

■ Lothar Baumgarten autofocus retina

Opening: 7 February 2008

Exhibition dates: 8 February - 15 June 2008

Curator: Bartomeu Marí

Produced by: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)

This is the first retrospective exhibition in Spain by this German artist (Rheinsberg, 1944). The son of an anthropologist, Baumgarten lived for several years with an indigenous tribe in the Venezuelan Amazon region, and in the 1960s he became one of the first artists to explore representations of minority cultures and their absence from western cultural representation. Interested precisely in the idea of "the Other" and how it is portrayed in history, Baumgarten's work uses objects, images and the written word to stimulate reflection about conditions of exchange and travel in relation to geography and the accumulation of history.

The exhibition will focus particularly on Baumgarten's photographic work, particularly through such series as "Carbon" (1989) and "Montaigne" (1985), veritable visual essays and summaries of his entire production. In both "Carbon", a geographical study of the United States through two railway lines that cross the country, and "Montaigne", visual representations of Venezuelan Amazon landscapes (seen here in complete form for the first time), the artist's black-and-white photographs provide testimony to his interest in naturalist iconography and the idea of the artist-anthropologist. Combined with textual elements and signs, Baumgarten's work are veritable encyclopaedias of a landscape in constant evolution.

The show at La Capella MACBA will feature the work "Ecce Homo", from 2002, as well as including other outstanding pieces devoted to South American cultures, such as the specially commissioned installation, on the Museum front of Baumgarten's work "Imago Mundi" (1988), a metaphoric work which uses a universal photographic colour chart to explore the 20th-century colonial spirit.

For further information and/or graphic material:

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