

As is typical in her practice, the sculptures' heads, hands, and shoes are fabricated in ceramic whilst the textiles are a complex mesh, collected throughout the artist's travels and encounters. Through a carefully-staged collision of glossy porcelain, pop colors, threads, eyes, eyebrows, and a mixture of clothing and textiles, Lemsalu creates global, pan-cultural mythical figures, immortal mothers, divine oracles. An homage to the force of knowledge preserved in fairy tales, folklore, ancient rituals, and traditional culture. The ultimate SEÑORA.

We give our respect, silently embracing their symbolic power.

As if exiting a sacred temple, we descend the stairs, feeling lighter perhaps blessed, rejoining the exhibition's main space. Were we reborn? The message is clear, if we are to succeed in our revolution, we must cease to be individuals, and become a collective being, give up our agency and exist only through collaboration and exchange. We must be women.

1 – Audre Lorde, *Learning from the 60s*, public speech at Harvard University, 1982, published as part of *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Crossing Press, 1984

2 – Maggie Nelson, *No Excuses*, as part of *Sarah Lucas, Au Naturel*, organized by the New Museum, New York, published by Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2018, p. 12

3 – Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, Routledge, UK, 1990

4 – Francesca Gavin, *How YBA Art Legend Sarah Lucas Helped Design the Tate's Franz West Show*, *Another Magazine*, February 20, 2019

5 – Sabine Stastny, *Your Poverty*, as part of Michèle Pagel, *Kulturboom*, VfmK Verlag für moderne Kunst GmbH, Vienna, 2016, p. 90

6 – *No Hard Feelings; Girlfriend Material; If it's not love, then it's the bomb* (all 2019).

7 – Edith Karlson, *Short Story*, 2020

## Heimo Zobernig

November 2020–April 2021

Location Eschenbachgasse

Publication

(ill. p. 772)

Press Release

*INFRASTRUCTURE*, *NATURE* read the inscriptions in Heimo Zobernig's latest pictures. Using slogan-like texts, Zobernig regularly addresses topics such as formalist modernism, economism, but also spirituality and other aspects of artistic practice. While *REAL*, *REAL EGAL* were terms introduced in the early 1990s, *FUCK PAINTING*, *FORMALISM*, *FINANCIAL TRANSACTION TAX*, *PAINTING*, *PAINTING SCULPTURE*, *FUCK PAINTING SCULPTURE* or *PERFORMANCE PAINTING SCULPTURE* served as the text modules for an exhibition of paintings in the gallery in 2011.

Achim Hochdörfer: "In 1994, the pictorial motif *REAL* found its way into his painting; more than fifty further variations were developed in the following years. As painting, the term *REAL* suddenly takes on entirely new connotations. It is now associated with an anti-modernist, conceptual pictorial concept that exposes the employed means of expression as literal realities. Paradoxically, in their optical presence and force, the geometric forms are thoroughly committed to a formalist tradition. It is as though Zobernig were insisting on the reality of aesthetic pretense, thus rejecting the schism between opticality and literalism. What is significant about the *REAL* series is that it brings the pictorial motif back from its functionalist contextualization and into painting. [...] It is no longer painting that establishes the relations to other artistic fields, but rather, these relations that force their way into painting."<sup>1</sup>

In formal terms, it is noteworthy that the framing of the respective text grid, typical of Zobernig's more recent paintings, grows increasingly dense through the composition of colored pictorial elements, as the relationship between text and image blurs almost to the point of indistinguishability. The text often seems completely consumed by light and color. The explicit use of the terms *INFRASTRUCTURE* and *NATURE* addresses essential art discourses by recalling the ethnological structuralism introduced by

Claude Lévi-Strauss, which raises the question of whether empirical yet entirely relative pairs of opposites such as raw and cooked or fresh and lazy, which serve almost as leitmotifs in myths, reveal something about their structure, about the syntax underlying them, about the "unconscious mind" that is at work within them. In no way, therefore, is the civilized "cooked" superior to the "raw" in intellectual or cognitive terms, for both are only variants of those similar procedures for which Lévi-Strauss introduced the label "wild thought." The "primitive" is not driven by instinct instead of reason, but rather processes specific material no less "rationally," simply differently, with different goals and more in the mode of tinkering.

