

The Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presents:
ONE OF MANY
An exhibition by PAWEL ALTHAMER
Palazzina Appiani, Sports Arena
Viale Byron 2, Milan
May 7 – June 5, 2007

**FONDAZIONE
NICOLA
TRUSSARDI**

From May 7th through June 5th, 2007, the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presents *One of Many*, the first major solo exhibition in Italy by Polish artist Pawel Althamer.

In the Neoclassical space of the Palazzina Appiani in the Sports Arena, the exhibition *One of Many* is an exceptional occasion to discover the work of one of the most respected artists from Eastern Europe. The exhibition presents new works and productions commissioned by the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, along with a unique selection of pieces loaned from international institutions and private collections.

In Althamer's work, fiction and reality merge and overlap to construct an eerie world. For the artist, the Human Being is always the center of our universe, a universe which – with the power of imagination – can be transformed into a fairy tale or an extreme spiritual experience. Almost like a shaman, Pawel Althamer has used his own body and his own image as tools to construct a different relationship with the world. In *One of Many*, Pawel Althamer presents nine videos, each of them reporting his reactions to different drugs: poetic and fragmentary self-portraits, Althamer's films document the altered states of the artist's mind while describing new and obscure magical rituals.

In Althamer's sculptures – often realized with organic materials such as grass, hemp fiber, animal intestines, wax and hair – the artist represents himself, his family and his loves in an uncanny group portrait. Multiplying his identity in an infinite crowd of idols, dolls, and disturbing puppets, Althamer populates the exhibition with human figures and mysterious totems. Like relics of some archaic and primordial world, Althamer's sculptures investigate the meaning of basic, visceral human relationships and question the limits of identity. In the monumental spaces of the Sala Appiani, Althamer creates a visual autobiography, portraying himself as a child, as a tiny character in some ancient fable or as a monstrous and hyper-realistic creature. As in a family album, Althamer also sculpts portraits of his little daughter, of his current partner –represented almost as a giant, pregnant Athena – and of his new born son, who is reduced to a little foetus.

One of Many is also an unexpected chance to take a look at the artist's future. The exhibition, in fact, is inhabited by a spectral and unexpected presence: the artist has searched for his elderly double, a person whose physical appearance resembles that of Althamer in thirty years time. The artist's *Self-portrait as an Old Man* is free to wander around the exhibition space, a living sculpture linking the past and future of his life.

Pawel Althamer is a spectator of daily life. *One of Many* echoes of the notes of a busker; the music comes from the park outside the Palazzina Appiani where an African musician hired by Althamer plays traditional folk songs. Through a special audio system the music is heard in the exhibition space and on the balcony that opens onto the Arena: life is treated like a movie, complete with a soundtrack – a film in real time.

The park is also the stage from which Pawel Althamer's challenges traditional sculpture. A huge self-portrait of the artist – an aerostat, more than 20 meters long– flies over the city like a UFO or an absurd, temporary public monument. As if it were a carnival or a village festival, Pawel Althamer plays with the city, treating it to a collective hallucination, making fun of artists' narcissism and presenting himself naked before the judgment of the public. Conceived by the artist many years ago, and realized through a collective effort, the sculpture *Balloon* is finally visible thanks to the commitment of the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi in supporting ambitious projects by contemporary artists.

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With the exhibition *One of Many* the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi continues its adventure in the rediscovery of the hidden secrets of Milan, bringing back to life forgotten buildings or temporary spaces that are suddenly transformed into stages for contemporary art. In the year that marks its bicentenary, the city's Sports Arena – built by Napoleon and opened in 1807 and hosting the frescoes by Andrea Appiani – becomes a perfect scenario for Pawel Althamer's work. Althamer's exhibition *One of Many* celebrates the Human Being in all its fragility, and it does so exactly in the place where the heroism of extraordinary bodies used to be glorified through sport..

