



BÜNDNER
KUNSTMUSEUM
CHUR

MUSEUM D'ART
DAL GRISCHUN
CUIRA

MUSEO D'ARTE
DEI GRIGIONI
COIRA

ENGLISH

OLAF HOLZAPFEL

Plant Works

18.09. –
14.11.2021

The Grisons Museum of Art in Chur presents the first solo exhibition by German artist Olaf Holzapfel (b. 1967) at a Swiss institution, consisting of an expansive installation composed of reeds and a half-timbered structure. In this work, Holzapfel explores how the traditional use of natural raw materials results in specific architectural forms that have an impact on our landscape and culture.

Olaf Holzapfel grew up in the German Democratic Republic and was deeply influenced by the ecological movement of that era. In the 1980s the destruction of the environment in Saxony and in the historical region of Bohemia reached unprecedented levels and contributed decisively to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. In early 1989, before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Holzapfel escaped to West Germany via Austria and Hungary. Following a period of extensive travels around the world and studies in Dresden, he eventually chose Berlin as his base. Borders and transitions as recurring motifs also feature in his installations and pictures. Holzapfel views contemporary habitats as fluid, and he positions his works on the threshold between ideal states, nature, and technology.

Holzapfel's installation *Pflanzenwerk* (Plant Works, 2021) at the Grisons Museum of Art seems permeable, light, and vivid despite its monumentality. He constructed a half-timbered scaffolding with wooden beams to support a curved wall composed of thousands of reeds. The waved-shaped wall consists of around one hundred trapezoidal cubes in which the reeds are inserted. Their varied positions create the impression of a projecting and receding façade that is evocative of a modular, digital system. The reed wall is actually based on an algorithm that was generated using random parameters. The equal treatment of analog and digital processes is a matter of course for Holzapfel.

Half-timbered buildings, known as *Fachwerkhäuser* in German and *Riegelhäuser* in Swiss German, are found today both in cities and in the countryside in Switzerland. Skeleton constructions made of wood have been used since the late Middle Ages through to the industrial age, and reeds have also had a significant role as a natural building material. Since reeds do not absorb moisture, they are resistant to rotting, making them suitable for roofing material. They continue to be used in partition walls in ecological construction today.

The shift to the country in Holzapfel's work also reflects his renunciation of the short-lived tendencies of the contemporary art scene. Using simple motifs such as buildings, fences, and fields, the artist refers to farming and rural techniques of cultivation. This minimal vocabulary of forms ultimately produces universal statements about what concerns us as people and reflects our cultural history. The universality of these old techniques allows Holzapfel to take a libe-

rating look into the past by focusing on the physical makeup of the world. The smell and feel of the wickerwork as well as the half-timber structure reflect the primal nature of sweet grasses and woods as materials. For generations they have influenced our architecture and landscape. Holzapfel explores their inner poetry and the techniques that stem from these materials. This return to rural traditions throws light on their timeliness and demonstrates the central ecological role of renewable resources in social change.

ÖFFENTLICHE FÜHRUNGEN

Im Rahmen von Führungen zur Ausstellung «LandLiebe»
So 19.09. / 28.11., jeweils um 11 Uhr
Do 30.09. / 21.10. / 04.11., jeweils um 18 Uhr

VERANSTALTUNGEN

Sa 18.09. 14 Uhr
Damian Jurt im Gespräch mit dem Künstler Olaf Holzapfel

Sa 30.10., 10-18 Uhr
Symposium «Der Grund, auf dem wir leben, fliesst!»

Anmeldung erforderlich: +41 81 257 28 69

SCHULEN

Projekt im Labor zu «Olaf Holzapfel. Pflanzenwerk»
30.09. / 1.10. / 28.10. / 29.10. / 4.11. / 5.11. / 11.11. / 12.11.
Mit Irina Cannabona, Tanzpädagogin, Dauer: 90 Minuten
Anmeldung erforderlich: kunstvermittlung@bkm.gr.ch

Wir danken für die grosszügige Unterstützung



Stadt Chur

ifa Institut für
Auslandsbeziehungen

Ernst und Olga Gubler-Hablützel Stiftung | Charlotte und Nelly
Dornacher Stiftung

Partner:



**Graubündner
Kantonalbank**



Amt für Kultur
Uffizi da cultura
Ufficio della cultura

**BÜNDNER
KUNST
VEREIN**