

Fencing with Space // Ingo Gerken / 2007

Stella Geppert choreographs situations that rope you in. Adapting your behaviour to them is more or less automatic, you hardly think about it. You become part of a form, part of a constellation. As her acteur you simply merge into your own physical movement in a clearly defined space. It is enough to be there; the rest just happens.

At Cluster this occurs as a sculptural coming and going – and starts in the stairway: the old decorative stepwise border has been turned into smoothly progressing guidance system. Follow it, and you are led into Geppert's wild and coolly deconstructed space – a meticulous massacre of roof battens, distorting mirrors and vaguely posed questions.

In "**Nowhere Is Everywhere**" fragile wooden frameworks have the tendency to become spatial delineations. They are and they aren't objects. As yardsticks both literal and metaphorical they are architectural dashes – they affirm their surroundings more than themselves. Lithe and lissom, askance and awry, they are on the verge of their own disintegration. They are both storage and stored, stack and stand. They are a wobbly model, auxiliary lines for planned and unplanned usability.

The installation evokes the condition of not exactly knowing if that was it or whether there's more to come. But it is a form of balance that is entirely concentrated, and it proceeds through a dance of finely tuned formations. You might think that the artist had moved its elements back and forth for weeks, had scrupulously subjected herself to the drabness of location and material. And this is indeed the case; the composition has subtlety and depth from all angles, while also being a happy shambles like the wreckage of a tenderly shattered raft. You can sense a technique somewhere between battle and ballet. Perhaps it also reflects a Japanese-inspired gestural or written language.

The dull mirrors give off a sense of the surreal. On every corner you meet yourself as a flowing configuration within a crooked space, and so you plunge in and become part of these curious displacements, this awkward barricade – en garde! It is set against the naive view and the recognition of the recognisable; it stands for a complex doubt. In the midst of this splintery discord you can feel a prismatic zestfulness of self and surroundings. And every mirror has a hole in it (touché!), a blind spot, a dull dream, which sucks you in and then swirls you out again. Rhythmic, giddy, everywhere and nowhere.