



All works courtesy the artist and
Mary Mary Gallery, Glasgow

Introduction to the exhibition

Torsten Lauschmann

Gallery 1

12 April - 15 June 2008

FOR EXHIBITION LAYOUT AND TITLES OF WORKS PLEASE SEE THE PLAN ON THE BACK OF THIS GUIDE.

The first work encountered in Torsten Lauschmann's exhibition acts like a circus ringmaster, welcoming visitors into a new and unusual experience.

THE MATHEMATICIAN (PAL ERDÖS) is an animation made to accompany a soundtrack of excerpts from a documentary about Pal Erdős (1916 – 1996).

Famous amongst mathematicians, Pal Erdős's unconventional approach to life and work is recounted in some of the stories he tells here. Erdős talks about his childhood, his mother and domestic life and his itinerant working

career. For this artwork, a blackboard of numbers, more often associated with a scientist's attempts to work out a problem, becomes a surface for representing a mathematician's personal and emotional recollections.

Lauschmann's interest in combining the logical with the personal and emotional, as in **THE MATHEMATICIAN**, extends to many of the works in this exhibition. Numbers, geometry and pattern occur in much of Lauschmann's work, but not to the exclusion of accident and feeling.

The sculpture **HOT, HOT, COLD, HOT** uses a table lamp turned on its side. The lamp lights up a page torn from a magazine and also provides energy to turn a heat-sensitive wheel. In another

sculpture, **UNTITLED**, a stuffed peacock is poised over a discarded chip wrapper. The artist has painted the chips on to the paper so it resembles an abstract painting. Eyeing-up, perhaps picking at, this piece of litter, the peacock would be out of place amongst the usual Saturday night activity on the streets of any city (Lauschmann lives in Glasgow), although the bird's associations of strutting and showing off might have closer ties to such scenes.

As well as such apparently spur-of-the-moment sculptures, Lauschmann has developed carefully crafted, manipulated videos. **ROPE DANCING** and **PANDORA'S BALL** both use his technique of masking out sections of footage from films to create eye-catching and slightly unsettling results.

The complex geometric star shape of **ROPE DANCING** combines outlines painted onto the wall with projections from a film. Through the complex, fragmented patterns the image of a woman climbing a tree and walking along a rope can just be made out.

PANDORA'S BALL combines two images, one of a ball shape and the other the dancing feet of a woman. Lauschmann has manipulated the film to ensure the dancing feet remain on the top of the ball, resulting in a film that dances and trips along with the woman's feet.

As in **ROPE DANCING**, Lauschmann introduces different senses of depth, surface and solidity by placing these differently rendered elements side-by-side.

A nearby work uses a crunched up sheet of aluminum, painted black. Once unfolded, creases and holes appear in the surface and Lauschmann has back lit these so they resemble stars in a night sky. Unlike most of the artist's works, the results of this process are less uncontrolled. The random effects of folds and lines cannot be reduced to a simple equation.

Occupying much of the rear of the gallery, **THE CURTAIN** is another example of the artist's interest in both the technical and mathematical but also in the beautiful and romantic associations of his imagery. Playing around with mathematician John Conway's 'Game of Life' (a computer game in which cells live, die or multiply according to mathematical rules, thereby forming visual patterns), Lauschmann created a fluctuating design of vertical bars. When projected, it has the appearance of a shifting curtain before a performance begins, or shrouding something before its unveiling.

Around the back of the structure on to which **THE CURTAIN** is projected are a set of Polaroid photographs selected from an ongoing series by the artist. Displayed in this way, they encourage people to explore the structure supporting the projection in front; a reminder that it's just an illusion. Each photograph shows elements of Lauschmann's personal, domestic life. The double exposures and imperfections which result from this way of making pictures contrast with the precision and

control in the digitised works. There are also three **DRAWINGS** in this cupboard-like space, one almost hidden towards the back.

On the wall nearby is **FEAR AMONG SCIENTISTS**, a simple sum made of wooden cut outs. The figures are contradicted by their shadows, which show a different equation. The equation here is an undemanding one, but there are many complex problems and inexplicable number patterns which scientists are trying to find explanations for, using reason and rationale. Lauschmann's title for this work seems to suggest one of the consequences of leaving things unexplained.

The overturned keyboard in **QUALITY MONEY CHORD** emits a constant hum. A bank note is trapped underneath and Lauschmann has carefully matched a projected animation with the shadow cast by the keyboard. As in **FEAR AMONGST SCIENTISTS**, the shadows of this work contain extra information, something not revealed by looking at the solid object.

This combination of objects, like **HOT, HOT, COLD, HOT**, resembles a new type of machine. In the case of this work it appears as though feeding in a bank note causes the keyboard to make a musical note; a new kind of sound resulting in mathematical chaos.

The sculptural structures of **QUALITY MONEY CHORD** resemble the video projection on the wall above. The keyboard legs look a little like the

gymnast's crab-like posture, and the bank note resembles her notepad. Like the numerical patterns in the sculpture, Lauschmann's addition of a bizarre, unexplained animated design on to the video seems to suggest some kind of less than ordinary event is in process.

Torsten Lauschmann is always open to new ideas and his diversity of interests is reflected in the range of media and ways of working in this exhibition. Bringing together sculpture, digitized video and personal imagery side-by-side with his more formal, logical pieces, this exhibition is a chance to compare works as well as look at them individually. Like the layering of merging sounds emanating from different works within this exhibition, visual and formal ideas clash and overlap to stimulate new ways of thinking about the artwork.

Please ask a Steward if you have any questions. Further information about Torsten Lauschmann's art and ideas can be found in the Reading Room on the Second Floor. Open Tue - Sun 12.00 - 6.00pm.

There are free tours of the exhibitions at 2.00pm each Saturday.

ART/FUN, an activity pack for the exhibitions, is available from Arnolfini Bookshop price £1.