

Terminology of the window:

In principle, a window is first of all an opening in the wall – a gap which allows communication between in and outside. In a room with four walls, the openings are certainly the most attractive elements. Nevertheless each opening of the known and secure interior means temptation as well as threat simultaneously. While the door has an active character (to enter or leave in between two rooms), the window is more of a passive nature. It frames – just like a mat – a random cutout that is set by the square of the window. The parcelling of the perceived results in fragments that do not necessarily in size and in relation to their function fit the actual content of the more familiar. While there is a voyeuristic approach from the inside, it raises expectations from the outside (i.e. the existence of light behind a window means physical presence).

Small windows can be a sign of expectations, intimacy, loneliness (who is outside can only guess what might be inside, from the inside the landscape seems as observed through a picture frame). Large windows indicate an area of movement, interaction, relationship (the interior communicates with the outside). For the public sector the pub or bar-glazing gives a good example. The traditional restaurants often display matt, domed or obscure glass – views in or outside are rather difficult. In the current local scene however, you see quite often large, panoramic windows – the aspect of seeing and being seen plays a much more important role.

In painting the window is often a synonym for homesickness as well as itchy feet, longing, a secret love, it stands for letting thoughts go and accommodation of the outside nature.

Recent history of architecture:

Especially in recent architectural history and due to newer construction techniques in steel and reinforced concrete construction the efforts of planners were to make windows as large as possible. In particular, the representatives of modernism designed huge windows intending to create bright and light-filled spaces. Most obviously this called the traditionalists on the scene who believed (by the influx of even light in the room) to lose its attraction of gloaming, and therefore feared a demystification of the space. The objects in it (as part of the identification of the user) would be drowned by a pitiless, blinding light – all the peace or protective sensation would be destroyed in chorus. An example of this dispute gives the conflict between Le Corbusier and his former teacher and employer Auguste Perret, which is documented in the form of written magazine articles. While Le Corbusier advocate-like favoured the horizontal window – he manifested it as one of his five points on the new architecture – Perret saw the interior as protective cover of private man and his identification massively disrupted. He feared that the horizontal window would impose the omnipresence of environment / nature, and thus having the inhabitants condemned in a passive role of spectator.

Even in literature there are examples of the above mentioned dilemma: The last words of the dying Johann Wolfgang von Goethe are supposed to be „More light!“. On the other hand he believed that the artistic seclusion of the room was destroyed by capacious windows which is why he castigated the blurring of the boundary between rooms and the outside world in his texts.

What followed were inner side panellings of the window with curtains and blinds to return the inner isolation in private chambers again and to negate an intrusive relationship with the outside world.

In the end the above divergence continues to this day. It's not unusual to see enormous windows – planned by architects – which are often closed off from their future residents due to internal ruche curtains.

Exhibition:

As the shows name would make guess already, the works represent views from private or public spaces in urban landscapes of Hanover. A trigger for the series „Durch Fenster“ – „Through the window“ – was the (originally designed for a different series) image „Nicht auf dem Holzweg“ – „Not on the wrong track“. Its title is a wordplay regarding the ancient Holzmarkt – so to say timber market. The viewer is located inside the Historical Museum of Hanover. Through the large panorama glazing he looks out over the old city right to the timber market. Obviously, the night has already fallen, so the visitor, who is at this moment one with the viewer of the image, finds himself into an unknown situation. Suddenly the art shown in the museum is no longer in the foreground (as it is usual during the day), but the object awakening his interest is provided outdoors instead.



The picture „Entre chiens et loups“ – „Between dogs and wolves“ also shows a deserted area. While outside some lights of the city shine brightly, the atmosphere inside with candlelight is slightly compact and intimate.

In all the works presented in the show the artist is capturing a moment of intimate observation and record the experience of serenity in itself. Without describing each image in detail the attraction of the works most certainly lies in looking at the pictures by trying to localize the site and the outlook of the places shown. There are many details to discover. Although the prospects are largely authentic, they raise no documentary character – e.g. the artist takes her freedom to transform an opposite facade for her own aesthetic sen-

se. On the question of inspiration of her work Emmanuelle Tanais Aupest names the Baroque painter Georges de la Tour. His „night pieces“ are consistently kept dark and lit only by candles (usually even only by one candle, and most often this is restricted only as an indirect light). Of course the artist herself considers it presumptuous to compare herself with such a genius at all but yet illumination and colour of various interiors of her work recognize definitely the value of the old master.

Six of the works shown function as direction of view from the inside out, while five images have the opposite effect direction. The closed cycle of the „Matin“ – „Forenoon“ shows an interior at night that is penetrated by outside lights (e.g. passing cars), and further on the daily movement of the sun light within the room – also the subject of the earlier described „curtain-situation“ can be seen here in a very beautiful way!

Technique / Style:

In fact Emmanuelle Tanais Aupest drafts all interior spaces by hand – with a good eye for the stock – mostly with a felt pen. All exteriors she captures in photographs. Both components are then edited on computer and assembled into a whole. The PC hence serves her as a kind of bonding table.

Hartmut Möller, Hannover, Juni 2010