

PRESS INFORMATION

Swarovski Crystal Worlds Information

**Temporary Enchantment 2005
KRIST-ALL-TAG**

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Temporary Enchantment – KRIST-ALL-TAG

The exhibition "Temporary Enchantment", conceived by Harald Szeemann, devotes itself to the theme of "Krist-All-Tag" (Crystal in Everyday Life) for its second year at the Swarovski Crystal Worlds in Wattens. Until 5th February 2006, Una Szeemann's audio visual installation on the theme and the recently adapted internet project, [thecrystalweb°](#), will accompany the two permanent works of art in the display, Ingeborg Lüscher's "Amber Room" and Peter Bissegger's "Prometheus Dome".

Through "Temporary Enchantment" in the "Crystal Showcase" at the Swarovski Crystal Worlds, the Swiss curator, Harald Szeemann, who died in February 2005, was able to realise one of his last great exhibition projects – a playground of imagination characterised by visionary ideas and art for all the senses. The core elements of the display are the Amber Room and the Prometheus Dome, which have been installed in the Swarovski Crystal Worlds for a duration of three years. Equally significant, however, is the constantly changing virtual world of [thecrystalweb°](#) and an annually changing audio visual area, which Una Szeemann developed as "Krist-All-Tag" for 2005. This thematic focus takes over from "Escape Points", which unearthed crystals in architecture and film, in expressionism and science fiction in the first year of "Temporary Enchantment" (March 2004 to February 2005).

The current version of "Temporary Enchantment" bears Harald Szeemann's signature not only in the figurative sense but now also in the literal sense - his writing of "Krist-All-Tag" is emblazoned in neon lettering above the entrance to the exhibition. Concealed behind it is Una Szeemann's multimedia installation, which looks at the term from different perspectives and makes free associations on "crystal" (in German: Kristall), "everyday" (Alltag) and "universe" (All). Films, television, newspapers, fashion and music are the

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materials from which she filters out the components for her vision. Here, crystal can be found in its original connotation with the precious and the unusual and also as finery or even as simple everyday properties – crystal sugar, crystal Barbie and crystal water. Monitors with film clips and a reflecting disco ball attract the observer's attention, with a musical accompaniment of songs with crystal themes.

The virtual museum, the **crystalweb**^o, also presents an open approach to the object of "crystal" and has been arranged as a website as well as a fixed installation in a room set next to the Crystal Showcase. Through the touch screens and the information system, *Liquid*, that are provided in this area, it is possible to navigate the crystal network of interconnected ideas through touch. Crystal can thus be conceived in all its facets and associations in art, science, technology and everyday life. Furthermore, the recent addition of the film, "Backstage", shown in the exhibition room, invites you to wander behind the scenes of the **crystalweb**^o. In the film the network's "crystal experts" provide insights into their everyday "crystal affairs" for the first time.

Historical imaginations take shape in both the permanent installations, the "Prometheus Dome" and the "Amber Room", both modern realisations of legendary art rooms. Ingeborg Lüscher's "Amber Room" is made out of the profane material SOLE soap and is a replica of the legendary baroque work of art. Peter Bissegger's "Prometheus Dome" emanates from the vision of the Russian composer, Alexander Skrjabin. Together with the **crystalweb**^o and "Krist-All-Tag" they form a complete work of art combining music, text, images, scent and touch – a Temporary Enchantment.

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Harald Szeemann

Harald Szeemann studied art history, archaeology and journalism in Paris and put on his first exhibition in 1957 in St. Gallen. In 1961 he became director of the Kunsthalle in Bern and consequently made a name for himself organising various highly acclaimed exhibitions.

From 1969 he worked as a freelance exhibition manager with his “Agency of Spiritual Guest Work” and as an independent curator for the Kunsthaus in Zürich from 1981. In 1972 Szeemann organised the legendary “documenta 5” and he was given the responsibility for the Swiss pavilion at the Universal Exposition in Seville in 1992. In 1997 Szeemann took over as curator of the “Biennale” in Lyon, and the “Biennale” in Venice in 1999 and 2001.

He died on 18th February 2005 in Zürich.

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KRIST-ALL-TAG in the Swarovski Crystal Worlds

«Bling-bling»

Harry Szeemann's three-year series of exhibits, «Temporary Enchantment», has now reached its second year, and this year's theme is «KRIST-ALL-TAG». Incongruent concepts have been combined to form a new word, the word «All (universe)» serving as a connector between the concepts of «Kristall (crystal)» and «Alltag (everyday life)». But the result is not KristAll-Tag or Krist-Alltag, but Krist-All-Tag, with the word «all» left open to association.

