

## PRESERVING AND RESTORING



Robert Gober, *Untitled 1995-1997, 1995-1997*, detail with coins and seaweed

**Working tools and substitute materials for preserving and restoring Robert Gober's installation**  
*Untitled 1995-1997 (1995-1997)*

While the long-term development of traditional, familiar materials such as canvas or marble can be anticipated, new materials in use today pose many unresolved issues that still require research. The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation's collection includes works made of such materials as chocolate, petroleum jelly, wax and polyurethane — materials that are more difficult to preserve and whose aging characteristics are relatively unknown. The works of art at Schaulager are placed in surroundings suited to all aspects of their conservation. Environmental influence is minimised in the windowless storage area. State-of-the-art technology throughout the building ensures perfectly tailored climate control and there is no light in the rooms unless work has to be done there. Such stable conditions are crucial to optimum preservation of fragile works and materials such as Dieter Roth's chocolate sculptures or the plastic components of works by Katharina Fritsch, Peter Fischli / David Weiss or Matthew Barney. Open storage gives restorers direct access to the works, allowing them to observe and keep a record of their condition.

As with all material things, the aging of artworks cannot be entirely prevented. In many cases, restorers are faced with the challenge of finding a balance between change and artistic intentions and, where necessary, they work directly with the artist themselves to find solutions. The conservation of contemporary art also entails anticipating the requirements of works that contain electronic or digital components.

The tools and materials on display here document the measures undertaken to preserve and restore an exceptionally elaborate work: Robert Gober's installation, which is permanently installed at Schaulager. Being in constant contact with water, the materials inevitably require conservatorial care. For example, a protective coat must be applied to the coins to prevent corrosion; the basin with the seaweed must be cleaned; and the hairs on the wax legs require regular, painstaking restoration. The metal coins and the silicon seaweed are also materials that must be restored from time to time and occasionally replaced. The block of wax seen here is used by restorers to practice inserting hairs.

## ROBERT GOBER



Robert Gober: *Work 1976–2007*, exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2007

*Untitled*, 1994–1995, wood, wax, bricks, plastic, leather, iron, coal, cotton socks, electric lamp, motor, 78 × 78 × 77 cm

### Robert Gober, working model of exhibits created to plan the exhibition *Robert Gober. Work 1976–2007*

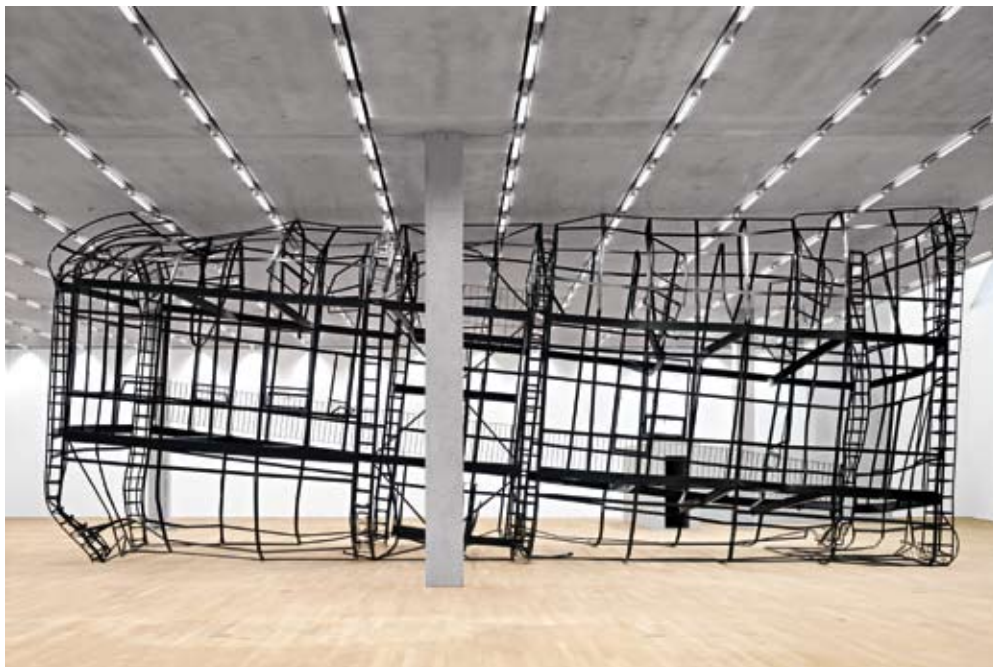
American artist Robert Gober (\*1954) references a visual vocabulary that initially evokes domesticity, religion and the body. Objects drawn from this *visual inventory* are combined and alienated in his sculptures, so that the cosy atmosphere of domesticity suddenly takes a disturbing turn, symbols of cleanliness and hygiene appear as ambivalent substitutes for exclusion and repression, and renditions of body fragments suggest an unsettling absence.

The fascination of these sculptures lies not only in their subject matter but also in the tactility of their surfaces and the artist's devotion to detail. Suitcase, playpen, sink and ice skates are all naturalistic, handmade imitations of ordinary, everyday objects. Significantly, Gober's works do not mirror today's high-tech world of consumerism, but look instead more like relics of days gone by. For the artist himself, they are metaphors for the world in which he grew up: the middle-class, Christian surroundings of small-town America in the 1950s and 1960s.

Gober made his first appearance in Basel in 1995 in an important exhibition at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst. On that occasion, the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation acquired *Chair with a Pipe* (1994/1995) and *Untitled* (1994–1995), the latter a fireplace containing the legs of a child. *Untitled 1995–1997*, a complex installation with an underground water system, was purchased in 1999, prior to the construction of Schaulager. A special space has been built in the basement of Schaulager to permanently house this crucial work and display its many layers, both concrete and figurative, to the best advantage. The 2007 exhibition *Robert Gober. Work 1976–2007* gave Schaulager the opportunity to publish a catalogue raisonné, which offers a thorough and in-depth insight into the artist's oeuvre.

