

GALERIE

HUBERT

WINTER

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

curated by_ Abigail Solomon-Godeau

Mitchell Anderson/Joseph Pitruzzello, Daniel Eisenberg, Juan José Herrera, Thomas Israël, Birgit Jürgensen, Anne Lindberg, Julian Palacz, Sally Potter, Eric Vernhes, ao.

Opening: October 2, 2014 6pm – 9pm
October 3 – November 8, 2014

Sleepless nights, including those of insomniacs, may be singular, circumstantial, periodic, or chronic. Like pain or pleasure, the experience can be described and observed but cannot be experienced by another. This essential incommunicability makes it a permanent challenge to artistic practices. Whatever the particular manifestations of sleeplessness, the psychological and physical effects have long been the subject of literary, poetic, and artistic investigation. But unlike the artists of Romanticism or Surrealism who explored the mechanisms of dreaming and sought to invent literary or visual forms to express them, the artists represented in Sleepless Nights approach their subject from singularly nondramatic, or even occasionally physical, perspectives.

Although a number of contemporary artists have taken sleep as their subject (e.g., Laurie Anderson's 1972 Institutional Dream Series; Sophie Calle's 1979 Les Dormeuses), sleeplessness has also provided material for artistic exploration (e.g., Jeff Wall's 1994 light box Insomnia; Sally Potter's 2012 videotape Passion, Obsession and Insomnia). For if sleep constitutes the norm—the healthy mind in a healthy body—sleeplessness is typically a condition of disturbance, dysfunction, anxiety, even anguish. And, as is well known, sleep deprivation is one of the venerable forms of torture, notoriously employed by the US military in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison. Working in various media—performance, video, film, and multimedia installation—the artists featured in Sleepless Nights collectively explore the other side of dreaming, the other side of sleep. In this respect, and in keeping with our postmodern recognition of the world out of joint, they testify to a dystopian condition in which even dreaming is no longer a refuge from the grim realities of the world we inhabit.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau (July, 2014)

The exhibition takes place in the context of curated by_vienna: The Century of the Bed. The renowned architectural historian and theorist Beatriz Colomina has created the theoretical concept for the meanwhile sixth edition of curated by_vienna. The project is organized by departure, the creative unit of the Vienna Business Agency, in cooperation with 20 selected Viennese contemporary art galleries.

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