

RÉMY MARKOWITSCH

Projects and Installations 2
1995-2001

with parts from:

Für die Katz / For the Birds

Mr. Herbert

Blüten für Leipzig / Blossoms for Leipzig

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575/85

ÄsopScans

Schaschlik

Stemmler

Schaschlik meets Feng Shui

Lesungen / Readings

Mr. Herbert

2001, DVD

2 monitors, 2 dvd prof. player

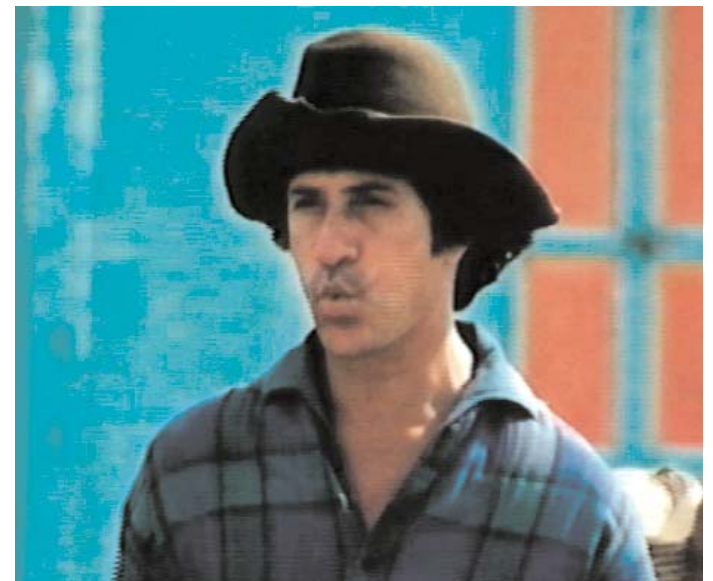
The video installation *Mr. Herbert* (2001) consists of two monitors, facing each other as if in dialogue. While the picture on one monitor is arrested and mute, the sequence on the other runs for some 30 seconds, and vice versa. The fragments are taken from the literary film narrative *Das Meer der Verlorenen Zeit* after Gabriel García Márquez. It is one of the early, melancholy stories by the Colombian winner of the Nobel Prize, novelist and exponent of magical realism, often characterised by fantastic narrative settings.

Markowitsch has selected key scenes from the film and confronts the protagonists on the two monitors. On one side, the rich gringo Mr. Herbert, a fairy-tale sorcerer, who promises to solve people's problems in exchange for a deed of their choice; on the other side, Patricio, a young man from an anonymous South American village, who imitates 48 different bird calls in exchange for 48 pesos.

The loop is synchronised in twenty different languages – Chinese, French, Greek, Persian, Russian, Swahili, and Swiss German, to name but a few. In this way, the artist shifts the focus from the statement itself to the space of the language into which it has been translated – a space for the play of languages and their difference. It is not understanding but rather encounter that has priority. Every language evolves within a certain tradition, within a fixed, recorded repertoire of words, within a heritage and a field of potential variations of not yet spoken or speakable sentences.

For native speakers, every language stands for a linguistic totality, and yet it is always only one means of processing the complexity of the world around us. The translator rubs languages against each other. Occasionally they collide; never are they completely congruent.

Mr. Herbert is based on a polyphonic structure (Gk. polys many; phon sound, tone), on the juxtaposition of many equivalent voices. Rémy Markowitsch's compressed accumulations, constructs of pictorial and extra-pictorial structures, vague, chance encounters, contiguities and relationships are always plural. The installation oscillates between original and translation, between original and copy, between multiplication and seriality, between difference and repetition.



Mr. Herbert, 2001, Videostills (Mr. Herbert and Fabrizio)

Für die Katz / For the Birds / Al cohete / Коту под хвост...