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HARD FACTS

Artist: PAWEL ALTHAMER
Title: ONE OF MANY

At: Palazzina Appiani, Sports Arena
Viale Byron 2, Milan

Dates: May 7 – June 5, 2007
Open daily from 10am to 8pm
Free entrance

Curated by: Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director
Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan

Press Preview: Monday May 7, 2007 – at 11:30am
Palazzina Appiani, Sports Arena
Viale Byron 2, Milan

Opening: Monday May 7, 2007 – at 6:30pm
Palazzina Appiani, Sports Arena
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SELECTED WRITINGS PAWEL ALTHAMER

You should be surprised by your own reality: it's exotic, sometimes.

On Earth I feel like a newcomer, someone who's here only for the time being. And this feeling is with me all the time, despite the whole stabilisation that I've worked out. There is a memory in me of some other, unknown place. I'm only passing through here, paying a short visit, and I don't know where my voyage will take me. But I feel that I have a mission, that I found myself here after all, I've to fulfil my obligations.

Artists are people without place. I'm one of them: I don't really know where my place is. I know, of course, that what I'm saying fits into a pattern. Like the homeless. I believe that there's an element of order in what can pass for chaos.

Sometimes it feels like I've been imprisoned, and if you are in a prison you can use some possibilities to escape, such as researching other planets other spaces.

I've decided to make different things, maybe even strange things, irrational things because I need to keep a feeling that the world is full of irrational things.

I build a man sculpture, the figure of Pawel Althamer, who is the focal point of my interests. It is a desire to record the physical presence of myself, my confrontation with my work. Does being next to a dead-man object make me experience my own animation more strongly?

It is a major achievement to realise that the body is only a vehicle for the soul. I feel like a cosmonaut in the suit of my own body, I am a trapped soul. The body plays a role of a dress, of an address. My bodily address is Pawel Althamer.

A self-portrait is my interpretation of myself and of my life because even now, if I observe it, I feel this is not mine, it's something that doesn't belong to me. I participated in the process, but it's not only mine, and this is the thing which always fascinated me, to work in the process which is a kind of mystery, always.

I feel such a distance from myself and the sculptures are a kind of sign, and I use mixed techniques because I feel I'm very mixed, mentally mixed, and by education I'm mixed.

What I find most exciting is using sculpture or some other construction to open up the perception instead of narrowing it down, so spectators can see more than they are being shown. I don't want any of the works to focus on the object and end there. I don't want too much attention paid to how nicely everything has been done. I prefer it when things perform an auxiliary function.

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SELECTED WRITINGS

Each work by Pawel Althamer, as the artist underlines, are variations on the common theme of "Althamer". While television broadcast reality shows, Pawel Althamer addresses the audience to confront with a non filtered reality. Pawel Althamer's work suggests that the distinction between natural reality and artificial reality is completely fictional.

Adam Szymczyk

Althamer shares with Beuys a religious attitude towards his own role, as an artist, in the transformation of society. The way he looks at reality is intimate, personal, and psychological. For him, the way to change the world is by addressing our immediate surroundings. In an almost Franciscan way, Althamer forces the viewer to look into herself or himself, asserting the position that art's first context is within ourselves – our soul and mind, not yet corrupted by the speed of contemporary reality. What we see is what we want to see. We are all actors, Althamer seems to say and it is up to us to figure out how we want to change the world through our daily performance called life.

Francesco Bonami

By means of discreet interventions into everyday life, the organization of playful and often absurd collective engagements or even acts of direct political negotiation, Pawel Althamer directs social scenarios that evolve from, and seek to shed light on, aspects of his own personal experience. Althamer's poignant and incisive critique emerges from the apparently seamless insertion of staged artifice into quotidian social situations.

Andrew Bonacina

The strange and beautiful tension of Pawel Althamer's work between the invisible and the absolutely, solidly real is unique in contemporary art discourse, although it has been the desiderata of many artists since the end of the Second World War. This is why although Althamer's work relates to that of many artists old and young, it stands slightly, awkwardly, apart.

Laura Hoptman

All of Pawel Althamer's work seem to be a constantly repeated attempt at creating a self-portrait. From hyper-realistic figural representations, to a wooden bench placed in a sculpture park in Sonsbeek, the artist keeps sculpting himself. At the same time all the objects he creates and all actions he performs are but an attempt to go beyond the material image, to find the true spiritual 'I'.

Joanna Mytkowska

For Pawel Althamer the point is to create a backdrop upon which the events of life will be inscribed and exhibited.