1 – Achim Höchdorfer, *Fuck Painting*, Quart 22/13

## Boltenstern.Raum

Florian Pumhösl

Two Warped Reliefs

April–July 2021

Location Eschenbachgasse

(ill. p. 776)

Press Release

The *Warped Reliefs* were created on the basis of studies in lead foil, in which the work is distorted by the folding of the material. This results in a deformation of the pictorial space through the respective position of the composition. The starting proportion is a field that is a bit more than two meters in a ratio of 4:3. The easy malleability of the soft lead results in line elements that are similar to textile folds; in contrast, for earlier works (*Canal Reliefs*) Pumhösl used the technique of a roofer, resulting in works that are defined by their construction. The practice of repeating and playing through certain constellations results in delays and blurring of the material, which ultimately define the entire compositional situation. Constellations arise in which allocations disappear, such as the assignment to a system of signs, a scenic attraction, a cartographic figure, a compositional principle, or the like.

For Pumhösl, a relief can be realized, if a relationship between the elevations and the deformed picture object arises, in which nothing is explicitly demonstrated (such as an abstraction, a balance, emptiness, or the like). Due to the format, the color appears in its spatial dimension. The blue-green results from the mixture of two cobalt pigments dissolved in matt acrylic. The shape and color are not intended to be representative and, at best, accept associations with the blue-green color of brackish water or ideas of a marchland.

## Annette Kelm

May–June 2021

Location Eschenbachgasse

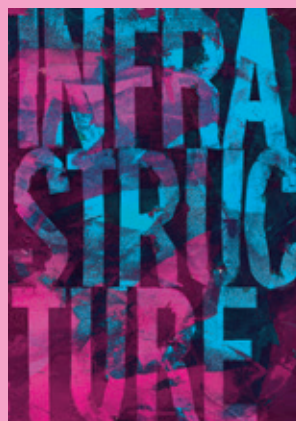
Publication

(ill. p. 778)

Text

Vanessa Joan Müller

Annette Kelm's artistic practice, with its focus on seriality and a seemingly objective approach to multiply coded materialities, is often described as conceptual—it reflects on the medium of photography and appropriates its classical genres in order to fulfill their conventions in a deliberately incomplete way by means of an abstracted,



Invitation, 2020



Publication, Die Bücher, 2021

contemporary adaptation. Photographic forms of representation are explored in terms of the semantic charge they lend to the subject, though the representation is simultaneously infiltrated by subtle ambivalences of meaning. Kelm's series *Die Bücher* [The Books] differs from her previous work, however, in that it considers the question of the object and its image to a disproportionately greater degree. This is due above all to the fact that the photographed books are artifacts whose graphic design vividly reflects cultural history, but which are integrated into a much larger historiography. On May 10, 1933, National Socialist students burned some 30,000 books on the Opernplatz in Berlin.

On the initiative of the German Student Union, numerous book burnings followed in other German cities. "Lists of harmful and undesirable literature" were also drawn up, on the basis of which "un-German" ideas were removed from libraries and bookstores. These lists included many well-known authors, but also those who have since disappeared from cultural memory. The banned books covered political literature, scientific books, novels, and poems, so-called trivial literature —even children's books were burned. They were denounced because they reflected a progressive zeitgeist, because they spread "leftist" ideas, because they stood for the emancipation of women, alternative role expectations, gender relations, homosexuality, or internationalism—or because they were written by Jewish authors.

