

Manfred Naescher

Visiting Shadows

Drawing performance and edition, 2014

Edition of 6 unique, handmade artist books

Book dimensions/format: 210 mm by 148 mm / 8.27 in by 5.83 in, 16 pages, saddle-stitched

Each book contains 6 watercolors over 6 double-page spreads

All drawings: watercolor and pencil on paper, 210 mm by 296 mm / 8.27 in by 11.66 in, 2014

Duration of drawing performance: 2 days

A Drawing Performance Resulting in a Six-Part Edition of Artist Books

“Visiting Shadows” was created in contribution to the group exhibition *Jump! Sprung ins Unbekannte* [Jump! Dive into the Unknown], August 23 to September 13, 2014, Green House Fukseriweg Schaan, Liechtenstein. An exhibition by Kunstverein Schichtwechsel, Liechtenstein.

Over the course of two days, “Visiting Shadows” resulted in an edition of six 16-page books that were titled after their subjects: Bruno, Moritz, Barbara, Hanni, Eloise, and Annett. Each book contains six watercolors on its pages. The work was created in-situ outside and inside a green house in which the exhibition *Jump! Sprung ins Unbekannte* [Jump! Dive into the Unknown] took place. Six guests (or visitors) were invited to sit for Manfred Naescher to draw their portraits in shadows. The drawings started as outlines: of the shadow of a profile, a hand, a shoulder, part of a head or a haircut. Six fragmented perspectives, distorted depending on the time of day/the angle of the sunlight (or, during cloudy periods, the light of a lamp) were projected - by the sun - onto the pages of the book, to be outlined and painted by the artist. The six books in the edition present individual portraits of the visitors, through the shadows they cast at a specific moment in their lives.

Contrary to plein air painting, “Visiting Shadows”, as the name suggests, is not so much concerned with depicting a permanent or recurring view, that is, a recognizable image of a place; its focus is rather on the highly ephemeral sign (the shadow) of a more ephemeral subject: a specific person at a specific time in a specific place. The work is created outdoors, but there is no setting - no landscape - in the resulting image: Context is provided by the shape of the drawn shadow, and it is the context of time as opposed to the context of place, as a drawing of, say, an elongated shadow of a hand suggests a late afternoon, when the shadows are longer, whereas a condensed hand shape points towards a time closer to noon, closer to the sun’s zenith.