Hans Ulrich Obrist

Pawel Althamer sends the world through a time machine, blurring presentation and representation, no giveaway, no prop-ism, no as-if: in the end we're all going to be finished, heaven or not.

Andreas Schlaegel

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PAWEL ALTHAMER
SELECTED BIOGRAPHY

Pawel Althamer was born in Warsaw in 1967. He lives and works in Warsaw.

AWARDS

2004

The Vincent Award, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2006

Black Market, Galerie neugerriemschneider, Berlin
Pawel Althamer, Centre Pompidou - Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris

2005

Pawel Althamer Incites, National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (cat.)

2004

Pawel and Vincent, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht (cat.)
Walk with model of Foksal Gallery Foundation in Praga district, Foksal Gallery Foundation, Warsaw

2003

So genannte Wellen und andere Phänomene des Geistes, Kunstverein für Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf (with Artur Zmijewski) (cat.)
Galerie neugerriemschneider, Berlin
Wrong Gallery, New York

2002

Chiesa di San Matteo, Galleria Claudio Polleschi Arte Contemporanea, Lucca (cat.)
Trieste Contemporanea, Trieste
Prisoners, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster
Le cinema itinerant/De rondreizende cinema, various locations, Belgium
Unsichtbar, Alexanderplatz, (DAAD artist-in-residency), Berlin

2001

Weronika, (public project) Amden
House on the Tree, Foksal Gallery Foundation, Warsaw
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
DAAD artist-in-residency, Berlin

2000

BWA Gallery, Zielona Góra
Bródno 2000, Foksal Gallery, Warsaw (cat.)

1999

Foksal Gallery, Warsaw
Artist-in-residency, Hoffmann Sammlung, Berlin

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1998

Exhibition, Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw

1997

Kosmonauta, a.r.t. Gallery, Plock

Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (cat.)

Bródno, A.R Gallery, Tecza cinema, Warsaw (cat.)

1996

Life after Death, Kronika Gallery, Bytom

Foksal Gallery, Warsaw (cat.)

1995

Miejsce Gallery, Cieszyn

1994

Fairy-tale, Galeria WOK, Warsaw

1993

Studies from Nature, Galeria a.r.t., Plock

Diploma, Galeria a.r.t., Plock

1992

a.r.t. Gallery, Plock

1991

Academy of Fine Arts' Museum (with Jacek Adamas), Warsaw

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**2006**

1,2,3... Avant-Garde, Experiment/Film/Art/Archive, Center for Contemporary Art, Warsaw

ManiPulations. On Economies of Deceit, Laznia Center for Contemporary Art, Gdansk

GEGENSTÄNDE / HANDLUNGSFORMEN, Kunstverein, Karlsruhe

Strange Powers, Creative Time, New York

YOU WON'T FEEL A THING. On Panic, Obsession, Anesthesia and Rituality, Kunsthau Dresden, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, Dresden

In Poland, That Is Where? The Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw

The Grand Promenade, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens (cat.)

Of Mice and Men, 4th Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art, Berlin

Kontakt... aus der Sammlung der Erste Bank-Gruppe, Museum Modern Kunst, Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna

2005

At the Very Center of Attention, Center for Contemporary Art, Warsaw

9th Istanbul Biennial, International Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul

Einstein Spaces – Neun Kunstprojekte in Berlin, Postdam und Caputh Im Rahmen des Einsteinjahres (cat.)

Positioning – In the New Reality of Europe, The National Museum of Art – Osaka, Osaka

The Impossible Theatre, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (2006)

(with Artur Zmijewski) Kollektive Kreativität, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel

I Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow (cat.)

(with Artur Zmijewski and the Nowolipie Group) Akademie. Kunst lehren und lernen, Kunstverein in Hamburg

2004

De ma fenetre. Des artistes et leurs territoires, Galerie de l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris

Atom Krieg, Kunsthau Dresden (cat.)

Duty and Rebellion. Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw 1944–2004, National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (cat.)

