

Alexej Meschtschanow – press release 2010

Alexej Meschtschanow's sculptures and installations are the result of observed social habits and the appropriation of embedded aesthetic and psycho-social conventions. Studying our immediate social environments; the suburbs and side streets, the constellations of the supermarket checkout or a station platform is as important part of Meschtschanow's wider discussion of the "iridescent products of high-culture". Characteristically, Meschtschanow forces his carefully selected found objects, often consisting of antique or classic furniture, together with idiosyncratic steel constructions in the attempt to achieve an augmented and stabilized form of existence.

Meschtschanow interweaves biographic material with a fictitious, abstract-mechanic formal vocabulary. The traditional image of furniture/living room situations/image on the wall is always present but the atmosphere created is oppressive rather than homely. Deformity, and a threatening physical presence counter our experienced history, memories and errant exchanges. The bold gestures of the raw steel elements in the space mix with the detail of the chair sculptures and wall-pieces. Each clamp, bracket or screw constitutes a social ornament that may not be unconditionally trusted. The resulting balance between black humor and actual discomfort remains fragile.

For his upcoming exhibition at Klemm's Berlin in May/June 2010 Meschtschanow will present a new ensemble of works in a coherent installation dealing with our image of labour – physically and mentally – in our post-post-fordist times. The relation between the individual and a abstract machinery, that might represent any sort of system, comes into focus. For this show the artist will built in a complete steel-structure hanging from the gallery's ceiling and will juxtapose this 'mega-sculpture' with a stylized conveyor belt unearthing a number of new small-scale objects.

These pivotal pieces will be accompanied by a new take on portrait – similar to his 'cracked- glassworks' from recent years – and another sculpture commenting on the situation in the gallery.