Annette Kelm's photographs show the contemporary edition of publications that fell victim to the public spectacle of the book burnings or were blacklisted. In these pictures, the book becomes a planar object, the cover becomes central. This emphasis on the factual avoids symbolic freighting, allowing the cultural and ideological significance of the publications to come to the fore. The orientation towards formal criteria and the renunciation of any narrative elements also emphasizes the translation of the object into the two-dimensional space of photography—the book becomes an image.

The books Annette Kelm depicts are in fact from that time. This makes them affectively charged vehicles of communication, survivors of the auto-da-fé of 1933, and representatives of their authors—many of whom went into exile, were persecuted or murdered. Their photographic representation, however, also makes them relics of a past that resist immediate accessibility. We cannot leaf through these books, we cannot read them, we can only look at them as images. As immediate as their photographic presence makes them seem, it renders them abstractions that beg the very fundamental question of how and under what conditions historical consciousness can continue to function when fewer and fewer contemporary witnesses remain to report on the past.

There is no archive of blacklisted books that Kelm could simply photograph; nor does the series strive for completeness. Annette Kelm's *Die Bücher* [The Books] does not distinguish between ordinary-looking books and those that are expressive, even evocative. They are all presented for contemplation on equal footing, and thereby wrested from the past. The historical relic rescues itself into the present in visual form, while refusing to make the ultimately incomprehensible tangible or to become part of a historical consciousness that, by referencing historical images, yet again highlights the perpetrators' self-aggrandizement and the burning piles of books. Kelm provides an alternative to these familiar, backward-looking documentary images, focusing instead on the authors and victims of National Socialist politics by giving them back a visibility that, to some extent, remains lost to this day. Reading their books brings them to life.

## Curated by Zdenek Felix

CAMOUFLAGE

September–October 2021

Location Eschenbachgasse

Publication

Artists: George Condo, gelitin, Rachel Harrison, Klára Hosnedlová, Mike Kelley, Martin Kippenberger, Kris Lemsalu, Francis Picabia, Pieter Schoolwerth, Anna Uddenberg, Franz West  
(ill. p. 780)

Text

Zdenek Felix

In times of Corona, which can certainly be met with bitter humor, the festival *Curated by* in September 2021 is dedicated to the topic of *Comedy*. The exhibition contribution *Camouflage* at Gallery Meyer Kainer takes up certain subversive and ironic aspects of the late work of Francis Picabia and uses them as the starting point for a specific observation of selected contemporary art positions that defy clear definition. However, the show does not aim to get involved in the current modes of comedy culture as they are constantly appearing in various forms in today's media. Wikipedia does not offer a clear definition of the term "camouflage." In general, it means the use of camouflage patterns in military or fashion, if one disregards the fact that some artists, such as Andy Warhol and Jeff Koons, had already appropriated the deceptive surfaces for the transformation of objects.

The starting point of the exhibition is a painting by Francis Picabia from the 1940s, which despite its comedy, touches with its intensity and depth. The French painter used a black and white photograph as a template for this "portrait of a stranger," which was shown in a popular men's magazine. The transfer into color gives the motif a strange appearance, as Picabia increases the contrast of light and dark areas, whereby the initial realism of the original dissolves. By intensifying the colors in the illuminated areas of the black-and-white photo, Picabia gives the colored version of the portrait a strange, auratic appearance, not far removed from the stylized depictions of film stars and other social idols. The result is a pastiche of technical and painterly processes, whereby the ironic intention unmistakably remains. The focus of the process is less an interest in art history than a fascination with ambiguity and camouflage.

Concerning the theme of the exhibition, it is noteworthy that Picabia's method of appropriation remained concealed from the public for a long time. The artist hid most of the templates for his figurative pictures, especially the photographs from the erotic magazines that were only published after 1990. Since the majority of his paintings were academic-looking female nudes, and since these paintings were created during the war years, suspicion arose after 1945 that these smooth, sexually laden paintings were veiled concoctions, infected with fascist aesthetics and ideology. The strangely contorted, pseudo-classical poses of the models did the rest to substantiate these misjudgments. Picabia was concerned with the translation of banal, subcultural photos into the field of painting and with putting these kitschy images that he transformed back into circulation using the "recycling process." By being eclectic, he anticipated, without realizing it, certain ideas of postmodernism for which the dogma of the absolutely new has lost its validity. The fact that Picabia kept the subcultural sources of his "Nues" a secret puts him in the forerunners of "Camouflage" – also in the context of this exhibition.