Gober prepared the exhibition with meticulous care, using an architectural model of the vast 4300 m<sup>2</sup> and tiny replicas of his works that he moved around to find the best arrangement. These painstaking preparations with scaled-down objects bear a direct relationship to the very beginnings of Gober's artistic career. At the end of the 1970s his initial interest in building dolls' houses gradually shifted to the semantic complexity of the house itself, in which the house becomes a symbol that is both cosy and uncanny.

## MONIKA SOSNOWSKA



1:1, 2007/2008, steel construction,  
exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2008

**Monika Sosnowska, model of 1:1 (2007/2008) and film documenting the construction of the sculpture for the exhibition at Schaulager (2008)**

In her sculptures and installations, Monika Sosnowska (\*1972 in Ryki, Poland) studies the surroundings, the architecture and the life forms related to them. The filigree paper object on display here is a model of the monumental sculpture *1:1*, which premiered in 2007 at the Venice Biennale and was adapted one year later for the exhibition at Schaulager. The gigantic steel construction was bent just enough to squeeze it in between the floor and the ceiling of Schaulager's lower exhibition area. The sculpture proves to be the skeleton of a building based on the modules that were widespread in constructing offices and housing estates throughout Poland during the 1960s and 1970s. On her wanderings through Warsaw's suburbs, through the ruins of residential buildings and through abandoned industrial premises, Sosnowska tracks down traces of bygone utopias. The atmosphere of upheaval, stagnation and new beginnings is the seedbed of her oeuvre, although she always devises her works

in direct relationship to their respective exhibition venue. Thus *1:1* also refers directly to Schaulager's spatial situation. Constructed in a scale of 1:1 by experts in Poland and painstakingly reconstructed in Basel, the sculpture braces itself against the existing architecture, making it physically palpable. We as viewers are therefore incorporated into the work both visually and physically: the fictional spatial configuration draws our attention to architectural and atmospheric qualities, sharpening our perception and bringing to light ordinarily hidden features of the space.

## DAVID CLAERBOUT



*Sections of a Happy Moment*, 2006, one-channel video projection, b/w, stereo sound, 26 min., stills



### David Claerbout, research material, sketches and production shots for *Sections of a Happy Moment* (2006)

Since the mid-1990s the Belgian artist David Claerbout (\*1969) has been investigating the media of photography and film, specifically their historical heritage and contemporary role, in works of great visual impact. Inquiry into our notions of time and narration is a crucial concern. In his installations, the artist includes not only vintage photographs, but also pictures and films shot according to his stage directions.

The video installation *Sections of a Happy Moment* from the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation pictures one of those precious moments, when life at its most ordinary converges with untroubled pleasure. People standing on a sunlit square are playing with a ball, throwing it high up into the air so that it never touches the ground — a symbol of arrested time in a moment of joyous abandon. A long sequence of shots shows the small group from steadily changing angles. A gently rippling piano piece accompanies the scene. It is set against the backdrop of an uninviting social housing estate, designed by the Belgian architect Renaat Braem in Antwerp-Kiel. The sterility and uniformity of the architecture is outweighed by the light-hearted and playful mood of the little group — so much so that it seems as if they could keep playing for all eternity.

However, viewers do not see what they think they see. The seemingly continuous sequence actually shows one single moment in the life of an Asian family. The semicircular arrangement of the figures was photographed by numerous cameras, grouped around the staged scene. The notes, sketches and research material on view here give an insight into the way the artist works. They are almost like directions for a screenplay, testifying to the precision with which he planned and composed the scene: For *Sections of a Happy Moment* Claerbout sifted through thousands of photographs, selecting about 180, which he then processed digitally, linking them up sequentially in a slideshow. By imposing the passage of linear time on the circularity of a constantly reiterated static moment, he conjures the impression of a progressing situation. Ingeniously he subjects the images to variations on time, stretching it and compressing it between permanence and fleeting moment. David Claerbout intertwines two important media in contemporary art — photography and video — with such skill that the conventions of their respective modes of perception are subtly subverted.

## JACQUES HERZOG &amp; PIERRE DE MEURON



Schaulager from outside

*Herzog & de Meuron. No. 250. Eine Ausstellung*, exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2004



**Jacques Herzog & Pierre de Meuron, model 1:200 and sourcebook for Schaulager  
(project: 1998–1999, execution: 2000–2003)**

The involvement of the Basel architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron with Schaulager is manifold. Between 2000 and 2003 they designed and built Schaulager in close cooperation with their client, and in 2004 Schaulager mounted a major exhibition of their oeuvre entitled *Herzog & de Meuron. No. 250. Eine Ausstellung*.

The two objects on display here, the model of the Schaulager building and the sourcebook, are closely linked to that exhibition, which explicitly chose not to present the architects or their projects. Instead, the objective was to give an insight into how the architects work and how they develop their ideas by presenting drawings, models and sketches, samples of materials and collections of photographs. The traces and relics of thought processes — as exemplified by the model and the sourcebook — offer tangible evidence of the distinctive way in which Herzog & de Meuron approach their projects.

The sourcebook shown here is a previously unpublished collection of visuals that were of significance for the team of architects in the process of conceiving and executing the Schaulager. It contains photographs of art depots or architectural types from other cultures that may have served as inspiration, a meticulous inventory of the

Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation's collection, listed according to the dimensions and volume of the works, rather than the conventional art historical criteria, as well as simulations and computer-generated pictures of architectural details demonstrating how digital media also figure in the architects' design process. The visual documents are complemented by other devices. These include a model in the form of an evocatively archaic object hand-crafted from wood that relates viscerally to the viewer and which can be picked up and taken apart. Crafted with exceptionally loving care, the object on display here has something playful about it.

Both the sourcebook and the model eloquently testify to the paths and detours, the conceptual and material processes that ultimately led to and are incorporated in the final product. However, these accumulated materials are more than just a record of the past; they also point to the future. For they have the potential to become repositories of the discarded materials that can offer inspiration for new projects and ideas.

