

Interview Anne Fäser – Andreas Sell

**On the occasion of the intervention for the art magazine Idealist
Studio Andreas Sell, December 5th 2010**

As contribution to the magazine Andreas Sell tore out two pages of each edition of the 5,000 magazines.

Standing still is the theme of Andreas Sell's works. He first explored this theme six years ago with his project Standstill which started as a counterpoint to his surroundings. The experience of The Impossibility of Standstill marks the beginning of further work about the structure of acting within societal contexts.

***Anne Fäser:** In your current work for Idealist there appear to be quite a few changes from your original concept of Standstill. After repeated realisation of this concept, in which you or others actually stand completely still in an exhibition room, now you're offering a different portrayal of standing still. Or is standing still for hours on end the same for you as tearing pages out of this art book?*

Andreas Sell: Standing still or tearing pages out of this art book are different actions yet they are connected to each other insofar as there is no other movement than the repetition of a single action. The attempt to repeat the exact same movement over an extended period of time contradicts the usual way humans move, which is characterized by a plenitude of different, unconscious movements. Reducing the movement to one exactly defined and repeated motion turns it into an image of a movement that seems to be still and motionless.

By doing a lot of my own performance art, I have learned how to control my body. Bodily standstill, for example, corresponds to the chosen speed of the repeated movement, and according to the body's condition it can be maintained for longer or shorter periods of time. This art book has a circulation of 5,000 copies, which defines the amount of my repeated movements. Hence, the speed of my movement must correspond to this precise amount and my condition.

***Anne Fäser:** Are standing still and movement diametrically exposed or do you see a connection between the two?*

Andreas Sell: Standstill shows neither reduction or increase. Yet there is movement. This movement bears a resemblance to itself but is in no way repetitious. I just assume that it is like this because I was not able to pause in the exact same position when I tried to stand still. I would describe standstill as the number of points of the same size which are equidistant from each other and which occur in a constant sequence within a certain period of time. After

this standstill, the increase or reduction of movement decreases in one direction.

Could you please explain in more detail how your view of the idea of Standstill has changed since we last discussed your work in March 2009?

I have started looking at standstill not only as being the minimization of physical movement but also in societal sequences of movement. For example, I showcase an empty house in the centre of Berlin. The house is standing empty because the ownership is unclear and therefore the structure is not being rented out or renovated. In this case I did not cause the standstill artificially; it arose due to the uncertain ownership of the house.

Standstill happens. Its manifestations are as varied as its causes. But it is always limited in time and has a regenerating effect.

Anne Fäser: *What role does it play in all this when you tear out the pages? You intervene in and change the existing structure of the book.*

Andreas Sell: A book contains information which has been printed onto the medium of paper. If I tear out the paper, this action counteracts the normal composition of the book, in this case not refusing the information but damaging the medium. Standstill acts against the dominating movement. The damaging disrupts the motion of information, and yet at the same time it brings the intervention to our attention. Thus, the information is now contained in the damage.