

Points that connect the world

By Manfred Kremser

An artist who chisels the binary code into his works with a hand-axe reminiscent of the Stone Age does not merely join the most ancient technology of mankind with the most modern technology of the Digital Age. A contemporary artist, whose wood-block prints remind us of the pictorial language of primeval shamanistic petroglyphs and roam around the Cyberspace now, will soon be called a cybershaman. Michael Schneider deserves this title already. He reaches far into the metaphysical repertory of common human archetypal motifs, and does not only bridge gaps of time and space, but also practices a constant fusion of the worlds, transcending time/space.

With his six hand-axes (the seventh is resting) he incessantly feels the heartbeat of creation in order to get to the heart of creation - to the heart or to the point where the world comes into being each time anew. This point, which the Indian Yantra art of meditation refers to as "Bindu", contains all the potential of creation; the entire world rests concealed in this point, until it is released in the act of creation and given shape.

Michael Schneider, by making this point the starting point of his work, returns with every beat on the wood-block to the very beginning of Genesis. He thus acts in the very present and where everything began - commuting between simultaneous coding and decoding, between the polar opposites of Nothing and Everything: In every beat both make themselves felt.

We the onlookers are completely drawn into this tension of the polar opposites. Suddenly we remember the present, which carries its beginning in itself. We are neither here nor there, we are everywhere. Through this welcome loss of spatio-temporal dimensions we participate in a greater world, in which everything happens simultaneously. Indeed, the infinite takes place in the finite. For a short time these worlds become one - and we become one with them. At this moment we are there and we are more ourselves than just by ourselves.

What is for me personally the secret of the shapes that Michael Schneider sets free out of the starting point? Why do they trigger off a stream of recollection, which I cannot pinpoint in concrete terms? Could it be the fact that the "slabs undeciphered" by Michael Schneider supply us with a key to the potential and not to the manifest - to the same potential which allows us to tip over into numerous readings? A cosmos full of metamorphoses, which the artist submits to our scrutiny so that these metamorphoses can transform themselves and we can continue creation following our own image.

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