MEDIA RELEASE – for immediate release

Come-in
Interior Design as a Contemporary Art Medium in Germany

RMIT Gallery, 344 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Opening: Wed 9 April, 6pm.

Come-in is an exhibition of work from 25 young German artists who use the relationship between fine art and applied design to explore what binds and separates us in our interior and exterior environments.

In this series of essays, rooms, installations and hybrid daily objects we see the landscape of urban density, fragility and luxury, media and marketing, fear and confinement, nostalgia and the departure from pure design and handcraft to the impact of mass production.

According to curator Renate Goldmann, the works can be divided into three groups:
Get-Together assembles rooms and objects which invite people to communicate and interact or not;
Coming Home focuses on human behaviour, social and psychological patterns; and
Living Fiction offers visionary designs, experimental scenarios and settings.

Stefan Kern, from Hamburg, explores the idea of conversation and observation with aluminium sculptures that are white high gloss and based on soft drink crates. They are like chat rooms, attractive, and at the same time unwieldy, uncomfortable and cold. It is people and movement that transform them into places of dialogue.

In contrast Heide Deigert, a Frankfurt artist, has created a revolving chair that requires the active participation of the viewer. Deigert has mounted two red and two white seats on a revolving pedestal, and the direction it is used depends on the number and positions of people seated.

Claus Föttinger’s Hermann’s Döner Inn looks at the German snack bar and sausage tradition by creating a hybrid bar that contrasts tradition, and the impact of immigration and fast food.

The artist filmed 265 doner stands around Germany with a DVD camera, and has stitched 100 stills together to form the wall of this illuminated bar, which sits on a crescent shaped plan. On one side there are traditional German bar stools, on the other wooden shelves interlocked to form a cross, and McDonalds corporate logo.
Author and curator Annette Tietenberg’s essay on *The Home as the Centre of the Earth* said that all the suppliers of ideas to the alternative product culture, like Bauhaus artists, Sophie Taeuber-Arp and Sonia Delaunay, strove to bridge the abyss that still separates art and design.

“Had the 19th Century not surrendered unconditionally to the supremacy of mechanisation and industrialisation, fine art and the applied arts would not have been forced to part and go their separate ways,” she said.

In Europe the density of cities and reconstruction post war, contrasts to the plate glass, broad vistas and minimalism of the Californian utopian dream. Yet in this age of information and mass communication, no one is unscathed by threats, fear and the needs of insulation and protection.

For *Come-in*, Eva Hertzsch and Adam Page have created a series of Securoprods, a product line of innocent furnishings that can be converted in minutes into high-security mechanisms: the revolving door turned into a security gate, the reception desk into an isolation cell, and a plant container into a revolving barrier. These artists play on the widely accepted and often absurd notions of the safety and security of publicly accessible areas.

RMIT Gallery Director Suzanne Davies said “Come-in is another example of our strength in bringing international shows to Melbourne to foster greater awareness and discussion about the interaction between fine art, fashion, design and architecture.”

This international touring exhibition was developed by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (IFA), Stuttgart, Germany and is presented in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Australien.

*For further information, high-res images, or to arrange an interview please contact: Vanessa Gerrans, RMIT Gallery (03) 9925 1717; 0413849256 vanessa.gerrans@rmit.edu.au*