

# ANDREAS SLOMINSKI

08 Oct –22 Nov 2003

private view: Wed 08 Oct 6-8pm

*Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.  
Walking next to the pony is different from riding it.<sup>1</sup>*

Andreas Slominski is best known for his traps. Since 1986 he has been collecting and copying models designed to ensnare a whole range of animals from voles to birds, weasels to foxes. These elaborate structures, designed to entice animals, work on the principle of temptation. To the human eye, they may possess a sculptural beauty, but this is undercut by the sense of repulsion and brutality incurred by their function. However, within the gallery, the traps retain the element of temptation, as the audience, curiosity piqued, inevitably begins to wonder if they are fully functioning, assuming that as humans they would be able to foil them.

The traps announce Slominski as a trickster, and indeed the ludic element in these works extends to other projects. In order to exhibit a stolen bicycle pump at his show at the Deutsche Guggenheim in 1989, instead of just snatching the pump from the bike, as many a petty thief before him, he sawed off the section of the cross bar, taking that along with the pump. For the same show, he hired a professional gardener to plant a dead tree stump amid the Lime trees on Unter den Linden where the Guggenheim is located in Berlin. To those who had not witnessed the planting, the appearance of the stump was inexplicable and for the local authorities it was distressing enough to warrant the area being sectioned off, like the scene of a crime. Common to all these works and others that have come since, is a narrative. In many instances the object exhibited in the gallery is the culmination of an elaborate sequence of events; Slominski has often covered his tracks, chapters of the narrative have vanished, leaving only some very perplexing signs. Boris Groys highlights the originality and fascination such a strategy holds:

'And so I have the impression that everything Andreas Slominski does is pointing to something else. That's its real power. Basically the power to direct another person's attention is absolute power. So the strategy is to manipulate me, to manipulate my gaze, and at the same time to avoid being judged by me. He directs my gaze exactly where he wants and at the same time away from himself. [...] He wants me to look past him. But when I look past him or his work and see something different, then I am entirely in his hands.'<sup>2</sup>

For his first show at Sadie Coles HQ an electric stove runs off electricity that circumnavigates Heddon Street, cakes have been baked to represent the percentage result of trivial polls and sections of the gallery walls have been cut and revolved 180 degrees so that pasted posters are hanging the correct way up. Each element is presented in a different denomination: 7 posters, 12 cans of paint, 14 spokes of the wheel, 2 cakes. Slominski considers the relationship between figures and quantities from a variety of perspectives - as abstractions, as mathematical elements and as the components of communities and society as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas Slominski in *Dreams* (eds Francesco Bonami and Hans Ulrich Obrist, published on the occasion of 48<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, 1999 (Turin, Italy: Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo per l'Arte, 1999)

<sup>2</sup> Boris Groys in Bettina Funcke & Jens Hoffman, "Slominski": A Conversation with Boris Groys', *Parkett* 55, 1999, p 102