## FRANCIS ALÿS



*The Sign Painting Project (1993–97): A Revision*, exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2006

Francis Alÿs/Juan Garcia, *La leçon de musique*, 1994–1997, enamel paint on metal, 93 × 121 cm

**Francis Alÿs, advertisement for menswear from a traditional sign painting studio in Mexico City, a source of inspiration for the *Sign Painting Project* (1993–1997)**

Walking, or—to be more precise—drifting about, plays a crucial role in the work of Belgian artist Francis Alÿs (\*1959). He has been living in Mexico City since 1986 and started his creative work strolling aimlessly around the city; an activity that has become the cornerstone of his entire artistic output. It allows him to cultivate his interest in the unspectacular, in all things ordinary and mundane. Taking a walk may be the point of departure for his work in the form of one-off performances. Alÿs keeps records of his walks or *paseos* in writing, sketches, postcards and videos, but they may also inspire ideas for specific works that become projects in their own right, apart from the walks themselves.

The *Sign Painting Project* (1993–1997), presented at Schaulager in 2006, is closely related to its geographical origins. To keep a record of his city strolls, Alÿs began painting small-format pictures in oils. He borrowed his motifs from the advertisements he saw on his wanderings through Mexico City—signs propped up on the sidewalk or hanging on the façades of businesses, produced by the professional sign painters known as *rotulistas*. The simplicity and immediacy of their visual syntax forms the distinctive aesthetic of the advertisement for menswear on display here. Various versions of the figure

wearing a grey suit and striking an effective advertising pose in the lower right-hand corner of the sign make their appearance in Alÿs' work. The artist adopted the style of the *rotulistas* for his *Sign Painting Project*, creating enigmatic, surreal scenarios and narratives in his combinations of found motifs and figures.

Alÿs then had a number of sign painters re-create his own pictures so that several “copies” were made of every “original”. Inspired by the more or less free interpretations of the *rotulistas*, he in turn created additional variations for reproduction, thus fuelling further copies. This simple procedure, like a visual version of Chinese whispers, resulted in a suite of works that questions the mechanisms of the art market and its distribution of roles. Who is the professional painter? What is an original? What is a copy? What is the status of a copy of the copy? Alÿs' act of sabotage against the art market went a step further: The act of copying became more and more important, involving thoughtful and detailed deliberation between sign painters and artists. The notion of authorship gradually morphed into the collective approach that was common practice in artists' workshops of the 16th century and has now acquired currency again in the postmodern discourse.

## PETER FISCHLI/DAVID WEISS



*Tisch*, 1992–1993, c. 750 carved and painted polyurethane objects and table, 77 × 990 × 330 cm, left in storage at Schaulager, right detail

**Peter Fischli and David Weiss, original objects, carved in polyurethane for the sculpture *Tisch* (1992–1993)**

Peter Fischli (\*1952) and David Weiss (1946–2012) are among the most internationally renowned representatives of contemporary Swiss art. The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation has been following their work since the very beginning of their creative collaboration. Through repeated acquisitions from the 1980s to the present day, the foundation has acquired an impressive collection of some of their most iconic works. The selection comprises various media, such as early films, including *Der Lauf der Dinge* [The Way Things Go] (1987), a major series of unfired clay objects from *Plötzlich diese Übersicht* [Suddenly This Overview] (1981), several photographic works and *Ohne Titel (Fragenprojektion)* [Untitled (Question Projection)], a project that evolved between 1984 and 2003. The collection also includes *Tisch* [Table] (1992–1993), with a display of objects that begs the distinction between appearance and reality.

*Tisch* consists of a worktop piled up with hundreds of everyday mass-produced items such as dried-out paint pots, bottles of cleaning fluid, an open juice carton, cigarette stubs. Simple materials and simple tools suggest processes of manual craftsmanship. The seemingly chaotic array of implements, materials, waste and leftover snacks gives the impression that these busy bricoleurs have just stepped out to take a short break. But what is this accumulation of objects doing in an art collection? Those familiar with Marcel

Duchamp's readymades may surmise that the artists have declared a corner of their studio to be art. But closer inspection reveals irregularities: an imperfectly painted label, a slightly too sturdy carton — and it becomes clear that these are not found objects at all, but true-to-scale reproductions. The objects made of carved and painted polyurethane are a disconcerting emulation of their own production process.

Illusionistic effects have always been an integral aspect of the still-life genre. This sculpture by Fischli/Weiss follows in the same tradition, with a contemporary twist. The simulation eschews the original — and captures it at the same time. However, it functions entirely on the basis of the recognition effect: it is only when the everyday items are recognised for what they are — well-known brands of washing-up liquid or canned pineapple, for instance, trigger the collective memory of an entire generation in Switzerland — that the initial sense of confusion turns to amusement and liberating laughter. In this self-reflexive gesture alluding to the objects themselves as well as to the obvious act of reproduction, Fischli/Weiss provocatively play on the sublation of their role as *auteurs*. Their witty subversion of conventional hierarchies of value goes hand in hand with the loving attention to detail that is the hallmark of all their work.

## FIONA TAN



*Correction*, 2004, six-channel video installation, installation view and detail

**Fiona Tan, photographs of the set taken while shooting the video installation  
*Correction* (2004)**

A core concern in the work of Fiona Tan (\*1966) is the relationship between the individual and the masses. Using the documentary tools of photography and film, Tan explores social, anthropological and historical questions that address the role of the individual within society.

*Countenance* (2002), an encyclopaedic series of portraits, is part of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation collection: four screens are suspended in two separate rooms (one in a small room, three in a larger room). They show people who live in Berlin, either at work or elsewhere in the context of their lives. This places Tan in the tradition of the German photographer August Sander (1876–1964). Starting in the mid-1920s, Sander embarked on a long-term project of several decades, recording *People of the 20th Century* from all walks of life and in thousands of photographs, classifying them by professional and social status. Tan adopts Sander's structure, but undermines his classification and the affirmative goal of achieving a representative selection. Her subjects each stand still for a few seconds in front of the running camera. Thus filmed gazing directly into the lens, they acquire a physical presence, their subtle movements and gestures radiating a self-confidence that simultaneously reveals facets of a fragile inner life — a duality indicated in the title itself: *Countenance*.

