

Constructed View²**Attila Csörgő – Gábor Ósz**

Curated by Kati Simon

23 March – 29 April 2016

I am overjoyed that I can be part of organizing an exhibition of works by Attila Csörgő and Gábor Ósz at the Vintage Gallery. Not only because both the beginning and end points of one of the most defining periods of my life are linked to these two artists – it was with Attila Csörgő that I began an intensive period of work at the Ludwig Museum and with Gábor Ósz that I said goodbye to the institution in 2013 – but also because, to this date, they have only had a single shared exhibition over a decade ago, at the Van Zoetendaal Gallery in Amsterdam.

The exhibition at the Vintage Gallery can be regarded as a visual dialogue between two artists, in whose works precise engineering calculations are combined with the thrill of continuous experimentation and discovery. In addition to their scientific interests, they also share a similar working method: both artists explore a specific problematic for months, or oftentimes even years, working toward finding a possible solution to the given question. The phases and results of the experiments are then materialized in the form of series or linked works.

Csörgő designs and builds his own unusual cameras, and then uses them to record his surroundings, fixing the captured images onto the surfaces of three-dimensional forms; on a hemisphere (Semi- Space), sphere (Orange Space), or – as in the Moebius Space (2006-) project also featured at the exhibition – on the surface of a Moebius strip. Gábor Ósz, for the most part, transforms and uses already-built structures and extraordinary architectural objects for creating his photographs; a trailer, a train compartment, or a war bunker functions as his camera obscura. In the endless corridors of the Prora complex, he rolls a self-built, movable pinhole camera from room to room, until the picture of a single room representing the sum total of all rooms appears on the photosensitive paper.

With their special cameras, they both explore the ways in which the world can be captured and represented through a photograph. Ósz is primarily interested in the process of formulating the image. The individual photographs of the series entitled Camera Architectura are the result of many long hours of exposure process, or even the work of several days. Csörgő, in creating his “distorted spaces”, concentrates more on rendering perceptible geometrical concepts and physical phenomena that are otherwise invisible to the naked eye; he focuses on the process itself and on making visible the path that leads from the birth of a thought to the phases of analysis, and then to the final outcome.

The photograph entitled How to Construct an Orange I (1993/2015) documents the initial phase of an experiment: the analysis aimed at seeking connections between plane geometry and solid geometry. The installation of white paper globes floating above fans concealed inside a white paper cylinder was ultimately realized in a different format: the paper turbines received shorter legs. In contrast, Spheric View (2013), a delicate piece combining photography and drawing, can be regarded as a kind of summation of the problematic, which also contains within itself the questions posed by Semi Space and Orange Space.

There is a similar connection between the photographs of Gábor Ósz's The Prora Projekt (2002) and his films examining the phenomenon of image making (Ontology, 2013 and Tautology, 2012), as well as the photos (production stills) of his film installations. In the National Socialist-built building complex of the Prora resort, which stretches out for several kilometres, rooms of a uniform size offering the same seaside view follow one another. The individual Prora photos capture the essence of the almost perfectly identical rooms and the panorama seen from their windows, with each photo condensing the image layers of many different rooms, exposed on top of one another. This serial presentation of repetitive images and the meditative manner of their depiction also return in Ósz's films, which engage the “picture in a picture” problematic and explore the relationship between time and space. The point of departure for the film entitled Ontology is an analogous, empty, looped filmstrip, which, rolling over a number of spools, follows a certain path. The empty filmstrip, as it passes through the projector, appears to transform into something like a “photo-graph”. By filming the projection, which vibrates like a light signal, and by re-filming the projection of the recording as well, the film becomes its own subject, where the relationship between the image and space becomes the “story” of the film. The identical opening and closing frames of the film make looped projection possible.