Una Szeemann's installation covers a variety of media promising, a break from everyday life, whilst also dominating everyday life. Cinema productions, television, newspapers, fashion and music all show imaginary worlds presenting a refreshing change from the viewer's own real world, whilst at the same time representing part of that real world which we experience all day. Unless you happen to play in the same league as Paris Hilton, the concept of *glitter* will largely run contrary to everyday life. The glitter of a diamond and the purity of a crystal are the essence of their unique, precious quality. Everyday life adopts these characteristics, producing a rarefied aura disguised as products such as *Crystal Barbie* or *Crystal Water*.

Glitter is an easily applied and effective medium for decorating a pre-existing surface. Una Szeemann has drawn her visual subject matter not only from glossy magazines and the world of fashion and jewellery, but also from department stores and Las Vegas casino facades.

She has transported her series of images into a new medium. The images are flashed on a display of monitors like a stroboscope and reflected in mirrors, all vying for your attention. Surrounded by images from everyday life and the attempts to transform everyday life, the glitter remains caught – in everyday life. Projections onto the disco mirror ball seem to illustrate the dilemma as this



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party symbol separates the images into their component parts – light and shadow. What remains at the end, as in a crystal lattice or the synthesis of hitherto unrelated morphemes in a new word, is a recombination of existing fundamental elements.

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The Amber Room - Ingeborg Lüscher

The Amber Room in the Swarovski Crystal Worlds is Ingeborg Lüscher's contemporary interpretation of the mythical baroque work of art. The artist had the cabinet reproduced from 9000 bars of SOLE soap that were attached to each other in tracks. A light coming from behind causes the honey-yellow room to gleam exquisitely.

The room's dimensions are exactly the same as the original that was built from 1701 to 1711 by order of Friedrich I. Friedrich Wilhelm I gave it as a present to Tsar Peter the Great in 1716 as a symbol of Prussian-Russian friendship. His daughter, Elisabeth, had it enlarged from 17 to 100 sqm with mirrors and mosaics and built into the Catherine Palace, the summer residence in Zarskoje Selo near St. Petersburg. In 1941 it was dismantled by German occupying forces and brought to the Königsberg castle where all traces of it were then lost. Having taken 24 years and 50 restorers to complete the work, a copy of the palatial room has been on display in Zarskoje Selo since 2003. However there continue to be countless legends entwined around the missing original; it may have, for example, been burned, shipped off to Chile, stored away in a tunnel or sunken in the sea.

By reproducing the legendary work of art out of the profane material soap, as opposed to amber, Ingeborg Lüscher manages to create a playful correlation with the myth. At the same time the bright cubes of soap open up new perspectives of observation and sensual experience. Its aroma, inseparably associated with cleanliness, does indeed allude to "dirty" history, on the one hand; with its attack in 1941, Germany deeply abused the friendship that the Amber Room symbolised. On the other hand, the intensive aroma, golden luminescent colouring of the room and the linear arrangement of soap bricks connected to each other produce an intimate feeling in the room which is reminiscent of the inside of amber. In a positive sense, one feels like "an insect or tiny reptile that is stuck in a soft resin, destined to survive the tides as energy" in Lüscher's Amber Room.

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Prometheus Dome - Alexander N. Skrjabin, Peter Bissegger

Music, colours and a descending dome is what the stage designer, Peter Bissegger, uses to make Alexander N. Skrjabin's (1872-1915) visionary synaesthetic work of art, "Prometheus" become reality in the Crystal Worlds.

In 1910, the Russian composer, Alexander Skrjabin, wrote his 5th and last symphony, "Prometheus – Poème du feu", in which he illustrated the connection between music and colour with the help of two "light-voices" accompanied by music. Presumably having synaesthetic skills himself, Skrjabin therefore perceived sound as colour, and in the "Prometheus" allocated each type of tone a certain colour. The tones were arranged according to the Quinte circle and the colours by the spectrum (extended to twelve colours). Thus C-major appeared as red, for instance, G-major as orange, D-major as yellow and A-major as green. From the combination of both light-voices, one slow and one fast, a constantly changing game of colour emerged.

In accordance with his all-embracing vision, the work should have been performed under a hemisphere by 2000 participants in India, and in fact for as long as it took until the whole of humanity had experienced the "Mysterium" and consequently reached a higher state of consciousness. The real first performance, which actually took place at the Carnegie Hall shortly after Skrjabins death in 1915, had to come up against limiting factors simply because of technical reasons. Only with modern digital methods can Skrjabin's concept of uniting of light and sound be achieved.