2000-2001, DVD, 31min

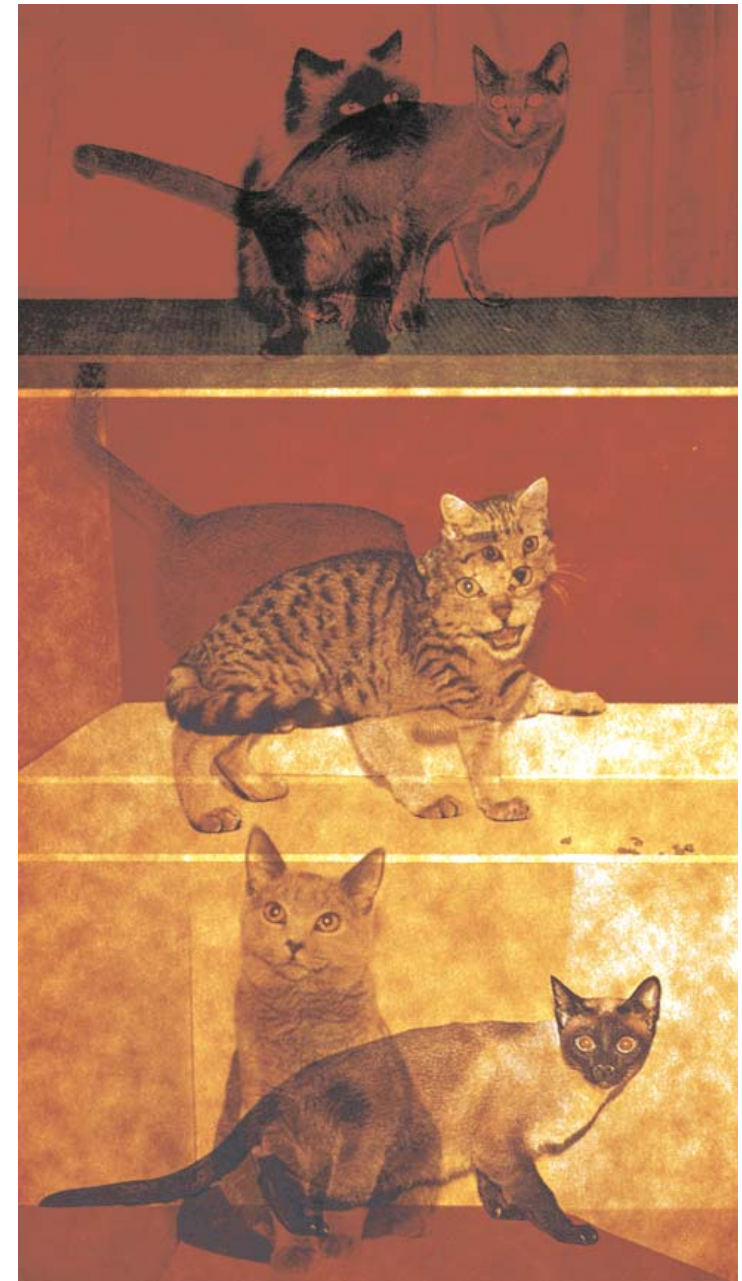


Für die Katz / For the Birds / Al cohete / Коту под хвост
Rémy Markowitsch in collaboration with Diego Schindler Castro (Videostill)

For the video *For The Birds*, Markowitsch invited Diego Schindler Castro (1972) to read or rather act as the storyteller of his modern fairy tales, in which he follows young people from all walks of life on their way from the country to the city to try their luck. Their ventures are ultimately always for the birds, al cohete, Коту под хвост or – as the title of the exhibition tells us -- für die Katz. Castro's tales about models of identification and strategies of survival offer an atmospheric, fractured view of the life of his generation, its codes and rituals.

Like Mr. Herbert, Castro's stories lead to the myth of the "American dream"; they illuminate the construction of identity against the backdrop of complex, interdependent value systems, power structures and economic systems. "Identity" is probed as a product of social, cultural, political and economic realities, but also of dreams, imponderables and irrationality.

