

MOUSSE

Barbara Bloom on Hans Dieter Schaal and *2001: A Space Odyssey*

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- 118
 Katja Novitskova, *Pattern of Activation (on Mars)*, 2014, installation view at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin, 2014. Courtesy: the artist and Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin. Photo: Hans-Georg Gaul
- 119
 Hans Dieter Schaal: *Coat of arms hall with Breslauer dinner service* installation view at the Kunstgewerbemuseum Schloss Köpenick, 2004. © Kunstgewerbemuseum Schloss Köpenick, Berlin / Köpenick, 2004. Courtesy: Kunstgewerbemuseum Schloss Köpenick, Berlin / Köpenick. Photo: Hillert Ibbeken
- 120
 Stanley Kubrick, *2001: A Space Odyssey* (production still), 1968. © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

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Hans Dieter Schaal's permanent exhibition design for the Kunstgewerbemuseums in Schloss Köpenick, Berlin, features classical decor accentuated by the odd orange paint color combined with floor illumination and mirrored table reminiscent of the "bedroom" scene from Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. This film set must be indelibly printed in the back of my brain, as it seems to have crept into several of my works. In this final scene the surviving astronaut, Bowman, goes on alone into a world where time and space are relative. When he suddenly lands, his overloaded senses need to return to something like normal. He stares aghast, finding himself in a white classical room with a fluorescent floor. It is a tranquilly furnished repro Louis XVI room (a hotel bedroom suite? a human zoo? a hospital?). Or rather, he can see himself standing—he is one and the same as the alter ego he sees. He explores the gleaming room, all the more alien for its apparent ordinariness. If anything, it is remarkable only for the rather expensive vulgarity of its furnishings. Could it perhaps be an alien idea of what a typical human might want to find at the end of such a journey? Some fantasy of luxurious living replicated from an old TV show? Or perhaps it is an image from Bowman's own mind? Perhaps this is his idea of the perfect place to arrive. It is movingly conventional, as if the most the ill man's imagination can manage in conceiving a better world beyond the infinite is to recollect something he has once been taught to see as beautiful in a grand decorating magazine. In this strange, fake room, time jumps and things disappear.

