

Guideline to eat a slice of toast within eight bites

Opening: Wednesday, 03. April 2013, 6 - 8pm

04. - 14. April 2013, Wed - Sun, 12 - 6pm

Karlin Studios, Křižíkova 34, Praha 8 - Karlín

German artist Andreas Sell presents a new group of works titled *Guideline to eat a slice of toast within eight bites*. It consists of 17 clay objects shaped like household items. The objects group around a small kind of mirrored house. From inside, you hear a voice that gives instructions for eating a slice of toast in eight bites.

Sell's works are based on observations and analysis of daily situations. Creating precisely choreographed public scenes with varying media, surroundings and contexts, he subtly adds a moment of irritation to the well known. The latest works deal with his personal story and employ his direct surroundings. Last summer, the artist presented a successive restructuring of his Berlin apartment titled *German Evangelical Gay*. He disassembled his belongings, reassembled them and combined unrelated elements. By de-functionalizing household items and furniture, they are absolved from their ordinary purpose.

In February 2013, Sell presented his mothers house as an exhibition, which he was about to clear out. Objects had to be checked, ordered, redistributed, discarded. An environment grown over decades was reviewed, a personal history cleared out and opened for the public under the title *Panic Attack Antidepressant Household Clearance*. By opening up, Sell faced the outside world from a very personal standpoint – consequentially, without any distance or back-up.

His artistic process reveals a strategic method within the conventions of our Capitalist society, which are simultaneously subject to critical analysis. A question discussed since the 1960s is a recurrent theme: Where does the private sphere cross over into the public sphere? Over the last years, Sell worked on the founding and operation of an employment agency, the documentation and sorting out of his property, tried living without a permanent residence and went to the Sahara without mission or goal.

In his Berlin exhibition, Sell deconstructed the objects he lived with. In contrast to this, he follows a figurative approach in the body of work now on view in Prague. The clay structures imitate familiar shapes, change them by recombination, altering the size ratios or reinterpreting them: the cut off handle of a water boiler, for example, appears on the bottom of a sandwich toaster, or a spotlight is implanted in an ice maker; thus objects lose their purported function. Clay types of different colours and leftovers are used. Working with up to five assistants makes the artist's hand disappear. The method and process, which also includes the chosen materials and the shaping, symbolizes a constant subversion of the Modernist dictum of the genuine artist, a devaluation of the art object and the development of a fictional reality, which is grabbed from the present.

The figures flaunt the view of a machine which, even if fully functional, would not

meet the requirements to eat a slice of toast. Success and failure, renewed attempt and loss of control, power gestures and oppression. The narrative of *Guideline to eat a slice of toast within eight bites* has no positive ending - it is more of a sketch for a drama.

Sina Wagner