"Für die Katz" ("for the cat" in German), "pour les prunes", meaning "for the plums" in French, "al cohete" in Spanish (for the rocket), "radrizzare le gambe ai cani" meaning as much as to straighten out the dog's legs in Italian, or "Kotu pod xvost", "to look under the tomcat's tail" in Russian language.



For the birds, 2000, digital print, 100x200 cm

For the Birds / Коту под хвост

Markowitsch calls all the photos that are normally thrown away in commercial photo-laboratories as sample prints: "The very first prints".

Markowitsch collected these prints for years and saved them from being destroyed as they are normally "for the birds".

For the birds remembers us of the use of the useless in a double-tongued and multi-lingual way.



Monitor: *Moscow Express* (DVD) noisy loop showing an outdoor loudspeaker and lamps, swinging in the wind



For the Birds (Prints on pasteboard (20-30cm), 110x110x220 cm, monitor)

Kolibri

2001

The large-format photograph, *Kolibri* (2001) is part of the extensive series *After Nature* (since 1991), which is subdivided into a number of groups. Their common denominator is the mode of production. From his collection of books, Markowitsch extracts single pages on which pictures have been printed front and back, which are then professionally photographed to make both pictures visible, like a double exposure or a hybrid generated by superimposition.

The title *Kolibri* describes the subject matter, a tiny, brightly coloured hummingbird, sucking nectar from a sumptuous pink blossom (both extremely magnified). The stylisation of the picture, its opulent colours and the play of forms evoke the artist's earlier renditions of flora and fauna. The brilliance of the colours and the sensuality underscore the artificiality of the reproduction. There is nothing natural about Markowitsch's portrayal of plants and animals in the *After Nature* series; they are all reproductions of found images and ideas.

In the exhibition *Für die Katz (For the Birds)*, Galerie EIGEN + ART Berlin, 2001/02, the image of the hummingbird was linking the video piece *Mr. Herbert* and the video reading.

There are 328 species and several hundred subspecies, which live outside of captivity only in North and South America. The hummingbird family is called Kolibri in German, oiseau mouche in French, pica flor in Spanish and beija flor in Portuguese; its scientific Latin name is Trochilidae. In Indian mythology, the hummingbird stands for joy and beauty. Its wing structure is unique among birds, allowing it to fly forwards, backwards and to hover in place. According to ancient Mayan teachings, the hummingbird belongs to the civilisation to come, the fifth world. The tiny, delicate bird has no understanding of secular things.

> [AfterNature.pdf](#)
Textarchive> [Nature_Stahel.pdf](#)
> [Lightning_Hoffmann.pdf](#)



Kolibri, 2001, (RC print, acrylic glass, wood, 190 x 170,5 cm)

Blüten für Leipzig (Blossoms* for Leipzig)

Leipzig 1998, Media Lab^{E+A}
Installation in a bankbuilding with windmachines and artificial blossoms.