The medium of film, which Tan also chose to use for the work that followed — *Correction* (2004) — is essential to the impact and perception of both installations. Tan visited four penitentiaries in Illinois and California, filming close to 300 inmates and guards in their surroundings. The men and women remain stationary in front of the camera for up to 50 seconds — it feels like forever and it is also a metonymical expression of the endlessness and monotony of incarceration. The six-channel installation of life-sized portraits is arranged in a circle with a soundtrack of prison noises.

The photographs on view here were taken on the set while filming, and show the subjects in three-quarter profile. The large-format prints also reveal what is going on in the background. The inclusion of the context underscores the temporary, selective nature of this standstill, in which panoptic control has been reversed and the inmates are granted individuality. Fiona Tan's project is without comment, its wordlessness heightening its political implications: the United States with the world's highest incarceration rate and overcrowded prisons; or the questionable idea of "correcting" criminals through incarceration.



## DIETER ROTH



*Löwenturm*, 1970–1998, iron frame on wheels with 7 glass shelves, figures cast in chocolate and sugar, c. 260 × 100 × 100 cm

*Roth Time. A Dieter Roth Retrospective*, exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2003

**Dieter Roth, documentation for *Selbstturm* (1969–1998) and *Löwenturm* (1970–1998); mould for *Selbstporträt als alter Mann***

Artist and creator of books, musician and filmmaker, poet and writer, communicator and mediator: Dieter Roth (Hanover, 1930–1998 Basel) was one of the few universal artists of the 20th century. His early interest in concrete art and Fluxus developed into an oeuvre informed by his virtuoso skills as both a fine artist and a writer. In 2003, Schaulager organised the first major retrospective of the artist's work after his death. As the opening exhibition, it set the stage for future Schaulager exhibitions by showcasing an artist who had consistently subverted and even deconstructed the notion of a durable work of art with unparalleled radicalism, while increasingly creating art as manifest traces of his own existence. In 1968 he produced what is probably his most renowned self-portrait *P.O.T.H.A.A.VFB. (Portrait of the Artist as Vogelfutterbüste)* [Birdfeeder Bust] and a year later a bust cast in the same mould titled *Selbstporträt als alter Mann* [Self-Portrait as an Old Man] as well as *Löwenselbst* [Lion Self]. He created these works at a time when he was busily subverting formal and linguistic conventions and had begun to experiment with nondurable materials. By using organic substances like chocolate or sugar, he incorporated decay into his works as a constitutive element and yet, at the same time, he wanted to rescue his work from oblivion. To this end, he deployed several strategies, including elaborate documentary and archival systems of *picture stories* (D.R.) and commentaries, to which he sometimes assigned the status of a work of art.

Roth returned to the above-mentioned works in the 1980s. For the installation *Selbstturm/Löwenturm*, he built shelves that were filled, floor to ceiling, with chocolate and sugar casts of *Selbstporträt als alter Mann*, *Löwenselbst* and a combination of the two moulds. When the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation acquired this work in progress in 1989, a room was rented enabling Roth to continue working on both towers until his death. The inroads of decay have inevitably changed the appearance of the objects over the years. However, what is crucial in this case is not the material itself, but rather the language and imagery that the artist has conjured. The figures all look different, their surfaces sometimes like rusty metal, sometimes like old leather, so that the sameness of the figures cast in sugar and chocolate has dissolved into countless individuals of the same species. By making this process so palpable, so visible, Dieter Roth has left behind a radical and moving piece of art about the dialectics of becoming and fading, of bravado and desperation.

## TACITA DEAN



*The Russian Ending. The Sinking of the SS Plympton, 2001, photogravure, 54 × 79.4 cm, and detail*

**Tacita Dean, twenty original postcards, source material for *The Russian Ending* (2001), portfolio of 20 photogravures**

The British filmmaker, photographer and graphic artist Tacita Dean (\*1965) captures fleeting moments and things about to be lost forever. Even her preferred artistic medium, 16 mm film, is rapidly becoming obsolete, with most laboratories already shut down. Dean is fighting with unflagging energy for the survival of her material, particularly because analogue processes are vital to her oeuvre. Her most recent publication, *Tacita Dean: Film* (2011) essentially puts in a plea for celluloid and includes contributions by such renowned artists and directors as Jean-Luc Godard, Martin Scorsese, Stan Douglas and Jeff Wall.

The analogue medium was also crucial to her exhibition at Schaulager (*Tacita Dean. Analogue: Films, Photographs, Drawings 1991–2006*, 2006). In the year 2000, the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation purchased the film *Banewl* (1999); the fragile blackboard drawings *The Sea, with a Ship; afterwards an Island* (1999); as well as the photographs *Friday/Saturday* (1999/2000) and *Jukebox* (1999/2000), a set of visual and audio records documenting the turn of the millennium in eight sea-ports around the world.

The almost cinematic approach to drawing that is the hallmark of Tacita Dean's work as a whole is especially conspicuous in her 20-part *Russian Ending* (2001). The title refers to a peculiarity of the early twentieth century Danish film industry, which catered to audience tastes by making two versions of each film: one with a happy ending for the United States and the other with a tragic ending for Russia. Arrows and markings in white, with handwritten stage directions such as "last shot" or "zoom in", are chalked onto copies of the flea-market-sourced postcards depicting man-made accidents and natural catastrophes, superimposing a dramaturgical commentary on the original motif. By scaling up the motifs, combining photographs and drawing and reproducing these graphic interventions as photogravures, the artist creates an impressive array of tragic endings for imaginary films.

