

Press Release: Mount Stuart Visual Arts Programme 2009

Exhibition: 17 May to 30 September 2009  
Artist Talk: 17 May 3pm. Booking advisable

### Katja Strunz – The Great Bear (je meurs où je m`attache)

Katja Strunz selects work to exhibit within the context of Mount Stuart – “a constellation of several metal objects, two paper works and a photographic work collectively titled ‘The Great Bear (je meurs où je m`attache)’. The installation, developing from the original exhibit Kunstmuseen Krefeld, Haus Esters 2006, reflects the artist’s ongoing enquiry into cultural history, philosophy, architecture, temporality and the ownership of space and collections.

The objects, placed within the context at Mount Stuart, and demanding a renewed focus, flow from the contemporary exhibition space of the visitor centre into the outside and provide a significant link to the garden and decorative interiors of the nineteenth century house. “The objects ‘Parasols’ are built to resemble plants, mushrooms or umbrellas and their positioning follows the pattern of the stars called The Great Bear.” The artist’s proposal, “rather than represent an exact copy of the constellation is to reflect the idea of mirroring The Great Bear into our space, a mimetic process”.

Mount Stuart is infused with astronomical and astrological decorative references, the most striking example being the astronomical ceiling in the Marble Hall. Amongst the spectral figures and shining stars is The Great Bear himself set within the constellations of the Ecliptic. Arts and Crafts decorative artist HW Lonsdale’s original designs for the ceiling remain in the archives at Mount Stuart.

The subtitle of the exhibition references “a photographic image taken in Nantes, France 17.3.1929 and shows a group of people wearing camouflage made of leaves. With the help of their outfits they resemble plants. Looking through the photographer’s camera into our time they hold a big sign which tells us “je me meurs où je m`attache”. The metal objects together with the photographic image join the old saying “I will die where I am closely connected”.

“The mimicry of the camouflage suits, the mimetical moment of reflecting The Great Bear, the fabrication of the Parasols from found and collected material into plant forms make the vital connection to nature”, and resonate with the eclectic collections at Mount Stuart.

The temporary nature of the work, as with previous projects at Mount Stuart initiates a new conversation about contemporary art practice, a response to the landscape, architecture and archives which creates a process of constant renewal and development.

Editors Notes:

The Artist: Katja Strunz

Born 1970, Ottweiler, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin.

Upcoming solo exhibitions: Camden Arts Centre London, December 2009; Cruise and Callas Berlin May 2009

Recent solo exhibitions: *Einbruchstellen*, Contemporary Fine Arts Berlin 2008; *Guten Morgen Erwachen*, Galerie Amine Rech Paris; *Lazy Corner and the Suicide Walls*, The Modern Institute/Toby Webster Ltd Glasgow; *Lazy Corner*, Artpace San Antonio Texas 2007; *Faltgestalt*, Museum Haus Esters Krefeld; *Whose Garden Was This*, Gavin Brown's Enterprise New York 2006; *Ta Pedia tou pirea*, Art Statement, Art/35/Basel 2005; *Time of the Season*, The Modern Institute Glasgow and doggerfisher Edinburgh 2003.

Katja Strunz is represented by The Modern Institute/Toby Webster Ltd Glasgow, Contemporary Fine Arts Berlin, Galleries Amine Rech Paris and Gavin Brown's Enterprise New York.

Mount Stuart Trust:

Through the visual arts programme, Mount Stuart Trust aims to promote and facilitate interest in the contemporary visual arts and bring exhibitions of international standard to Bute and Argyll. To create potential for a wider audience and new perspective, the trust utilizes the context of Mount Stuart and the island of Bute as an exciting opportunity for public artwork and provides inclusive educational opportunities.

For further information, full CV, bibliography and press images please contact:

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Ferry and train information: [www.calmac.co.uk/summer-bute-timetable](http://www.calmac.co.uk/summer-bute-timetable)

Visitor Centre, gallery & gardens open 10am-6pm daily.

FREE ADMISSION TO GALLERY

House open until 30 September, 11am-5pm Sunday through Friday.

10am-2.30pm Saturday

Please call +44 (0)1700 503877 for detailed opening times.