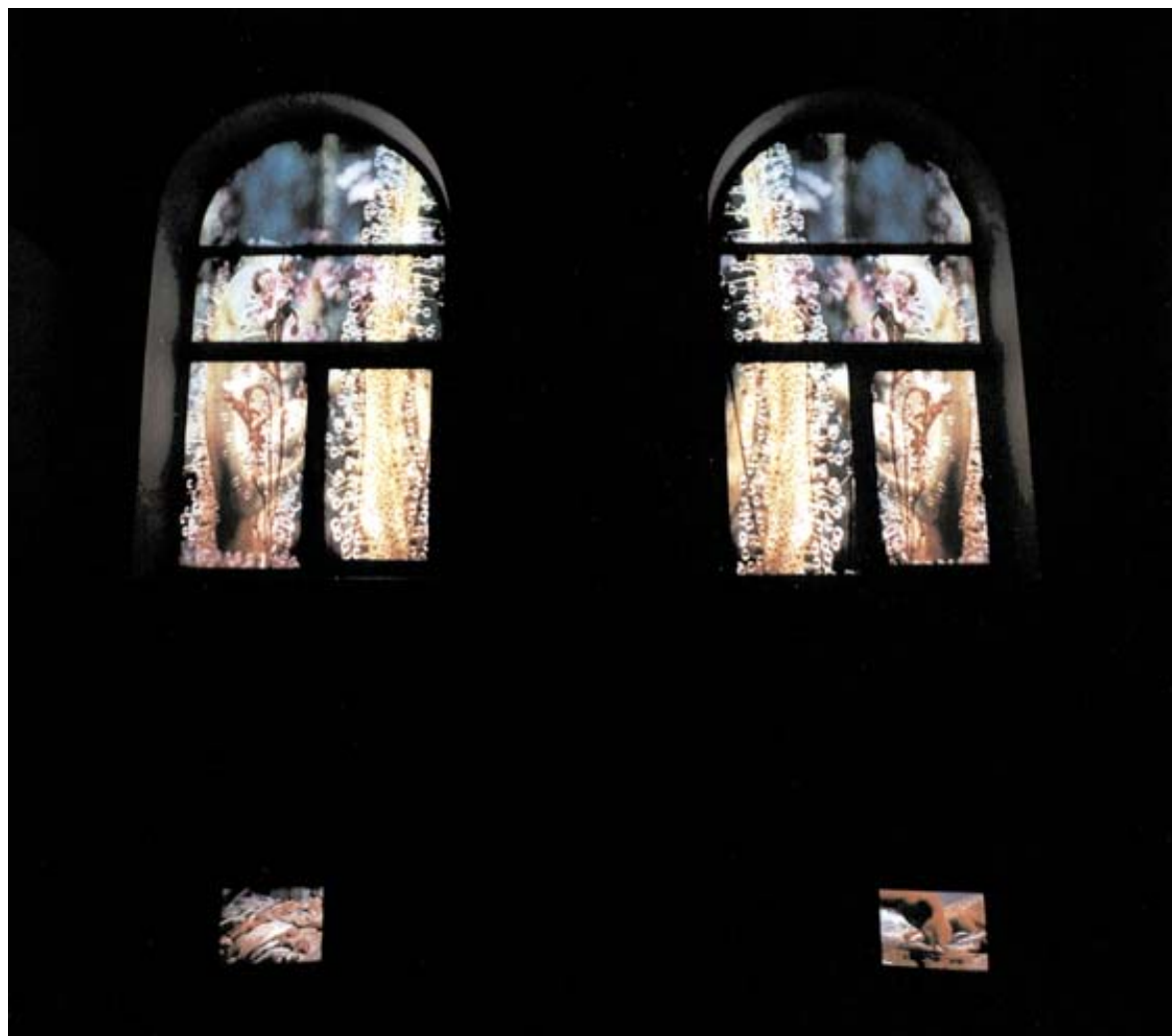
**Blüten* is a double meaning word for blossoms and counterfeit money.



Natural grown Killers

2000

Installationview, Aidan Gallery, Moscow
(Duratrans slide behind the windows),
2 Monitors with DVD-Handmade



575/85

Freie Sicht aufs Mittelmeer (Kunsthhaus Zürich, 1998), DVD with flatscreen



The numeric title *575/85* refers to the archive number of a photograph taken by the criminal investigation unit of the Zurich police department. The black-and-white image documents the destroyed portrait of the Spanish King Philipp IV, which was done by Peter Paul Rubens in 1628.

Through an arson attack, a young man destroyed this portrait when it was hanging in the Ruzicka Foundation Halls of Zurich Art Museum in 1985.



For my work, I used this black-and-white photograph as the initial image of a very slow forty-second digital lap-dissolve, which ends by showing the intact portrait by Peter Paul Rubens. Through a cut back to the first picture, the loop begins again.

The humming of the old fluorescent lights, which are used to light the exhibition hall, gradually fades out on the soundtrack.



This video piece *575/85* is installed in the Zurich Art Museum where the Rubens' portrait originally hung. The portrait by Rubens – which rather reminds one of a work by Velasquez – appears on a flatscreen plasma monitor (DVD video played back on a DVD player).