## KATHARINA FRITSCH



*Warengestell mit Gehirnen*, 1989/1997, aluminium, plastic, paint, 250 × 120 × 120 cm

View of the Schaulager storage space with works by Katharina Fritsch; in the foreground, *Kind mit Pudeln*, 1995–1996, plaster, foil, polyurethane, paint, 512 cm in diameter

### Katharina Fritsch, casts, models and preprints

The *Rattenkönig* [Rat King] (1993) by German sculptress Katharina Fritsch (\*1956) consists of 16 pitch black rats, standing in a circle, their tails inextricably tangled. This work, which is key to the artist's oeuvre, is permanently installed in Schaulager's exhibition area, dominating an entire space designed especially to accommodate it. In the 1980s, the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation already acquired her iconic early work *Acht Tische mit acht Gegenständen* [Eight Tables with Eight Objects] (1984). Today, Fritsch ranks amongst the collection's foremost artists. The arrangement of the tables and shelves evokes an element of commercialisation that underlies the artist's ongoing enquiry into art versus commodity, as demonstrated by *Warengestell mit Gehirnen* [Display Stand with Brains] (1989/1997). The artist pursued the principle of duplication and the multiple in her creation of *Kind mit Pudeln* [Child with Poodles], showing 224 identical poodles. That principle also applies to two-dimensional works, such as the silkscreens of trite postcard motifs or enlargements of illustrations from old encyclopaedias or newspapers, which the artist began making in the 1990s and which complement the sculptures and objects in the collection. Katharina Fritsch's works are based on references to reality, alienated by such factors as size, proportions, colouring, arrangement and composition.

The objects presented here give an insight into this work process. For instance, the negative mould enveloping a small rat reveals that Fritsch originally worked from a stuffed animal before making a cartoon to enlarge the cast to almost three metres. She worked on the plaster model, adapting it to the mould and optimizing it until she had come up with an unmistakably prototypical rat. The quest for the typical, standardised shape of things is also demonstrated in the other models and preliminary stages that Fritsch makes in preparation for her work. This painstaking approach to the meticulous execution of her sculptures, covering the spectrum from a quest for the ideal shape to the perfectly absorbent pigment, is what makes them so enigmatic, so striking in appearance and at the same time so witty. The familiar is alienated; everyday objects and memories are shrouded in hypnotically seductive appeal.

## JEFF WALL



After 'Invisible Man' by Ralph Ellison, the Prologue, 1999–2000, printed in 2001, transparency in lightbox, 174 × 250.5 cm

**Jeff Wall, Odradek, wooden object as a prop for the Odradek Táboritská 8, Prague, 18 July 1994 (1994), transparency in lightbox**

In 2005 Schaulager showcased the oeuvre of Canadian artist Jeff Wall (\*1946) in the important exhibition *Jeff Wall. Photographs 1978–2004*. The numerous works owned by the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation (his photographs have been collected since the 1980s) were complemented by loans from all over the world, including the transparency *Odradek Táboritská 8, Prague, 18 July 1994*, from the Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main. This work, created while the artist was in Prague, references *The Cares of the Family Man*, a short story by the Czech writer Franz Kafka. Written in 1919, the story describes a curious creature, the Odradek, a kind of household spirit that rolls about on a star-shaped spool, collecting dust, scraps of fabric and bits of thread. Wall built the wooden object shown here on the basis of Kafka's scant description and in his photograph of a young girl walking down a flight of stairs, he inserted the Odradek as a prop at the bottom of the stairs.

The motif is one of Jeff Wall's few transparencies to make a specific reference to literature. Another is his overwhelmingly detailed picture *After 'Invisible Man' by Ralph Ellison, the Prologue* (1999), which is also in the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation.

Although Wall has made *documentary* photographs, picturing situations in which he has not intervened, the great majority of his work is staged down to the tiniest detail, and has involved digital processing since 1991. The deceptively casual, snapshot feeling of these *cinematographic* representations, showing scenes of everyday life, landscapes and streets, is meticulously and painstakingly orchestrated. While social issues and even social criticism are a key aspect of his oeuvre, European art history, in particular 19th century French painting, represented by such artists as Delacroix and Manet, also plays a major role. The composition, colouring and subject matter of Wall's photographs have prompted some critics to borrow the words of Charles Baudelaire (1863) in describing him as a contemporary *painter of modern life*. Wall translates his interest in society into a contemporary iconography. His self-reflective awareness of the medium, which has taken the form of large-format lightbox transparencies since 1978 and, more recently, a return to conventional photographic prints, is echoed in the use of light and transparency, mirroring and deliberately manoeuvring the viewer's vantage point.

## ANDREA ZITTEL



Two examples of *A-Z Personal Uniforms*, 1991–2003

*A-Z Escape Vehicle* (Owned and Customised by the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation), 1996/1997, steel, wood, glass, 2CV car parts with video equipment, 152 × 213 × 101 cm

### Andrea Zittel, brochures, flyers and newsletters of the *A-Z Administrative Services* (1993–1998)

The work of US American artist Andrea Zittel (\*1965) is amply represented in the collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. The Foundation has been following her career since her 1996 exhibition at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel and has had the opportunity of acquiring many of her works in the interim. The cornerstone of what now quite probably forms the largest group of this artist's works in any public collection in Europe was her *A-Z Escape Vehicle* (1996/1997) that was purchased at the time. In 2008, Andrea Zittel was invited to present her oeuvre in a major exhibition at Schaulager: *Monika Sosnowska. Andrea Zittel. 1:1*.

In her work, Andrea Zittel explores various aspects of everyday life. She is particularly interested in the needs and habits that shape our attitudes to objects and the way we handle them. Since 1991 she has created so-called *Living Units* — modular and mobile structures that combine such elementary functions of daily life as sleeping, cooking, clothing, personal hygiene, and office work. The artist herself is the starting point of these explorations; she actually lives in the prototype of each unit until she has reached the point of being able to recognise and satisfy certain needs. The *Living Units* and their conceptual follow-ups such as the *A-Z Travel Trailers*, the *A-Z Selected*

*Sleeping Arrangements* and the *A-Z Escape Vehicles* are adapted to suit the ideas and wishes of their owners and are equipped in consultation with them, making this a form of co-authorship. In addition to their obviously functional quality, Andrea Zittel's living units also have a distinctly sculptural, model character. As such, they negotiate the boundary between autonomous artwork and functional item, recalling the spirit of such avant-garde movements as the Bauhaus or Russian Constructivism, which were rooted in utopian social ideas and made concrete efforts to unite art and life.

In order to give an organisational framework to her long-term project, Andrea Zittel founded *A-Z Administrative Services*. The title is derived from the initials of her own name, while at the same time formulating a somewhat tongue-in-cheek claim to the all-encompassing nature of her artistic work and creative research. During the 1990s *A-Z Administrative Services* issued brochures, flyers and newsletters based on commercial advertising formats to accompany the presentation of the various living units and artefacts. Not only are these publications compelling in terms of their graphic design; they also demonstrate Andrea Zittel's personal and single-minded commitment to the philosophy that she has devised.

