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Sofie Thorsen *Cut A-A'*

Kunsthaus Graz, Space02, Lendkai 1, 8020 Graz

Opening: 2nd March 2012, 7pm

Duration: 3rd March-6th May 2012

Curators: Katrin Bucher Trantow, Katia Huemer, Sabine Schaschl

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In cooperation with the *Diagonale 2012* and the Kunsthaus Baselland

"I am not very much interested in the personal or the subjective", is how Sofie Thorsen (born in Århus, Denmark in 1971, lives in Vienna) describes the focus of her work. Rather Thorsen's interest lies with culturally shaped forms and their political, social and art-historical contexts. Her solo exhibition *Cut A-A'* was developed in collaboration with the film festival Diagonale and the Kunsthaus Baselland and will initially be on show in the Kunsthaus Graz, followed by the Kunsthaus Baselland in the summer of next year. In it Sofie Thorsen presents three major installations in which on the one hand we see clearly her working method which blends a deep-delving focus with objectified distancing. On the other hand, in their almost forensic and direct questioning of the object, the works correspond with hidden conditions and constructions of specific image realities: thus the film that provides the exhibition title, *Cut A-A'* deals with the spirit of Socialist Modernism and with a cinema that is associated with a museum, is seemingly utopian and has fallen out of favour. As a highly precise journey in formal terms through the depths and chasms of space, it is devoted to the filmic language of transcending light as well as to an abstract recreation of a look at the expressiveness of architectural form. The film, which forms the basis of the trailer for the Diagonale 2012, will finally be shown in autumn 2012 in its place of origin - the Open Air Cinema of the Museum of Modern Art in Bratislava - before this venue is demolished and assigned to oblivion.

The Achromatic Island (2009) is also devoted to direct questioning of seeing and perceiving. The film is based on the history of the Danish Island of Fuur, where some of the residents suffered from genetic achromatopsia, i.e. total colour blindness, over generations up until the 1930s. Drawing on texts, photos and film in striking black and white contrasts, Thorsen shows the landscape and environment of Fuur from the perspective of those with this unusual vision defect, and so attempts to approach in artistic terms what characterises the perception of an achromatic world. The illness thereby helps in examining perception in general, as a conceptual "tool for seeing" that enables us to experience a possible model on the basis of a discernible difference in the way we see.

Another important work in the exhibition are the *Spielplastiken* (2010/11), which as drawings and collages take a look at forms of presentation. The work, which sculpturally grows outward into the Kunsthhaus, concerns a programme titled "Art in Construction" that occurred during the reconstruction period following the Second World War. Artists were invited to develop sculptures for a number of children's playgrounds in Vienna. The sculptures stood out on account of their utopian shape and colour which were exceptional for the drab Vienna of the 1950s, and, besides their architectural and sculptural aspects, were designed to be used by children for playing.

Here too, by the reduction to the pure symbolic nature of the contents, Thorsen creates a certain distance to places and situations, which she analyses with the means of the medium. Thorsen's works oscillate between a perceptible copy of reality, and possible fiction – and in this way they open up new realms of association right in front of the viewer's eyes.