>> Irene Müller: „575/85“, Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft, Zurich www.unil.ch/isea/2Actuel/ahome_deu.htm



575/85 / *Freie Sicht aufs Mittelmeer*, 1998, Kunsthaus Zürich

ÄsopScans

1995

Digital Plot (Electrostatic printing on paper)

Dimensions: 1:1 to the prepared animal specimens

ÄsopScans are electrostatic prints of digitally X-rayed preserved animal specimens. The X-ray apparatus is the kind used to check hand-luggage at airports. It identifies the make-up of the items in the luggage: orange is organic matter, blue inorganic matter, green mixed materials. Black indicates high density (inorganic) materials.

The manufacturers, Heimann System D, agreed to X-ray the animal specimens, and the Naturhistorisches Museum Mainz put its collection (including some very old specimens of extinct species) at their disposal.

The scientific department of the Naturhistorisches Museum became increasingly interested in my project when it turned that the methods I was using were excellent for identifying old specimens (and especially original parts). The method is particularly gentle, and it enables the taxidermist to obtain a precise picture of the contents of the specimen without damaging it.

Fleisch I (Meat I)

(1995)

Photo-CD player, monitor, photo-CD with 100 slides

Meat I from the series *Essen (Food)* consists of reproductions of 100 cooking cards of international meat dishes.

Slide No. 1 shows a classical boiled chicken. The sequence proceeds from clearly recognisable animals to well-known kinds of meat to meat dishes in which the original animal is completely unrecognisable.

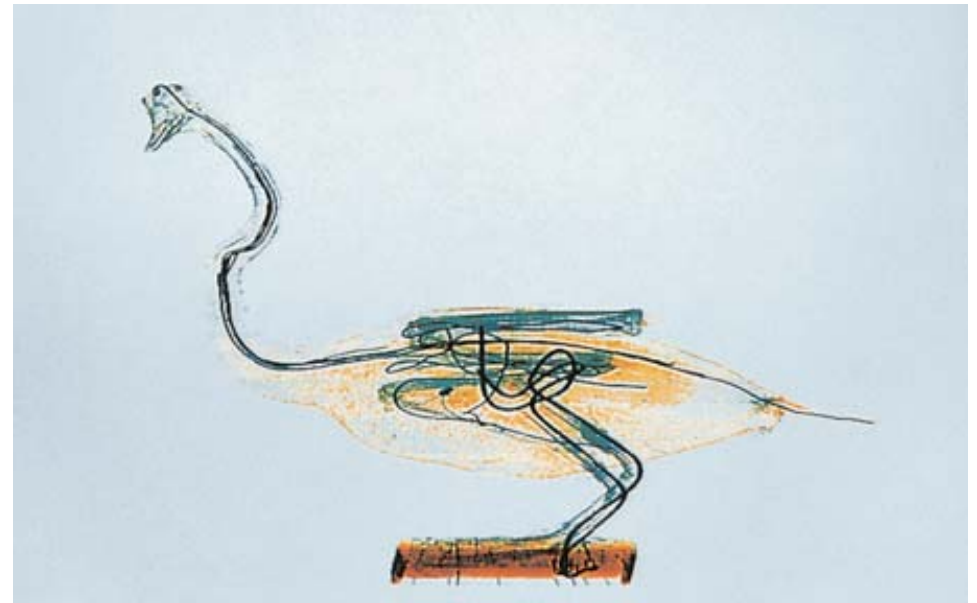
The photo-CD work on the monitor runs in a loop and is installed as part of the *ÄsopScans*.

