

Thomas Feuerstein: INVISIBLE HAND

Gallery Nicola von Senger is extremely pleased to present Thomas Feuerstein's solo-exhibition, Invisible Hands. Feuerstein, born in 1968 in Innsbruck, examines social systems and biological structures as well as the relationship between science and art in his rather complex works. For his show at Gallery von Senger, the artist has created a multilayered cosmos where one can study these concepts and examine their meaning in both natural and cultural phenomena.

The central work of the exhibition is Manifest (2009) a larger-than-life carved wooden hand which moves in response to the stockmarket fluctuations of large re-insurance companies such as Münchner Rück, SwissRe or Lloyds of London. The hand's movements, as if magically guided by an unseen force, draw an infinite line on the gallery wall.

A computer server in the form of a container ship Daimonia (2009) breathes life into the hand and records, in real-time, the companies' market performance. Simply the name Lloyds imparts an historical depth to the work by making reference to an insurer who had already covered colonial expeditions. Hence, capitalism, as the superordinate economic and social classification system, becomes the focal point.

By using biological metaphors, Feuerstein also conveys his interest in organization and interconnections. In Parlament (2009), single-cell amoeba in a bio-reactor melt into a giant cell of slime mould. This transformation process stands as an allegory of social behaviour and coexistence: do cells transform into one, large state-like structure or rather into many rivaling fractions? This question, though initially unanswered, resolves itself during the course of the exhibition.

The photographic work Species (2008), presents images of a microorganism in the Amazon forming gelatinous colonies. These microorganisms have more in common with our social reality than one, at first glance, might like to think. Of relevance here once again is the relationship of the individual parts to the whole. While the systems examined may vary in size or complexity the questions remain constant: How does structure originate? How much leeway or tolerance remains for the individual within this structure? And are we too simply guided by automatic processes, that is, invisible hands ?

Feuerstein's art stems from our own social, economic, political, technological, historical and biological reality and reflects the relationship between visual and linguistic elements. However, his aim is not to accurately reproduce structures or to formulate conclusive theories about modern life. The concepts of interdependence, space and transmittance are what interest him. Feuerstein's artworks stand as receptacles communicating with one another and with a power which just might lead us to enlance the conditions of our time with new possibilities or entrap ourselves in new terms or histories.