

THOMAS HIRSCHHORN: I WILL NO LONGER EXHIBIT IN SWITZERLAND

I am purposely unaccommodating. I cannot accept the newly elected Swiss Upper House of Parliament because nothing is more luxurious, nothing is more comfortable and nothing is more egocentric than to be a democrat today. Democracy is not untouchable, since our current state proves that democracy is vulnerable. The problem of democracy is that it implies its own inviolability. My intent is not to go against democracy; my intent is to go beyond democracy. I authorize myself in rashness, in blindness and headless to make a decision which requires me to go beyond myself. I want to challenge myself; I want to ask more than I demand. I don't want what's possible, I want the impossible – art does not want what's possible art wants the impossible – **I WILL NO LONGER EXHIBIT IN SWITZERLAND**- in art the impossible triumphs over the possible. This is the triumph over narcissism, over depression, over resentment and over angst. I want to be inflexible because art is not consensual, art is not diplomatic. One cannot make art with unthoughtful compromises. One will accuse me of being a dreamer and unrealistic, but I just want to risk a movement with uncontrollable course and I want to assume a radical responsibility with total excess – I want to be responsible for something irresponsible and for something which destabilizes me but makes me agree with myself- I don't want to be critical, I don't want to polemicize, I want to agree with myself - for me art is a tool. A tool to confront myself with reality- art is also a resistance movement, art resists, art is neither passive nor reactive, art attacks- through my artistic work I will grapple with reality in its complexity, its density and its incomprehensibility. I will act in all its unclarity. I will be brave, I will not get lulled to sleep, I will continue to work and I will be happy.

The most important thing about my Swiss exhibition boycott is, **THAT I WILL DO WHAT I ANNOUNCED** - One can count on it, since I do not want to become a politician. Therefore all the questions about the “how” and “where” and “when” are secondary at the moment – of primary importance are **WHY**. With my boycott I would like to show that there has to be an end with the creeping fascism. I know and history proves it that people like Blocher will not change even after being part of the Upper House of Parliament. To believe the opposite is naivety, blindness or stupidity. Nobody in Switzerland seems to have learned from the situation. I put Blocher, Haider and le Pen on the same level – Four years ago when Haider's party became part of the government, Robert Fleck made a plea to boycott exhibitions in Austria. I agreed with his plea and have not since 2000 accepted any exhibition invitations in Austria. – I already knew back then that we Swiss would be next in line of the European renaissance to follow anti-foreign and racist's thoughts. Now it has happened and I will therefore be persistent. In a few years, Blocher, as the highest government official, will represent Switzerland, **MY COUNTRY**, and this I will not accept as a Swiss. **10/12/2003**

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