In Csörgő's work entitled Moebius Space, the same motif can be seen at the beginning and end of the filmstrip, but with one of the images being shown upside down. If we twist the transparent film halfway around, its two ends can be joined together to form a continuous image. In this way, we end up with a loop referred to as a Moebius strip, which has the unique feature of only possessing

one side: its entire surface can be traversed without ever crossing an edge.

The camera obscura operates in exactly the same way as our eyes do in creating a visual representation of the surrounding world: an inverted image of the light passing through the small hole appears on the photo paper. In Maartje van den Heuvel's words, Gábor Ósz transforms these spaces – which are so extraordinary from the perspective of image making (as well) – into gigantic eyes, so that we can view the world through them. Attila Csörgő, on the other hand, renders the laws of geometry and physics visible in all their full beauty and absurdity. He constructs a special camera which records reality in the form of never before seen images.

Whether their observations of the world result in playful approaches or strict composition, the work of both artists is permeated with a kind of poetic approach that is devoid of any attempts at representing the human form. The human being is only present as the observer behind the camera and in the historical context of the architectural structure that serves as the camera; it is there as an external force that interferes in what is depicted. This human presence is nevertheless obvious in these contemplative works which explore the relationships between people and space, memory, or science, and which tell us about the ways in which our view of the world is shaped by the space and the place where we happen to be standing.

Kati Simon, March 2016

Attila Csörgő was born in 1965 in Budapest. He currently lives and works in Białystok. In recent years, his works have been shown in a number of solo exhibitions, including: Der Punkt, Budapest, Galeria Arsenal power station, Białystok (2015), Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2014), the Kunsthalle Mainz (2012), Atelier Calder, Saxe, France, Wiener Secession, Vienna (2011), the Kunsthalle Hamburg, MUDAM Luxembourg and Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest (2009-2011), Domaine de Kerguéhennec, France (2009), and the Museum Folkwang, Essen (2008). His latest group exhibitions included: IMMA Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerpen, Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich (2015), Rampa Istanbul, Nomos Foundation, Rome, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (2014), Villa Empain – Boghossian Foundation, Brussels (2013). Csörgő has participated in many international biennials: Kaunas biennial (2015), OFF-Biennale Budapest (2015), dOCUMENTA (13) (2012), the Biennale of Sydney (2008), the Istanbul Biennial (2003), the Biennale di Venezia (1999). In 2008, he was accorded the Nam June Paik Award, which constitutes one of the most significant European recognitions in media art. His works can be found in a number of international private and public collections, including: Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Musée national d'art moderne – Centre Pompidou, EVN Collection, Maria Enzersdorf, Janus Pannonius Museum Gallery of Modern Hungarian Art, Pécs, Institute of Contemporary Art, Dunaújváros, Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, MUDAM Luxembourg, Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zürich. Represented by Galerija Gregor Podnar, Berlin.

Gábor Ósz was born in 1962 in Dunaújváros. He currently lives and works in Amsterdam. He has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including: MUSA Wien, MUDAM Luxembourg (2015), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, Modem, Debrecen (2014), Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest, Netwerk, center for contemporary art, Aalst (2013), Lodz Biennale (2010), Pinakothek der Moderne, München, George Eastman House, New York (2008), NBK, Berlin (2006), Musée des Beaux Arts, Mois de la Photo, Montréal (2003), Gemeente Museum Den Haag (2002), Museum Schloss Moyland, Bedburg Hau (2001). His works can be found internationally in a number of private and public collections, including: Achmea Kunstcollectie, Holland, Gemeente Museum Den Haag, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (FNAC), France, Frac Franche-Comté, France, Fondation Louis Vuitton, France, FOAM - Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam, Janus Pannonius Museum Gallery of Modern Hungarian Art, Pécs, Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest, Musée de La Roche sur Yon, France, Museum Schloss Moyland, Germany, National History Museum, Arnhem, Rabobank Collection, Holland, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Represented by Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris, Vintage Gallery, Budapest, and Van der Grinten Galerie, Cologne.