The installation in the function room of the Crystal Worlds, designed by Peter Bissegger, manages as an aesthetic sound-light room to convey an impression of Skrjabin's immense vision. The dome floats up and down synchronously to the tune of the Prometheus symphony, conducted by Pierre Boulez, while sound, colour, light and the sparkling of crystal blend into an artistic interplay of sensual harmony.

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Contribution of thecrystalweb° to KRIST-ALL-TAG museum°playground°knowledge machine°

The first stage of this path will be to adopt the principle of montage in history. Therefore to erect large constructions out of the smallest architectural segments that have been cut and sharpened. Indeed, to discover crystal of the total event in the analysis of small, single moments.

Walter Benjamin

backstage. thecrystalweb° provides insights

The history of the**crystalweb°** dates back to 2001. Four years later crystal experts are dedicating their research work to crystal in all its facets. In a self-made short film, the**crystalweb°** team can be seen going about their everyday "crystal affairs" as part of the second phase of the exhibition series, "Temporary Enchantment". Visitors are given details about the morning sports session with a crystal football and rackets, for example, or the various stages of scientific processes, or celebrating with a crystal glass of crystal wine. How do crystal experts really live? How do the crystals get into the computer? Who makes sure that only the best are displayed? The film series provides answers and much more in an entertaining and humorous way.

the**crystalweb°** is a space, residing between museum and playground, between everyday life, science, art and technology, between tradition and innovation, the**crystalweb°** is an attempt at reorganisation.

Its central theme is crystal - entwined around it are myths and scientific discoveries It leaves its mark in works of art and on advertising panels, acts as the epitome of divine order and as a symbol of dark powers, hears poetic invocation and radiates blissful delights. It unites the contrary and irritates the

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whole. **thecrystalweb**^o is a collection of crystalline objects, their facets and their historical and cultural references.

All this is accessible in two different forms: **thecrystalweb**^o can be visited on the internet at www.thecrystalweb.org as a virtual museum as well as in a fixed installation in the Crystal Worlds in Wattens.

The first-of-its-kind information system, *Liquid*, at www.thecrystalweb.org, is not satisfied with a simple appearance on the internet. As a fixed installation in the Crystal Worlds in Wattens, it invites visitors to become active co-designers rather than silent observers in a somewhat different museum.

Via touch, sensuous experience, the way to understanding is paved.

The visitor "wanders" with the presentation that is activated when the visitor taps the touch screen, makes use of several elements and leaves behind pointers from his/her journey through the Infospace, providing interesting sources for other visitors. Waves of information links run through the module, the content of interrelated elements changes and the newly revealing links can be "investigated" - a journey through the Liquid-Infospace.

The observers, actively involved in the "inspection" of a realistic virtual room, map out their surroundings – you do not stand at a conventional "infopoint", but dive into the interconnected web of information whose perpetual stream, with no specific end goal, manifests itself from module to module.

In a conscious, experimental uncertainty, which is also "expected" of the visitor, *Liquid* takes the liberty of attempting not to "simplify" structures but to present them in their complexity.

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Notes on Harald Szeemann by Andreas Braun

on the occasion of the exhibition opening “Temporay Enchantment” in March 2004.

“The limits of the intellect, upon which the propensity for all art is based, are blurred; they are extensions of the concept of harmony. On the periphery lie geometry and ecstasy, the notions of new bodies and new people. The propensity for all art is the titanic struggle to create an earthly paradise....”

This exemplary excerpt comes from Harald Szeemann. They are borrowed from his book “Individual Mythologies”, published by Merve Verlag, 1985..... Sentences from a man 70 years young, a profoundly humorous titan of the European cultural scene, from an “Ecstatic”, liberally translated someone who spurns stagnancy, from a man who created legendary country and themed exhibitions (such as La Suisse n’existe pas, Sevilla 1992 or “Money and worth”, Switzerland EXPO 2002) and was the curator for such international art events as the documenta 5 1972 or the Biennale 2000 in Vienna.

Whenever he is not hurrying around the world lecturing in the academic arena or starring, in various contexts, in pictures, texts, objects, spaces and views, he lives in his „fabrica“ near Locarno in the Swiss Tessin, a deserted factory building in the hidden Maggia valley, which contains his thousands of meticulously archived books, excerpts, correspondence, commentaries, pieces of paper and memorabilia, ranging from everyday culture, theoretical art, history to philosophy. From there, he manages his “agency for “intellectual foreign workers” and runs his “Museum of Obsessions”, whose virtual plan shows a labyrinthine floating middle and four load bearing elements, namely Fire, Water, Earth and Air.

