



Iceland Here and Now

Current painting from Iceland in Hangar-7

HÉRNA [ʰɛrdna, *adv.* here, that is, now . . .], from 22 September, Edition 8 in the **HangART-7** art programme is showing art from Iceland. The curator and programme director Lioba Reddeker has selected seven Icelandic artists for this who attest to the broad creative spectrum of the island in the north. To be seen from **22 September to 11 November 2007** in Hangar-7 in Salzburg.

Iceland, the largest volcanic island in the world, more than 10 per cent covered in glaciers, has numerous characteristics that earn the population great international empathy. The island state has no military of its own, occupies a leading position among OECD countries in the promotion of education, and has a highly regarded arts and cultural scene. Despite the geographically isolated position and the manageability of an island, it is noticeable that Icelandic artists assume strikingly individual positions and differentiate themselves sharply from one another. In painting alone an unusual diversity is apparent, and this is simultaneously against the background of a pronounced social cohesion in the arts scene.

With the current selection for the exhibition in Hangar-7, the curator **Lioba Reddeker** wanted above all to look at painting on the island, the medium that in relation to the subject of art from Iceland is at the moment hardly the centre of attention.

Aron Reyrr Sverrisson, for example, paints interiors and landscapes and occasionally combines the two. The central theme is the view, which in the rounded picture corners of the current paintings is reminiscent of a rear-view mirror, of old photos or of television screens.

Birgir Snæbjörn Birgisson's paintings might at first glance be seen as over-exposed. For the artist they are a counterbalance to everything that is all too flashy, shrill and noisy. His motifs: blonde nurses, wounds or healing touches.

David Örn Halldorsson creates powerful, psychedelically striking colour compositions. In his pictures, alongside forms in warm, powerful tones, motifs and symbols from the Icelandic everyday and saga world repeatedly appear.

Gudmundur Thoroddsen paints – one could almost say casts – pictures. The paint acquires a consistency of ice-cream. The technique contrasts with his choice of motifs, including bodybuilders or ghosts. What is noticeable, for example, is a muscle-man or a rodeo rider with icing, symbols of pop culture.

For many young painters, **Helgi Thorgils Fridjónsson** is almost a father figure. He himself has created a universe of fantastic figures from the world of sagas and of his own dreams. His pictures are noticeable for dense art-historical references and motifs, technical perfection and faintly shimmering colour compositions.

Ragnar Kjartansson's art explores the boundaries between illusion and



physical reality, and does so in the most varied “dramatic” media. Video, performance, painting, interventions: with Ragnar Kjartansson, material and context decide in and with every story or action. His works are immediate and powerful statements; when for example he paints a cigar that he is still smoking. An immediacy that is meant in the title of the exhibition in the Icelandic word “hérðna” (here, that is, now).

Thorri Hringsson, restaurant critic and artist, shows his hand for detail. For example when he paints sections of landscapes that initially seem unspectacular. Or in allusion to (unfulfilled) desires in life, he takes illustrations from cookbooks of the 1950s, symbols of well-being and home-baked warmth, as the basis for his paintings.

Presentation for media representatives

With the curator and all the artists

Friday 21 September 2007, 10.30

Hangar-7 (Wilhelm-Spazier-Straße 7a, 5020 Salzburg)

Exhibition period: 22.09.- 11.11.2007, daily 9.00 to 22.00, admission free

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Web: <http://www.hangar-7.com>, <http://www.basis-wien.at>

Downloads of pictures in print quality:

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