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Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (cat.)
Utopia Station, Haus der Kunst, Munich
Nowa Huta. Kunst aus polnischer Sicht, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster
Artists' Favorites (Act 1), Institute of Contemporary Art, London
Atomkrieg, Kunst Haus Dresden, Dresden
Kinder Biennale, Utrecht
Academy East/West, Tanzquartier Wien
Prym, BWA Gallery, Zielona Góra (cat.)
Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz. Philosophical Margins, CCA, Warsaw (cat.)
Under the White-Red Flag. New Art from Poland, Estonian Art Museum, Exhibition Hall in the Rotermann
Salt Storage, Tallinn; Contemporary Art Centra, Vilnius; National Centra for Contemporary Arts, Moscow;
Nizhny Novgorod branch of the National Centra for Contemporary Arts, Arsenal, Nizhegorodsky Kreml;
Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts, Nizhny Tagil (cat.)

2003

Way of life... , Center for Contemporary Art Laznia, Gdansk
Art Focus 4, Israel Museum, Jerusalem (with Artur Zmijewski)
Institutional Aesthetics, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki
Views 2003 / The Deutsche Bank Cultural Foundation Award, Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw
Now What? Dreaming a better world in six parts, BAK, Utrecht (cat.)
Bring on the Clowns, Frize Art Fair, London
Street level/Simplon Tunnel, Simplon
Hidden in a Daylight, Foksal Gallery Foundation, Cieszyn 2003 (cat.)
Dreams and Conflicts – The Viewer's Dictatorship, 50th Venice Biennale, Venice
Play ground, Bródno, Contemporary Art for All Children, Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw

2002

A Need for Realism. Solitude in Ujazdowski, Center for Contemporary Art, Warsaw (cat.)
I Promise it's Political, Museum Ludwig, Cologne (cat.)
In Prague, Galeria Vaclava Spaly, Prague
The Collective Unconsciousness, Migros Museum, Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich

2001

Ausgeträumt..., Secession, Vienna (cat.)
Jubilee exhibition, Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw
Poetry Summer, Watou (cat.)
Museum unserer Wünsche, Museum Ludwig, Cologne (cat.)
Neue Welt, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main (cat.)
Dialog III, OK Centrum für Gegenwartskunst, Linz
Vi – International Communities, Rooseum Centre for Contemporary Arts, Malmö
Progetto Bovisa, Milan (cat.)

2000

Endgame, Progetto Arte, Firenze (cat.)
Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Lyon (cat.)
Polnische Kunst nach 1989, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden
Manifesta 3, Ljubljana (cat.)
Colored Grey 1956 – 1970, Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw
Amateur 1900-2000, Göteborg Konstmuseum (cat.)

1999

City Sleepers, Midnight Walkers (public project), Amsterdam (cat.)
Fauna, Galeria Zacheta, Warsaw
14th Contemporary Art Days, Arsenal Gallery, Bialystok
Welcome to the Art World, Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (cat.)
Artist-in-residency, Hoffmann Sammlung, Berlin

1998

Passport: Exchange, (Ex)change, Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Arthouse Multimedia Centre, Dublin;
Galeria Zacheta, Warsaw
Parteitag II", Galeria a.r.t, Plock (cat.)
There is Nothing Like A Bad Coincidence, Medium Gallery, Bratislava (cat.)

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Poliptyk, BWA, Katowice (cat.)

1997

documenta X, Kassel (cat.)

Parteitag I, artists' studios, Warsaw

1996

The Garden of Arts, city park, Biala Podlaska

Me and AIDS, Kino Stolica, Warsaw; a.r.t., Plock

1994

Germinations 8. European Biennale for Young Artists, Academie St. Joost / Hogeschool West-Brabant, Breda; Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw

1993

Unvollkommen, Museum Bochum, Bochum (cat.)

Sonsbeek '93, International Biennale of Art, Arnhem (cat.)

1992

Polish Contemporary Art, Espace Periresec, Toulon

Studies of the Nude, a.r.t. Gallery, Plock

A Home Exhibition of Photographs, Katarzyna Kozyra's apartment, Warsaw

Die andere Seite, Ludwig Forum, Aachen

Dialog dzieł i postaw, Centrum Rzeźby Polskiej, Oronska

1991

Magicians and Mystics, Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw (cat.)

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