Harald Szeemann managed the Bern art gallery in the 60’s and stepped down voluntarily in order to replace the spatial and institutional “ownerships” with free activities, to “blast” the constrictive studios, galleries and museums and to escape the conventional standards of art and cultural events. Since then, his

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life has tended towards the winning of ranges of freedom and resistance to corruption.

When I met Harald Szeemann in Wattens for the first time, I was impressed by his encompassing knowledge of crystalline cultural history. From Plato to Leonardo da Vinci, from Bruno Taut to Paul Klee, from Johannes Kepler to Buckminster Fuller: Harald Szeemann retrieved from his stupendous, encyclopaedic knowledge an abundance of details and references. Evidently, the phenomenon of crystals had accompanied him for a while, in all its enigmatic and utopian fascination. Maybe the "Metaphor" crystal played a role already in his exhibition "The propensity for all art" (Zürich art gallery 1982), like the symbolic amalgamation of "Geometry and Ecstasy".

Over 20 years later, the crystal medium is mediated by the director of the „Museum of Obsessions“, Harald Szeemann, and me, the person responsible for the "categorically antagonistic" location of the Crystal worlds. From this collaboration, came the idea of a temporary, so a three year, project of the new SKW exhibition by Harald Szeemann. The motto of this project is: "Enchantment on time". A unique chance to immerse and enrich oneself in the discourse on crystal! A rare magic moment for the Andre Heller (as "Magic moment hotel) designed crystal worlds.

On the 17th of March 2004 the curtain on the „Temporary Enchantment“ with a theme out of crystal has been raised under the name of "Escape points". Further crystal themes are already planned for 2005 and 2006.

We, as representatives of the „Individual Swarovski Mythology“, look forward to the auratic ventures of Harald Szeemann. We look at it as a lucky coincidence, that the miracle of faceted light and the prospect of the development of an, at least partial, "earthly paradise" has enchanted him.

Andreas Braun, March 2004

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Swarovski Crystal Worlds – the Company

In 2004, 720.000 visitors were welcomed to the Swarovski Crystal Worlds in Wattens, Tyrol. Since 2003 the work of wonder, which owes its existence to the company's 100th anniversary in 1995, glows with a brand new sparkle: with new chambers of wonder, a more fluid space and access concept, as well as a revamped shop. The volume of investment: 15 million euros.

With 90 employees, the Swarovski Crystal Worlds have long played a significant role in the economy of the region. By directing their marketing strategy to target tourism they have managed extremely effectively to attract a large international audience.

The story about the origin of the Swarovski Crystal Worlds reads like a fairytale in the books of event marketing. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the company, a tribute for employees and owners, the Swarovski family, was celebrated – magically staged by André Heller. This brought about the suggestion for an installation of lasting value. The Giant from Wattens, whose image is recognised all over the world today, was soon brought into the world as the guardian of sparkling jewels created by renowned international artists.

Thanks to the uniqueness of the crystal sensations and a marketing concept based around tourism, the Swarovski Crystal Worlds became one of the most visited sights in Austria very soon after their opening. With this in mind, the ratio of tourist groups and guests travelling individually is 50:50.

Seasonal fluctuations in the number of tourists are kept to a minimum through the incorporation of winter festivals and artistic homage to foreign cultures. To reinforce their cultural significance in the region, the Crystal Worlds are the retreat for the concert series, "Music in the Giant". The extraordinary rooms enjoy their immense popularity as exclusive event locations or settings for films. The shop contributes to this success too of course. All current products

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made from Swarovski crystal, as well as precision equipment from Swarovski Optics, can be viewed and bought here.

Dr. Andreas Braun, who has managed the Swarovski Crystal Worlds since 1994, puts the necessity for the renovations down to the success they have with visitors: “To a certain extent the Crystal Worlds stand for the transformation of the Swarovski group from a purely B2B (Business to Business) orientated company at the beginning, and later the direct access to the consumers, or B2C, to the self-selected assignment of C2C, Culture to Consumer. Today, the identity of a brand can no longer be achieved through product alone – even if it does speak for itself, as in the case of our crystal gems – but it is an aesthetic, sensual super-structure to be set up, changing constantly and parallel to the product’s development. Crystal is the all-embracing symbol for this metamorphosis. Therefore it is only natural that reflection about crystal is subject to constant transformation. At the new Crystal Worlds, one will be able to experience how the exquisite material of crystal puts wings on your thoughts and makes use of all the technical possibilities to create something truly amazing.”

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