



**In the evangelical kindergarten *Stephanus* you have presented works by the artist Ondrej Brody: Five paintings made after found children's pictures and presumably looking exactly like the models. Could you bring your idea a little bit closer?**

Ondrej had shown me a documentation of his works. I became attentive to this series which, at the first glance, looked like a mistake in the portfolio and which he had never shown before. I regarded the kindergarten as a good place for the show.



**One sees what it is - and doesn't see it at the same time because the paintings are a kind of imitation, and that is not to be recognized at once. Are there any discourses which - or artists who - were influential on these works and your curating?**

Actually, one of my main interests in art is the uncertainty of what is visible as such and how to classify it. Ondrej's paintings are precisely executed copies, they don't include any spontaneous gesture. They get their energy (and our sympathy) from our imagination relating to children's pictures. But when you look at the paintings carefully, you recognize firstly that the technique (oil on linen) and secondly that the calculated execution has nothing to do with the way children paint. Ondrej's purpose with this series was also to shake the viewers' perception. He mentioned works by Glenn Brown as one artistic reference.





**Only a few pictures appeared in the show, bringing about the idea of concentration, but the non-resistance in a semi-public space, too, in favour of a "conviction" which avoids known proceedings of art presentation and which trusts in the viewers' favourable estimation. Do you see a new way of discussing art indicated in this show?**

I don't know for certain. Concerning concentration, I would like to remark that the kindergarten's children's drawings were visible together with Ondrej's paintings: He installed his paintings together with a selection of their works. So the situation was quite dissolved. Furthermore, I can't see why this show would indicate non-resistance. A semi-public space is not free of resistance, quite the opposite. I think the two of us feel confident of this work now, but you should not forget that Ondrej didn't want to show the paintings before. And, evidently, there is an urge to present art, I would say, but it takes place in a specific context. Concerning favourable estimation: No one can be sure of kids as affirmative observers; they are very spontaneous. The kindergarten's children appreciated the paintings but didn't understand why we wanted to show the paintings there. And I don't know the parents' mind but I am sure that the children told them of the event. The installation of the show was very exciting for them, they helped Ondrej to select their own drawings, to clean the walls and to hang the pictures. They also did some real "performances" in front of the camera, hoping it would be broadcasted on TV ... – My coming to terms with art is not orientated on the "new" but on the alienation of the "known". The context in which I make this project, the way I make it and how I mediate it, is more interesting for me than the invention of anything "new". My concern here was mainly to form a space for thinking of and experimenting with the pictures. Perhaps, the *Re-Institutionalize* project might be compared to some exhibitions and actions by Christian Boltanski in the beginning of the '70s, or to some projects by Gianni Motti. Also works by artists of my own generation were influential, as Sislej Xhafa's *Pleasure of Flower* (2000, an installation in a police station) or Anri Sala's *Dammi i colori* (2003, a video documentation of a "pictorial" project by the mayor of Tirana).



**Do you regard the *Re-Institutionalize* project – this show was the second part of it – as a developing process, or as facets of one main thought, or do you regard each show as a singular event?**

I should not answer to this question, yet. – Very important to me is the opportunity to work together with the people in the institution where the show takes place: A significant question is, every time, how to involve the people in the best way. The kids did a good job: the installation of the show was a thrilling, funny and exhausting experience. At the first show of the project, *Salon Picasso*, Ondrej had suggested to come with me in order to film the installation. That was a very good idea! The installation of the show is the moment when people are actually involved in their space and in the artistic work. Every time, it's a different moment, and so are the decisions which are made in that moment. Although it is an easy work – to install some pictures in a room – this task causes complex questions and reactions at the very social place. Artworks mostly dissolve outside the protective environment of the White Cube; otherwise, the given status of a place can be questioned when art enters the place. I'm interested in this possibility of producing a kind of switch in our perception of a place.





Ondrej Brody & children

**Interview: Heike Wetzig & Kristofer Paetau, June 2004**

**Re-Institutionalize # 02: Evangelical Kindergarten**