

WOLFGANG LAIB

OPENING: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2008, 6 - 9 P.M.
EXHIBITION: SEPTEMBER 5 – NOVEMBER 1, 2008



The Cobra Snakes are Coming out of the Well at Night, 2008

Clay pots, ashes, metal, oil lamps
Dimensions variable
courtesy Buchmann Galerie Berlin

The Buchmann Galerie is pleased to present its second gallery exhibition in Berlin by Wolfgang Laib.

New works have been created especially for the show that open up new facets of his work by incorporating the elements fire and ash.

A field laid out on the floor of more than a thousand hand-formed clay vessels filled with white ash contrasts with a nearly equal number of clay bowls standing somewhat higher with burning wicks lying in oil.

Two rice houses of black granite point to the continuity of the oeuvre that is an essential aspect of his work for Wolfgang Laib:

"I have always resisted artistic development in my life and in my work. Quite deliberately, I want to grind a milk stone in 2006 that is precisely like those from thirty years ago. . . . That is a completely different ambition."¹

BUCHMANN GALERIE

Over thirty years Wolfgang Laib has created an oeuvre that largely escapes traditional classification and has a highly original quality. He uses natural materials such as rice, pollen, milk, and bee wax in his art, which also reinforces the spiritual and open dimension of his message:

"That is always what is exciting about art: being something that is not yet there, that is not graspable, not yet achieved, that has an open end."¹

Looking at Wolfgang Laib's works, one is always taken in immediately by the simplicity of the forms and colors. It testifies to a desire for the essential, for avoiding any demonstrative tendency.

Every characteristic has its own necessity and stand out as extremely important. The reduction of formal vocabulary to primary elements and the tension in the synthesis of form and idea solidifies in his works, pointing to a strong suggestive power. They are works that reveal complex preoccupations and an unsuspected profundity beneath their apparent modesty. Discovering Wolfgang Laib's oeuvre is an intense and unique experience that provides viewers with much more than an aesthetic appreciation.

A survey of his works is on view until September 28 at the Musée de Grenoble, curated by Guy Tosatto. On March 12, 2009, an exhibition will open at the Fondazione Merz in Turin.

For many years now, Wolfgang Laib has long been considered one of the most respected and admired German artists internationally. Important works by Wolfgang Laib are found, for example, in the collection of MoMA New York, the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC, the DePont Foundation Tilburg, the Centre Pompidou Paris, the Kunsthaus Zürich, and the Kunstmuseum Bonn.

For additional information on the artist and for illustrations of the works, please feel free to contact the gallery at any time.

press@buchmann galerie.com

¹ Wolfgang Laib: Reishäuser, Buchmann Galerie 2007, A Conversation Between Wolfgang Laib and André Buchmann