

photography: lejo & august walla:

Opening: Wednesday 28 September 2016, 7 p.m.

Duration: 29. Sept – 23 November 2016

This exhibition juxtaposes two artists of entirely disparate approaches to photography, who complement each other.

Johannes Lechner aka Lejo has bought and collected single photographs and whole albums from estates since 1990, and since 2007 has produced collages from strangers' photographs. His works originate at his Vienna studio among numerous albums, collections of clocks, cameras, picture frames and lamps. The walls are adorned with recently produced works, as Lejo likes to spend some more time with them, show them to his friends and even make some alternations. Photographs get cut up, torn, re-assembled, and when he deems it fitting, he will add to them in graphite pencil or scratch some parts out. Upon the perusal of various albums it struck him that there are moments in life which "everybody" takes pictures of; hence since 2012 he has created humoristic collages of such themes, like his piece *Class Reunions*. The all but overpowering repetition of a motive results in a bigger whole and the artist thus reflects society back to the onlooker, who inevitably revisits his own experience. Lejo seeks and finds his works' titles in the *Brockhaus* (a German language encyclopedia) or the *Wahrig German dictionary*. His works impress through their subtle approach, formal sophistication and gentle ironic humour.

The photographic work of the arguably most universal Art Brut artist **August Walla** was less famous than his drawings and paintings for a long time. Walla loved to immortalize his every surroundings, take pictures of his art works or let his mother photograph him in various poses with or without his artworks. He had his own photographic fingerprint, and despite his photographic work being quite heterogeneous (landscapes, interiors, documents of works, situational-private motives), the arrangements are idiosyncratic throughout. Walla always sees something plus something else, and thus his compositions always contain a main motive plus surroundings. His oeuvre can be divided into photographs he took himself and those he features in, which his mother took following his precise instructions. Special rarities are the black-and-white vintage prints, inscribed by Walla on the back. In the 1980s, he produced Instamatic photographs in colour, a selection of which got enlarged from the original negative, affixed onto carton and completed with drawings and writing on the back.

This exhibition offers an insight into both artists' works. In addition to Walla's photographs we are presenting some of his objects, whose staging and

photographic documentation played an important role for him at all times. It will be on show at the *galerie gugging* until 27 November 2016.

Additionally, **Lia Wolf Cabinet**, Sonnenfelsgasse 3, 1010 Vienna, will be hosting a solo exhibition of Lejo's photographic collages titled *Drunter und Drüber* (Topsy-Turvy). On 8 November 2016 at 6 pm there will be an artist's talk ***Topsy-Turvy – Lejo the artist talking to Anton Holzer, curator and historian of photography***, as well as the opening exhibition at 7 pm. The exhibition runs until 23 December 2016.

galerie gugging

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