

Sílvio Salgado: Zeig mir was (Show me)
Thomas K. Lang Gallery at Webster University, Vienna
8 September - 29 October 2004. Curated by Sabine Dortschy

Sabine Dortschy:

**ZEIG MIR WAS (Show Me)
An exhibition by Sílvio Salgado**

The exhibition space at the Th.-K.-Lang Gallery of the Webster University is not a regular White Cube. It also functions as a passage between the class rooms and as a lounge for the students.

One single column incontestably penetrates the Gallery; it doesn't stand in any particular line, nor does it project itself as a decorative item. Sílvio Salgado has discovered the many such columns which support the structure. They have a static function in the building, which, however, remains veiled from the house dwellers. The columns stand in an ostensibly random and disproportionate fashion as structural elements in the various spaces, occasionally causing restriction and hindrance. They penetrate the entire building and, at the same time, hold it together; but they are noticed only when they become obstacles, as is the case in some small office spaces.

The column in the exhibition space on the third floor is, in fact, a camouflaged pillar that begins in the cellar of the building. It continues through the super market on the ground floor, enters a classroom with computer terminals on the first floor, penetrates an empty room, and ends in the art gallery. The private apartments on the top floor seem to manage without the support function of the pillars. The column thus intrudes into a variety of places with different kinds of public and private functions, and at the same time, connects these spaces with each other.

Salgado's photographs that are exhibited in the gallery depict the columns wrapped in black-and-yellow and red-and-white band that is typically used to protect particular sites from passers-by or to protect passers-by from certain sites. The band also signals forbiddance and danger, defines borders, marks inclusion or exclusion. The column in the exhibition space stays wrapped during the show, thus also making the documented intervention more tangible to the viewer.

Through his phenomenological contemplation, Salgado evokes discussion on limits and boundaries between public and private spheres, a theme that he also examines as the initiator and curator of the Vienna International Apartment. Since a few years, every spring and autumn, he invites international artists to exhibit their works in his apartment and opens it to the public for several weeks. The public, as well as the artists and Salgado, confront the situation in which one suddenly enters the private sphere of another person, alters it, and is required to accept and adapt to new rules and realities of this environment. Through an interplay between reference and revelation, Salgado is able to uncover new possibilities and new realms.

(Translation from German by Antti Kaski)