## JOHN BALDESSARI



*Throwing Four Balls in the Air to Get a Square*, 1972–1973, 8 colour photographs on cardboard, each 24 × 35 cm, detail

**John Baldessari, *Four Balls Project*, Multiple (2010)**

John Baldessari (\*1931 in National City, California) is among those artists who contributed substantially in the 1960s to expanding the traditional notion of art. In contrast to many of his colleagues, he was still interested in painting despite his spectacular *Cremation Project* of 1970 in which he took a radical stance against classic painting by burning all of his early works. He subsequently dedicated himself to the reduced principles of Minimalism and Conceptual Art, conducting experiments that question how art functions and seeking new ways of finding visual solutions and forms of composition. The art that he created gave concrete visual shape to concepts. Baldessari had already attracted the attention of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation in the 1970s. Key samples of his early work are in the holdings of the collection. These include an early text piece, *Semi-Close-Up of Girl by Geranium (Soft View)* (1966–1968), as well as two works in the medium of photography, *Throwing Four Balls in the Air to Get a Square* (1972–1973) and *Floating: Stick (With Two Figures to Get Various Triangles)* (1972).

In the multiple on display here, Baldessari references a series of photographic works of 1972/1973 that illustrate his search for new methods of creating art. He linked photography with a variety of aesthetic principles or strategies, among them the integration

of chance into the work process. Self-imposed rules, reflected in such titles as *Throwing Four Balls in the Air to Get a Square*, enable the artist to determine the composition of a work without making any explicit intervention. The work is thus based on a formal concept while the ability to control the composition of red balls thrown up into the air is limited. The four red balls, issued as a multiple in 2010 for an exhibition at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, are an invitation from the artist to engage in the game by implementing his instructions.

In this play between order and chance, Baldessari has found an idiosyncratic and poetic response to the recurring question about the conditions of artistic production. A subtle irony also lies in his response: the quest for a perfect square may be interpreted not only as an allusion to art history but also to Minimal and Conceptual Art, both artistic movements that were attracted to the clarity and reproducibility of the square. These subversive implications allow John Baldessari to assign a different meaning to order as such, while also drawing attention to the conventions that underlie every system.

## THOMAS DEMAND



*Clearing*, 2003, C-print/Diasec, 192 × 495 cm

**Thomas Demand, egg carton, part of the paper model constructed for the photograph *Kitchen* (2004)**

Before devoting himself to the medium of photography, Thomas Demand (\*1964) studied sculpture at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art. It is an interest that still resonates in his art, for the third dimension is a salient feature of the scenographic preparations that precede his photographs. These photographs depict the paper models that he and his assistants construct in his studio, usually in full scale. Upon completion, they are meticulously illuminated and photographed with a large-format camera to create the actual work of art. The paper model is ephemeral, serving only to stage the desired scene. What remains is the photograph mounted on plexiglass, where its wealth of detail and resolution are emphasised even more. Paper appeals to Demand particularly because it can easily and quickly visualise what he wants it to; it is chameleon-like, and “can be everything, but is rarely itself” (Demand). Different types of paper are the artist’s “actors”, who act out a recognisable scene — but only for the duration of the brief camera shoot, since the sculptures are extremely fragile and not meant to last.

What is the reality of a picture? The afterlife of pictures in today’s mediatised universe is constitutive of Demand’s choice of image. His source materials are press photographs made famous by the media. By subjecting his pictures to a twofold process of translation, thereby undermining the distinction between production and reproduction, Demand questions the credibility of images and inquires into the role photography plays in shaping reality.

The titles of Demand’s still lifes are unassuming, as illustrated by *Kitchen* (2004), a work in the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation’s collection. A closer look at the artist’s photographs reveals that no dirt, no traces of use, no signs of human presence mark the cleanly illuminated paper settings, their banality actually underscoring the feeling that stories, scandals or dramas of great political consequence must have taken place there. *Kitchen*, for example, is a reconstruction of the kitchen in the hideout where Saddam Hussein was discovered in his native Tikrit, Iraq in 2003. The egg carton exhibited here is seen next to the dishes at the edge of the photograph. It is one of the rare leftovers from the paper model and gives an impression of the painstaking exactitude with which the artist reconstructs every single object.

The accumulation of such detail is sometimes taken to immeasurable lengths, as evidenced in the large-format work *Clearing* (2003), exhibited at the Venice Biennale that same year and now part of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation’s collection. It took many thousands of leaves, each cut out by hand, to conjure the illusion of a sunlit forest clearing.

## ILYA KABAKOV



*Mother and Son. 'My Mother's Album', 1993, installation view and entrance*

### Ilya Kabakov, tools and extra materials for *Mother and Son. 'My Mother's Album' (1993)*

Born in the former USSR, Ilya Kabakov (\*1933) became known for works that he made during the communist era and could only show underground in his native country. After emigrating in 1987, he continued to focus primarily on the unofficial life of the artist in Moscow during the 1960s and 1970s. He began to create large-scale installations, interweaving historical events and fundamental human concerns. The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation took an interest in his work from the very beginning and purchased paintings and drawings by Kabakov even before his first major exhibition in the West (Kunsthalle Bern, 1985). The Foundation's holdings were further enhanced in the 1990s by the acquisition of two important works: the installation, *Mother and Son. 'My Mother's Album'* (1993) and a work for public space, *Monument to a Lost Glove* (1998).

*Mother and Son. 'My Mother's Album'* is what Kabakov calls a "total" installation. He applies the term to works that generally occupy several rooms, appealing to all of the viewers' senses and engaging them as individuals. His carefully composed combinations of objects, colours, materials, lighting and sound generate an overall atmosphere that compels viewers to become physically involved. He creates the impression that we have entered a specific (social) space but then undermines that impression by adding commentaries and labels.

