

## PLAY – The Frivolous and the Serious

16 May 2013 – 25 August 2013

me Collectors Room Berlin / Olbricht Foundation, Auguststrasse 68, 10117 Berlin  
Opening times: Tue–Sun, 12–6 p.m.



The exhibition *PLAY – The Frivolous and the Serious* (16.05. – 25.08.2013) revolves around the universal phenomenon of the act of playing. It is the result of a collaboration between the Olbricht Foundation and two graduate students on the ‘Curating the Contemporary’ Master’s degree programme at London Metropolitan University. The programme is run in conjunction with the Whitechapel Gallery, London, under the directorship of Nico de Oliveira. This is the second time that the Foundation has invited young curators to develop their own ideas and perspectives on the Olbricht Collection, and to curate a show for me Collectors Room as part of their final degree module.

From early childhood all the way into old age, a myriad of different forms of play have shaped the lives of human beings since time immemorial. Learning experiences among infants, social interactions, and trials of strength in social games, the performing artistes’ acts in the theatre, and the act of making and maintaining a collection (which can itself be seen as a ‘mature’ form of play) are just a handful of examples of games.

As an omnipresent subject, be it consciously or subconsciously, the game in all its variants also finds expression in the art and works contained in the Olbricht Collection. Twenty-two works in various media have been singled out and brought into play with one another by the curators Anna-Antonia Stausberg and Philippa O’Driscoll:

The painting ‘Ich sticht’ (‘Me Trumps’, 2011) by Jonas Burgert, for instance, alludes to the human need to attribute meaning to our existence. The artist creates frozen set pieces, depicting activities that capture the essence of play and play-acting. By extension, he thereby draws attention to his own form of play-acting: art and the act of painting.

Gisela Bullacher’s photographic work entitled ‘Luftballon ( gelb)’ (‘Balloon (Yellow)’) from 1998 uses an ordinary object to create an ineffable poetic presence. Her works depict the quiet magic inherent in the simplest of everyday things and transport the viewer back to his or her childhood, to a place of spontaneity and innocence.

John M Armleder's neon installation 'O.T. (target)' from 2001 was created according to the rules of chance. His works emerge according to a defined set of rules or through the absence of rules, whereby the playful character of the process behind the work's genesis is brought to the fore. PLAY not only features contemporary works, but also craftwork and historical artworks, such as a chess table with ceramic chess pieces designed by Mogens Lund & P. Jeppesen and etchings of geometric forms by Jost Amman from 1568.

**List of featured artists:** Mark Alexander, Jost Amman, John M Armleder, Gisela Bullacher, Jonas Burgert, André Butzer, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Adam Eck, Gama, Philippe Halsman, Uwe Henneken, Esther-Judith Hinz, Bethan Huws, Jean-Antoine Lépine, Mogens Lund & P. Jeppesen, Alex McQuilkin, Jack Pierson Zhou Tiehai and Jorinde Voigt

A **companion publication** to PLAY will be published through argobooks, priced €14.90. In addition the Collectors Room offers a range of **workshops** for young people with the two young curators of the exhibition (held in English), as well as a **curator's tour** through the exhibition on Saturday, 18.05.2013 at 4 p.m. (exhibition and tour €6).

**Parallel** to the show, our major exhibition 'WONDERFUL' is on display and has been extended until 25.08.2013.

Both curators are available for interviews and to discuss their show in person.

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**Images**

- 1) Gisela Bullacher, Luftballon (gelb), 1998
- 2) Jonas Burgert, Ich sticht, 2011
- 3) John M Armleder, O.T. (target), 2001 © Waldemar Kremser, Courtesy Galerie Anselm Dreher, Berlin

