walls of the Foundation in order to discover what will happen as a direct result. In *Ohne titel* (Untitled, 2003), a pole is positioned at the entrance to the exhibition which stretches from the ceiling to the floor. Visitors willing to participate are asked to remove their trousers and hand them over to a seamstress, who will unstitch the seams in such a way that the left leg will be dislocated from the right leg. Once this has been done, the seamstress will pass the trousers over the pole, the right leg from the right, and the left leg from the left. Another seamstress will then sew the trousers together again, and apply a label giving

details of the work, thus making them part of a limited edition. The seamstress will then return the trousers to the owner.

For *Brot* (Bread, 2003), Slominski asked a bakery in Milan to bake a special kind of bread, visibly imprinted with the studs of a football shoe. This bread is to be freshly baked every day of the exhibition, and sold daily to the public in the bakery, where details of the project will also be available. Some bread rolls are displayed in the reception area of the Foundation in a basket, with indications of where they may be purchased.

Two videos document events that took place before the inauguration began. The first is entitled *Den Eiffelturm streichen* (Painting the Eiffel Tower, 2003), and shows the work executed by a French workman specialised in repainting the Eiffel Tower, who was invited by the artist to come from Paris to Milan in order to carry out a similar kind of operation on some of the external iron bars of a window of the Foundation. The same uniform and work tools were adopted for this enterprise (safety ropes, hooks and harnesses, bucket, hammer, trowel, brush and paintbrush), and the same varnish normally used for the Eiffel Tower was employed. The work processes consisted in cleaning the bars, removing the rust stains and repainting the iron grills, while at the same time painting a light switch (*Licht anschalten*, Switching the light on, 2003) and leaving some marks on the internal and external walls of the space (*Souvenirs aus Paris*, Souvenirs from Paris, 2003).

The video entitled *Sein Leben wegwerfen* (Throwing your life away, 2003) is a documentary showing scenes taken from an event promoted on the 1<sup>st</sup> April in a daily newspaper, which took place the following day in Milan, with the artist inviting people who happened to be crossing a bridge of Milan's Naviglio Grande to throw their house keys into the canal. A professional frogman then dived into the water where the keys were lost, retrieved them and gave them back to their owners.

### *Exhibition info*

Title:	Andreas Slominski
Dates:	10 April – 13 June 2003
Venue:	Fondazione Prada
Address:	Via Fogazzaro 36, Milan
Opening hours:	Tuesday–Sunday, 10 am–8 pm; closed on Monday
Admission:	Free
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