> See Maria Vogel: »ÄsopScans«, in: *Finger im Buch*, Kunstmuseum Luzern/Cantz, Ostfildern 1996

>The 3rd Tokyo International Photo-Biennale. *Fragments of Document and Memory*, Katalog Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo 1999

> **AesopScans-pdf**

Textarchive: >Linguistic_Vogel.pdf



ÄsopScans (Swan), 1995

1995 (digital plot, aluminium, 131 x 200 cm)



Meat I, 1995

Photo CD No. 1



ÄsopScans, 1995 Installationview, Städtische Galerie Erlangen, 1997



ÄsopScans, Cat 1995 (digital plot, aluminium, 104 x 138,5 cm)



ÄsoScans, Mouse 1995 (digital plot, aluminium, 52 x 97 cm)

Stemmler

(1997/98)

Video title: **Schaschlik**, DVD: 56:29
monitor, wood, books

Furniture: wood, light blue, 150x83x83 cm
Books: 49 titles

While taxidermal specimens pass by from right to left in the video, 53 people from Berlin, Lucerne and Schaffhausen read text selections from books about animal food. These text selections were chosen by the readers from an extensive collection of texts. The books that were used are part of the work and are available to the visitors for perusal.

The Stemmler Museum of Schaffhausen (Switzerland) originated with a collection of taxidermal specimens donated by the furrier and ornithologist Carl Stemmler. The visual part of the video work Schaschlik is based on this collection and was created in co-operation with the art association of Schaffhausen: 98 taxidermal specimens were examined with a scanner from the firm Heimann Systems, Wiesbaden.

These scanners (which are used primarily for security reasons at airports to examine hand luggage) are able to determine the material consistency of objects - taxidermal specimens, in this case - using computer-controlled colour assignments.



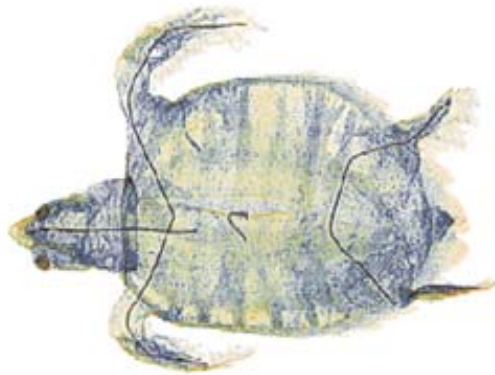
*Stemmler (with Schaschlik) 1997 "Animaux et animaux" Zeitgenössische Kunst und Zoologie
Installationview, Kunstverein Schaffhausen, 1997*



Stemmler Installationview, Kunstverein Schaffhausen, 1997

Schaschlik meets Feng Shui

1998



Feng Shui, the traditional Chinese theory for organization of interiors and outdoor, is used today in private and public rooms.

I assigned Mathilde Sternberg, Feng Shui Advisor from Berlin, to arrange the gallery space after Feng Shui principles. Mathilde Sternberg operates within the therapeutic area, makes color and style consultation and "intuitive Feng Shui".



Schaschlik meets Feng Shui, Invitationcard Galerie EIGEN+ART, Leipzig, 1998





Schaschlik meets Feng Shui, Galerie EIGEN+ART, Leipzig, 1998

Lesungen (Readings)

1996

VCD (MPEG_1); 12 Video_CD-Player, 12 Monitors

For my first video - reading projects "Lesungen" in 1996, I asked some friends and acquaintances to read to me from a book of their choice. The readers also determined the background and the length of the text, and the only "stage direction" was that they must start by entering the room and end by leaving it when they had finished reading.

The digital video loop recordings are made on two VCDs (video-CDs) of 70 minutes and six tracks each. The first shot is of an empty room; the reader enters, sits down, and starts reading. When he or she has finished reading, they get up and leave the room, and the last picture of the empty room blends into the first on the loop. The number and size of the monitors (and tracks) vary according to the size of the exhibition room.

In the Kunstmuseum Luzern, twelve looped readings were combined to create a carpet of sound, and the listener is only able to distinguish the individual voices of the readers when he moves closer to the monitor.

A leaflet provides information about the authors, titles and publishers of the books used listed under the first names of the readers.

