



Die Rückkehr der Pfote / Return of the Paw

- 2013, architectural installation in context of „Paws pro toto“
- Lion’s Paw by Eugen Kircheisen (1855–1913), sculptural fragment, cast iron, approx. 250 kg
- LED-display, reproduction of a historical photo from 1893

In 2009, Eleni Trupis (*1976), visual artist and post-graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden, began a long-term multimedia project that is both performative and conservationist in nature, relating to two specific historical monuments.

„Paws pro toto“ – as the art project is titled – contains several correlated but independent art works. One of these is the installation „Return of the Paw“ which can be seen here at the foyer of the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden. Historical photos of two monumental, formerly winged lion sculptures, created by sculptor Eugen Kircheisen for the architecture of the Art Academy building were the impulse behind the whole group of works.

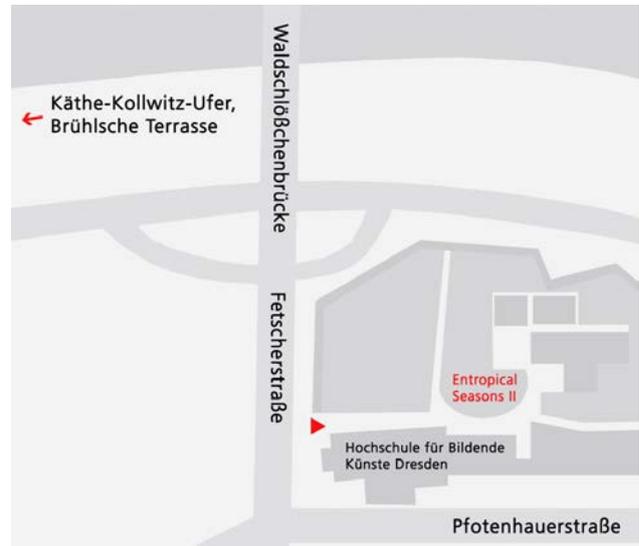
In 1894, the “Royal Academy” was inaugurated here on Brühlsche Terrasse 1. The planners of the building dedicated much attention to the building’s sculptural decoration in order to emphasize the importance of sculpture within the academy. An allegorical program had been designed and realized for each part of the building by professors and alumni of the Academy. Among the latter was Eugen Kircheisen. The post-graduate from the master class of Johannes Schilling created two monumental winged lions made of cast iron, which flanked the tympanum on south front and accentuated the architecture.

During World War II, many of Kircheisen’s works were entirely or partially destroyed, victim to the German arms industry’s so-called „Metallspenden“ (metal donations). The same happened to the lion sculptures, which lost their wings to the war effort. The lions remained in place until 1992 when they were taken down as part of an extensive restoration campaign and their fragments were relocated in the garden of the Art Academy’s location on Pfortenhauerstraße, where sculpture is still taught today.

The destiny of the lion sculptures inspired Eleni Trupis, who has integrated the locality of her artistic education in her work several times before, to create a slide show that documents the sculpture fragments’ deterioration against a backdrop of seasonal change. The photos were presented together with a collage made of rusty component parts in 2013 as part of her exhibition “PygmaLion” at the Albertinum. At the same time Trupis initiated a land art intervention at Pfortenhauerstraße: she created an enclosure around the lion fragments using carefully chosen quarry stones made of diabase and white marble split. As a result, the fragments have been protected from overgrowth by nature. The stones still surround the lion figures like a passepartout and transform them into a new – assemblage-like – art work.

With "Paws pro toto" Eleni Trupis pursues an artistic strategy that integrates history into the present while also comprehending historical change as natural process and a chance to create something new. "Return of the Paw" in its complex, extensive procedure resembles a symbolic act, repatriating the lions at least partially to their historical place of origin. By assembling a historical photo on LED-display and using the title "Return of the Paw", which references movie titles like "Return of the Jedi" („Star Wars Episode VI – Return of the Jedi", 1983), Trupis anchors the historical evidence as an independent installation in the here and now.

You are invited to visit the land art intervention "Entropical Seasons II" on Pfortenhauerstraße 81– 83. Please use the following maps. Opening hours are enclosed.



Die Rückkehr der Pfote / Return of the Paw

Installation in the foyer
of the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden

Entrance: Brühlsche Terrasse 1 (free)
Opening hours: Mon to Fri 10 am – 6 pm

Walking distance between Brühlsche Terrasse and
Pfortenhauerstraße: approximately 25 minutes

Entropical Seasons II

Intervention in the garden at the sculptors' location
of the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden

Entrance: Pfortenhauerstraße 81 – 83 (free)
Opening hours: Mon to Fri 10 am – 6 pm

„Die Rückkehr der Pfote / Return of the Paw" has been realized with the friendly support by the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden and it's Freundeskreis (circle of friends). „Entropical Seasons" is being supported by the Academy of Fine Arts Dresden and the Staatsbetrieb Sächsisches Immobilien- und Baumanagement (SIB).

Picture credits:

df_hauptkatalog_0305452 (picture detail of a historical photography which shows the winged lion sculptures in their original site around 1922) Sächsische Landes-, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB) Deutsche Fotothek, 01054 Dresden, SLUB Dresden / Deutsche Fotothek / Walther Hahn

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