

Mark Gisbourne:

Michael Sailstorfer

Acts of intervention, of deconstruction and reconstruction, are central to the sculptural works of Michael Sailstorfer (*1979). There is in his work a pre-disposed sense of the given, a given that is quite literally given over to something else. Whether it is a natural space in the forest given over to artifice (*Waldputz*, 2000), or an old police car turned into a set of drums (*Schlagzeug*, 2003), there is always for both the maker and object realised a defining instinct of self-consuming playfulness. Familiar utility is turned with humour to uselessness, or, put another way, into an aesthetic usefulness: meaning and function are thus transposed to a second use value. Sailstorfer's Froebeling tendencies can just as easily turn a light aircraft into a tree-house (*D-IBRB*, 2002), as a city tourist bus into a non-utilitarian sculptural object. A house consumes itself in a boiler (*3 Ster mit Ausblick*, 2002), caravans turn themselves into a house (*Heimatleid*, 2001), or a house becomes a piece of furniture (*Herterichstrasse 119*, 2001). Similarly, bus shelters can just as readily find themselves as newly domesticated spaces (*Wohnen mit Verkehrsanbindung*, 2001). In the mind and imaginary world of Sailstorfer the transitory suggests a variable permanence, and what appears to be permanent becomes transitory. Lampposts can become portable rockets that take off from launching pads (*Sternschnuppe- Shooting Star*, 2002), and street lamps need shades against the mosquitoes (*Mückenhaus*, 2001). For if the use of irony is that Socratean method by which we find the conveyance of new meaning, and in whose literal meaning is the opposite, then we have in Michael Sailstorfer a contemporary maker of playful ironic objects.

Published in: *Michael Sailstorfer - Welttour*, Galerie Markus Richter, Berlin, 2003