> See Maria Vogel: *Finger im Buch, Linguistic matters*.
in: *Finger im Buch*, Katalog Kunstmuseum Luzern/Cantz, Ostfildern 1996

>Petra Lewey
„Shall I go on reading?“ „Yes.“ Time passes. It doesn't know any better«. 1997

Textarchive: >[linguistic_vogel.pdf](#)
>[lottie_lewey.pdf](#)



Lesungen (Readings) Museum of Art, Lucerne, 1996, 12 VCD,TV`s and VCD_Player)



Video-Screen-Stills from: *Lesungen (Readings)*, 1996

LESUNGEN (READINGS), 1996

Anna
ARMAND
von Emmanuel Bove, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1982

Anatolij
РЕЧНЫЕ ЗАВОДИ von ИИц Най-Ан
Издательская фирма «По ярис», Рига, 1992

Robert
DER PHYSIOLOGUS
(übertragen und erläutert von Otto Seel),
Lebendige Antike, Artemis Verlag, 1960

Edith
ES NIMMT SEINEN LAUF
von Edmond Jabès,
Bibliothek Suhrkamp, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981

Esther
33 AUGENBLICKE DES GLÜCKS,
Aus den abenteuerlichen Aufzeichnungen der Deutschen in Piter
von Ingo Schulze, Berlin Verlag, 1995

Hanspeter
STORYTELLING AND MYTHMAKING
by Frank Mc Cornell,
New York/Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979
L.A. CONFIDENTIAN
by James Ellroy, Mysterious Press, 1991
LADY MACBETH
by Nicolas Freeling, Penguin Books, 1989
THE BIG SLEEP
by Raymond Chandler, Penguin Books, 1948
THE MUDDY FORK
by James Crumley, Clark City Press, 1991
THE SHINING
by Steven King, New English Library, 1977
STRAIGHT CUT
by Madisn Smart Bell, Abacus, 1988
HEAVEN'S PRISONERS
by James Lee Burke, Vintage, 1990

COUNT ZERO
by William Gibson, Grafton, 1987
THE LAST GOOD KISS
by James Crumley, Vintage Contemporaries, 1988
WAR CRIES OVER AVENUE C
by Jerome Charyn, Abacus, 1985

Hjördis
GRUNDRISS DER GESAMTEN
PRAKTISCHEN MEDIZIN
von Professor Dr. Ed. Müller
(Magen und Darmerkrankungen)
Springer Verlag, 1931
DAS GROSSE HAUSBUCH DER NATURHEILKUNDE
von Gerhard Leibold,
Falken Verlag Sticker für NSB, 1978
UFER DER VERLORENEN
von Joseph Brodsky, Hanser Verlag, 1991

Loredana
DER REGENBOGENFISCH
von Marcus Pfister, N-S Verlag, 1992

Maya
WIR LERNEN MODE-TÄNZE MIT DEM EHEPAAR FERN, DER POP ART
von Ernst und Helga Fern, Falken-Yerlag E. Sicker KG Wiesbaden, 1968

Maria
LA DIVINA COMEDIA DI DANTE ALIGHIERI, CANTICA PRIMA, INFERNO,
di Canto Primo, Secondo e Terzo

Paul
SCHAKALE UND ARABER
von Franz Kafka, Fischer Verlag, 1919

Stephan
LISSABONNER REQUIEM, 5. Kapitel
von Antonio Tabucchi, Hanser Verlag, 1994

PUBLICATIONS:

FINGER IM BUCH
Rémy Markowitsch
with contributions by
Martin Schwander
Justin Hoffmann
Edith Jud
Maria Vogel
Friedrich Kittler
Languages: D/E
Design: Thomas Kissling,
Zürich
Ed. by Martin Schwander, 1996
CANTZ
ISBN 3-89322-832-2

HANDMADE
Rémy Markowitsch
with an essay by
Christoph Doswald
Translations into English,
French, Italian, Spanish,
Russian, Chinese, Japanese
and Romansh
Hardcover, 314x235 mm, 160
pages, incl. 73 colour pages,
edition of 1500.
Design: Stephan Fiedler, Berlin
Editors: Flurina und Gianni
Paravicini-Tönz and
Christoph Doswald
Published 2000 by Edizioni
Periferia, Luzern / Poschiavo
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