Visitors encounter a similar interplay of physical involvement and detached viewing in *Mother and Son. 'My Mother's Album'*. Equipped with flashlights, they walk into the dimly lit room and, as they grope their way about, they are immersed in a (fictional) conversation between the artist and his mother. *My Mother's Album* (1987) consists of 115 collages that Kabakov has laid out on a shelf along the wall. There, the artist pits the mother's memories of the hard times she experienced during the Russian Revolution, Stalinism and the post-Stalinist regime against the son's selection of propaganda pictures from magazines of the 1950s and 1960s. Labelled waste objects are attached to strings crisscrossing the entire room at eye level. The labels contain sentences that sound like something the son may have said to his mother — remarks, questions and requests about ordinary everyday affairs. The artist's voice is heard in the background, absent-mindedly singing traditional Russian songs. Parts of the installation are revealed in the beam of the flashlight but it is too dark to see this gesamtkunstwerk in its entirety.



## CINDY SHERMAN



*Untitled Film Still #22*, 1978, b/w photograph, 10.5 × 25 cm

*Untitled #316*, 1995, colour photograph, 122 × 81 cm



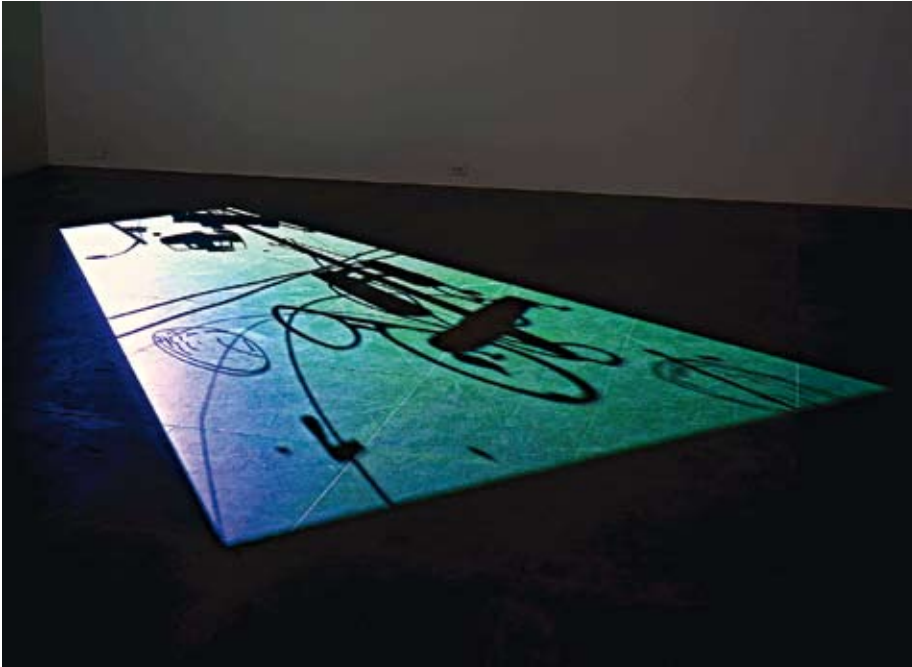
### Cindy Sherman, costumes and props for the photographs

American artist Cindy Sherman (\*1954) is associated with the 1980s Pictures Generation (Douglas Crimp) in New York. The term refers to the omnipresence of images in the media and the ever-growing importance of television, which had reached invasive heights by that time. Significantly, the very act of quoting images also led to their deconstruction. Notions of the original and, hence, of authorship per se were undermined by subverting the distinction between original and copy. The authenticity that images can convey is an issue of overriding concern in postmodernism and has been central to Sherman's artistic practice from the very beginning. By appearing in her own photographs in a variety of roles, costumes and characters, Sherman exposes not only the fiction of identity but also the proliferation of stereotypes and repetitive images that circulate globally in an array of arbitrary reproductions. Mutability and multiple identities feature in these photographs, their theatricality and excessive make-up clearly revealing that they have been staged. Any attempt to find the 'genuine' person behind them is thwarted. The modernist belief that art can express the self has been demystified.

Sherman makes self-contained, themed groups of work. The collection of the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation has several works from the most important series. In the early, black-and-white *Untitled Film Stills* (1977–1980), the scenes of women (all played by Sherman

herself) look like stills from films of the 1950s or 1960s. The artist's interpretation of the body and the role of women in society is even more pointed in her *Centerfolds*. In this series commissioned in 1981 by *Artforum*, close-ups of a vulnerable young woman parody the format and lascivious poses of erotic spreads in magazines such as *Playboy*. The somewhat ironic yet astonishingly apposite *History Portraits* re-enact an entire series of iconic works in the history of European art from the 15th to 17th centuries. On display here are the costumes and accessories that Sherman used for three of her works. For the photographs, all of which she shoots in her studio, the artist finds everything she needs herself and also does both her own clothing and make-up. For some years now she has processed the photographs digitally. The breast with the pump, the wig and the gold embroidered shawl were props for the nursing Madonna in *Untitled #225*. In other series, Sherman boldly confronts the ugly, the repulsive, violence and sexuality. For the first time, instead of being her own model, she started using prostheses, parts of dolls and body fragments. As objectified substitutes for the actual presence of human beings, they are all the more expressive of the repressed and disturbing side of human life.

## PAUL CHAN



*Oh why so serious*, 2008, plastic,  
computer keyboard with USB cable, 8 × 47 × 20 cm

*1st Light*, 2005, digital one-channel video installation, no sound,  
14-minute loop

**Paul Chan, instrument for the composition of digital video animations;  
keyboard with unlettered keys**

Paul Chan (born in Hong Kong in 1973, lives in New York) distinguishes between his political commitment and his artistic work. In the former he reacts to the present, in the latter he focuses primarily on questions regarding a possible future. The aesthetics and content of his works range from colourful pop culture to outdated computer technology, from literary and philosophical references to an occasionally hard-hitting visual immediacy. In 2010, an important suite of works from this young oeuvre was acquired by the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. It comprises, among other things, the large video installation *Sade for Sade's Sake* (2009) with accompanying ink drawings, as well as two animations from the cycle *The 7 Lights* (2005–2007). Chan used the computer keyboard exhibited here for the composition of his digital video animations. A note on musical tempos such as *allegro*, *largo* or *accelerando* is affixed to the upper edge. The keys are calibrated with weights to imitate the touch of a piano; their lack of lettering makes it easier for the artist to concentrate. As one of his most important artistic tools, he has, for instance, used the instrument to programme his light animations, which are based on movement and rhythm.

