

KunstHaus Vera Staub

Göschenen's former school and almshouse becomes House of Art

Change in Göschenen - The former school and almshouse is being transformed into the *KunstHaus Vera Staub* (House of Art Vera Staub) and will also house a branch office of the *Museumsfabrik* ("Museum-Factory"). The building will be a place of artistic creation and encounter, set in the unique mountain scenery of the Gotthard region in Switzerland.

The opening of the new KunstHaus in Göschenen will be celebrated with a feast and a new exhibition, to take place on September 1st, 2012, between 10 am and 8 pm. All are invited to attend.

The school and almshouse has a colorful history. The former house was set on fire by the parish cook in 1870. She barricaded herself in the burning building and pelted the approaching firefighters with stones before she perished with the house. Where should be built the new school and almshouse? The town decided to demolish the ruins of a medieval tower, which was built in 1290 by the lords of Rapperswil, and construct a new school and almshouse on its original foundation. Parts of which are still visible beneath the present building.

In 1909 the building was auctioned by the parish and the proceeds were used for the construction of a new parish church. From 1909 until 2012 it was used as a private home. Now it is about to become the *KunstHaus Vera Staub*.

The visual artist Vera Staub creates sculptures and installations that are engaged in people and their stories. The former school and almshouse in Göschenen is her current project as well as her studio. An almshouse was an early kind of retirement benefit: it was endowed by the community to offer refuge and charity to those in need. The artist Vera Staub would like her art studio to be a benefit given to the community, and she hopes that it will serve as a foundation for the town's future life. The *KunstHaus* will be a place where Vera Staub's artwork will develop and her artistic processes can be followed. In addition it will be a place of inspiration for people and their stories, and a place for encounters with art.

To celebrate the opening of the *KunstHaus* Vera Staub will exhibit artworks especially conceived for the rooms of the KunstHaus. In the historic stone cellar, which now serves as a sculpture studio, carved sandstones will be on view. Upstairs in the former classroom there will be photographs, still lifes taken in the house itself, which show the interplay between the artist and her surroundings.

The building will also house a branch office of the *Museumsfabrik*, a museum and exhibition consulting business founded by Kilian T. Elsasser. For several years he has been engaged in the preservation and the continuous use of the unique Gotthard railway which passes through Göschenen.

Vera Staub and Kilian Elsasser would be delighted to have you visit on Saturday, September 1st, and to welcome you to their new studio and office in the historic almshouse.

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Biblions

'Biblions' are meditative installations. They are based on statements from the bible, one of the foundations of our occidental cultural values.

In 2011 the artist Vera Staub worked in the Church St. Josef, Lucerne, Switzerland on her art project 'Biblions'. The church became her studio. The visitors could follow the making of the various installations. The installations were subject of meditative contemplations and integrated in the religious festivities taking place during Holy Week and Easter.

Similar to the other works by the artist, the installations Vera Staub is creating invite us on a meditative journey – to the transitions within ourselves.

Subjects:

Palm Sunday: 'Schwangerkeit' / 'Pregnance'.

Holy Thursday: 'Through the mirror'.

Good Friday: 'GrabLICHTung/ TombCLEARing'. Good Friday liturgy. Triptych installation.

Easter: 'Good bye, shroud'. Illuminated object.

Pentecost: 'Verwoben/ Interwoven'.

And he gave me a stone

In the traveling project titled *And he gave me a stone* Vera Staub invited passersby into her circus trailer where a sculpture in form of a tomb shroud awaited them and confronted them at this place of 'enchantment' with the topic of death. The aesthetic of the installation created the sensations of attraction and shudder at the same time.

Vera Staub documented her art action in form of empathetic photographs.

The author and journalist Brigitte Schmid-Gugler gets herself into these images.

Her short essays, analyses of the images, personal references and associative and sometimes humorous texts make the topic 'The volatility of being' approachable and are easy to read.

She describes the encounter of the artist and the public, makes art historical and historico-cultural observations; she describes the reservations she had at first, her awe of the topic, and reveals at the same time her fascination with it. The latter becomes notably perceptible in the correspondence with the 91-year-old writer, poet, nun and mystic Silja Walter from the monastery of Fahr. In addition to the letters, Silja Walter also contributed a poem to the book.

Magdalena Bernath, Die Zeile, 2010

Schwangerkeit (pregnance)

Installation, 2006

Turbine Giswil/Switzerland

Once a man found in a state of dreaming – in a daydream it was – that he got pregnant from nothingness. This quotation from Meister Eckhart, the mystic, relates to one of Vera Staubs recent figures. Staub is a tireless creator of pacific signs and strong gestures as well. Thus her twofold approach to apperception, of abundance on the one side, emptiness or nothingness on the other side. Nothingness is the womb from which abundance grows. Vera Staub calls this condition 'pregnance'. Using gold and silver, sun and moon, and the colors of the earth, Staub is revealing what the pregnant harbors in her womb. On beholding of these figures we are invited and allowed to empty ourselves... and what a man found in a state of dreaming seven hundred years ago is awakening again and rising to substantial forms. Abundance and emptiness at once. -text: Pius Strassmann, January 06 / translation: Stephan E. Hauser, June 06
7 objects – bellies of pregnant women made from plaster of Paris and synthetic resin – hanging from invisible 'strings' attached to the ceiling of the exhibition hall. Suspended like this, the bellies dangle, along with the current of air, incredibly slowly, suggesting all indolence.