

## Mladen Bizumic

Right now Mladen Bizumic is based in Berlin. He is working on a project for the Freud Museum in Vienna where he will install a vitrine of architectural fragments from Viennese buildings. These will be accompanied by two commissioned works: a piano piece composed by his girlfriend and a 'psychoanalytic poem' written by his mother, a psychologist. The project nicely articulates Bizumic's practice. Local material – the built environment of Vienna – will find its way into a museum, reframed as a self-consciously 'historical' display, which, in turn, will be translated and abstracted in both highly structured and oddly arbitrary ways. For which is the musical note that figures the sound of a built form? What is the 'unconscious' of rubble that can be put into a poem?

Bizumic's work always has a sophisticated finish, a guise that suggests a keen analytical intelligence. One could put it down to his European inheritance. But if one probes appearances the logic snags on what is a decidedly absurdist streak. Maybe this comes from his Central European background, which positions him a little off-kilter and therefore suits his adopted home, New Zealand. In projects, here, he has imagined extending the Guggenheim franchise to an east coast resort town in the central North Island; and staging a biennale in tourist-friendly Fiji. His supporting presentations are always impeccable, but their impulse is deflationary, not of the settings he works with, but rather of the overbearing ambitions of the global culture industry. Like a New World Walter Benjamin, he sees New Zealand as modernity's final frontier, treating this place as an ideal setting from which to ponder its ruins; somewhere, perhaps, for new beginnings.

Christina Barton

## Mladen Bizumic

Born in 1976.

Lives and works in Berlin, Germany and Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Selected solo exhibitions:

2007 – *How If: A Translation in III Acts*, Kuenstlerhaus Bethanien, and Program, Berlin.

2006 – *The Crystal Memorial*, Charim Galerie, Vienna; *Superstructure Doubled* (with Øystein Aasan), Korridor, Berlin. 2005 *Cafe Wittgenstein*, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland; event: *horizon.black.hole*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

2004 – *Aipotu: Love Will Tear Us Apart (again)*, Hocken Library Gallery, Dunedin.

2003 – *Fiji Biennale Pavilions*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth; event: *horizon*, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton.

2002 – *A Beautiful Afterlife*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki; *Untitled* (Tauranga Guggenheim), ARTSPACE, Auckland.

### Selected group exhibitions:

2007 - 2nd Moscow Biennale.

2006 – *A Tale of Two Cities, Café 1*, Busan Biennale, Korea; *High Tide: New Currents in Art from Australia and New Zealand*, Zacheta National Museum of Art, Warsaw, Poland, and Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania; *Don't Misbehave! : SCAPE 2006 Biennial of Art in Public Space*, Christchurch.

2005 – *Re: Modern*, Kuenstlerhaus, Vienna; *Small World, Big Town – Contemporary Art from Te Papa*, City Gallery, Wellington.

2004 – *We Are the World*, Chelsea Art Museum, New York; *Break/Shift*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.

2001 – *Bright Paradise: 1st Auckland Triennial*.

### Selected bibliography:

Marc Gloede, 'The Axis Powers' in *How If: A Translation in III Acts*, Program, Berlin, 2007.

Magda Kardasz, 'Upside Down' in *High Tide*, Zacheta Narodowa Galeria Sztuki, Warsaw, 2006.

Tessa Laird, 'Occhio alla Nuova Zelanda' in *Case Da Abitare*, June 2005.

Natasha Conland - 'Passing Through: A Base in New Zealand Art', *Broadsheet*, June-August 2005.

Cassandra Barnett and Grant Matheson, 'Ride on Time: Recent Works

by Mladen Bizumic', *The Velvet Rickshaw - A Ramp Magazine*, April 2004

Simon Rees, 'Pacific Trade and Exchange' in *Fiji Biennale Pavilions*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2004.