The simultaneous absence and presence of light, somewhat like shadow play, in the video projections reverberates in the typography of the title: *The 7 Lights*. Beginning with a prelude in colour, everyday objects are projected onto a surface; gradually lifting off, they rise up and disintegrate into their component parts: viewers can make out the outlines of such objects as bicycles, cell phones, eyeglasses. Then, suddenly, human figures drop out of the sky. The extreme contrast between weightlessness and sudden drop is underscored by the difference in tempo between rise and fall. The 14-minute projections, on the walls, tables or corners of darkened rooms, are shaped like distorted trapezoids, resembling light coming in through a (non-existent) window. As a rule, they fade out in a bluish purple spectrum of colours, before the loop starts all over again. While Chan uses the computer keyboard much like a paintbrush in these animations, it also crops up elsewhere as an object. The sculpture *Oh why so serious* (2008), its keys consisting of miniature tombstones, commemorates the transition from an analogue to a digital era. With this instrument, the artist programs themed fonts that can be downloaded from his website: [nationalphilistine.com](http://nationalphilistine.com). When typing, the technical conversion does not produce single letters but entire words or phrases. The innocuous text is transformed into pornographic or humorous sequences of words.

## GARY HILL



*Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)*, 1984, colour video, stereo sound, 32 min., still and set photography with Gary Hill

Gary Hill, text panels and tripod for the production of the video *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)* (1984)

Monitor: Filming of Gary Hill's *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)* (1984), 1' 45" (Film: Gary Hill Studio)

American artist Gary Hill (\*1951) is one of the pioneers of Video Art. Like many practitioners who started experimenting with the potential of video recordings, Hill did not simply use the technique as a new means of artistic expression but above all to reflect on the medium itself. He literally deconstructed the complex interplay of sight, sound and touch that underlies the technology: flickering, accelerated images, blurring, fluctuating brightness, incomprehensible sounds, drumming noises, monitors lying on the floor. Precisely calculated *interference* and digital processing direct viewers' attention to the parameters of the medium itself. It is, in fact, Hill's strategy to subtly overwhelm our sensory perceptions, inevitably drawing us into the process of reading and interpreting the artwork.

When the Basel Museum für Gegenwartskunst mounted a monographic exhibition in 1995/1996, the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation acquired several of Hill's key works: *Circular Breathing* (1994), *Remarks on Color* (1994), *Red Technology* (1994) and *Dervish* (1995). Ten years later, the Foundation also acquired some important early works, including the one-channel video *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)* (1984).

While Hill's works of the 1970s and early 1980s are informed with a delight in media experimentation, by the mid-1980s he had begun focusing more on literary and philosophical texts by such writers as Maurice Blanchot, Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein. The artist's point of departure for *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle* is the eponymous text by philosopher Gregory Bateson. In a conversation between father and daughter, cause and effect are illustrated by attempting to distinguish between order and chaos. Hill also turned to Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* for inspiration. Adopting Bateson's concept of the metalogue, Hill filmed speakers talking about the problem in a conversation structured so as to mirror what they are talking about. The language the artist uses radically inverts notions of sense and nonsense. Some of the sequences were acted and spoken backwards by the actors and then played the 'right way around' in the finished video. The resulting intonation is alienated, generating an impression of almost robotic artificiality. The text panels on view here show phonetic versions of the sections to be spoken backwards as mnemonic aids for the film production. The rotating camerawork, in which the tripod also shown here played a role, captures the disorder that gradually overwhelms the dialogue. In this work, Gary Hill provides a compelling demonstration of video's potential to examine and represent processes of perception and consciousness.

## MATTHEW BARNEY



*DRAWING RESTRAINT 13: The Instrument of Surrender*, 2006, petroleum jelly, plastic, and black sand, exhibition view, Schaulager Basel, 2010

*DRAWING RESTRAINT 17*, 2010, two-channel colour video, silent, production still



**Matthew Barney, shoes used to create the sculpture *DRAWING RESTRAINT 13: The Instrument of Surrender* (2006); climbing grips and costumes used in the film *DRAWING RESTRAINT 17* (2010)**

**Monitor: Filming of Matthew Barney's *DRAWING RESTRAINT 17* (2010), 4'11" (Film: Matthew Barney Studio)**

The work of American artist Matthew Barney (\*1967) seeks to lend aesthetic and symbolic shape to the laws of physics. His artistic practice involves the parallel production and mutual influence of drawings, films, performances, sculptures and photographs; any hint of a media hierarchy is subsumed under a kind of *gesamtkunstwerk*.

Matthew Barney's often elaborate groups of work are characterized by a distinctive aesthetic and artistic mythology. The artist initially attracted international attention for his five-part film series *Cre-master*, created between 1995 and 2002. The Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation has traced the development of the series since its inception, acquiring the films along with the accompanying displays or sculptures, shortly after they were completed. *DRAWING RESTRAINT* is a second ongoing project, begun in 1987. While he was still a student, Barney began filming his athletic feats. He set himself obstacles — such as ramps, trampolines or straps — that he had to overcome in order to make a drawing. The principal that muscles are strengthened by physical resistance symbolizes for Barney the creative potential that is fostered by constraints. Through the joint

acquisition of the *DRAWING RESTRAINT Archives* by the Laurenz Foundation and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, a substantial and complex multimedia group of works has become part of the collection stored at Schaulager.

For the sculpture *DRAWING RESTRAINT 13: The Instrument of Surrender*, Matthew Barney used the shoes on display here to stamp the petroleum-jelly footsteps onto the floor.

The climbing grips were props for *DRAWING RESTRAINT 17*, which was filmed on site for the exhibition *Matthew Barney. Prayer Sheet with the Wound and the Nail* (2010) at Schaulager. They served as handholds in the scene that shows a young woman climbing the high wall in the Schaulager atrium, while wearing the costume on display here.