These and other properties of Picabia's images contrast the intention of the theme of *Comedy* as a genre, as in a similar sense, the other, also artificial and hybrid exhibition contributions in *Camouflage*, are dedicated to a complex game of subtle contexts. Regardless of how the intentions of the participating artists are influenced by Picabia's strategies, the tension between the two positions remains stimulating for *Camouflage*. In this context, it is interesting that the American artist Mike Kelley, born in 1954, a year after Picabia's death, was able to pick up on and continue the strategies of the Frenchman at the beginning of the 1970s. The reasons for this ideal relationship lay mainly in Kelley's conviction that inspiration should not be primarily sought after in the so-called "high culture," but in the sphere of the subculture. He consistently expanded the radius of his activities to include underground and trash phenomena, produced



Publication, CAMOUFLAGE, 2021

punk music and organized performances reminiscent of horror movies. With his installations, in which he often used worn-out children's toys and dolls, he gets under society's skin and shows its collective fears and traumas.

Narrative paintings on loose canvases often played an important role in Kelley's actions. Only few of these accessories have survived. One version of the large-format picture "Wound" was part of a performance at the Artists Space in New York in 1986, during which the artist entered the room through the vertical crack in the canvas. Since the opening is framed in red and its shape is associated with a vagina, the action can be read as an allusion to the "trauma of childbirth." As an inverted sexual symbol and as an object of imagined childishness, "Wound" can evoke deep psychological memories, but at the same time, refers to the spiritual roots of the deconstruction of the iconic "allegory of the cave" by Plato, to which Kelley refers in connection with his examination of the terms "Eros" and "Idea."

Mike Kelley's strategies and ideas are very close to the position of the American artist Rachel Harrison. Her new "collaged sculpture" selected for the show in Vienna is entitled *Sculpture in a Corner*, which relates not only to the name but also to the placement of the work. Since this title refers to the relationship between the sculpture and the surrounding space, it is installed accordingly: in the corner, but facing the wall, avoiding the frontal view. This arrangement hardly allows the audience to walk around the sculpture and prompts them to reflect on the situation of the artwork as part of the environment and architecture. At the same time, Harrison's work is reminiscent of the now iconic sculpture by Martin Kippenberger *Martin ab in die Ecke und schäme dich* (Martin, into the Corner, You should be Ashamed of Yourself) from 1989. In response to unfair accusations by a critic, the German artist moved a life-size figure with his own facial features in the corner of the room thus visualizing the "punishment" from back in elementary school.

Harrison's work consists of a base and a folding chair placed on it, a stuccoed bread container, and a wig. Numerous streams of color poured over the sculpture serve as a unifying element, an allusion to the "abstract expressionism" that dominated until the 1960s, which is reflected here with humor and irony. Following the suggestion of the artist, the sculpture is presented in such a way that it is situated near Mike Kelley's "Wound," another reference that is characteristic of Harrison's work. Both artistic positions are linked, as Eric Banks put it, by an "uneasy, variegated tension," which is connected, to a haunting critique of the lifestyle and current situation in American culture.

Art historical and biographical references play a major role in both Mike Kelley's and Rachel Harrison's work. These references can also be found in the small but impressive painting *Untitled (Portrait Gil Funccius)*, 1976, by Martin Kippenberger. We see a man with his hands stretched forward. His facial features are reminiscent of the artist, his eyes fixate on the viewer with raised eyebrows, the teeth are exposed like an attacking animal, preservatives are pulled over the fingers of his right hand. The whole thing seems like camouflage or a scene from a cheap horror film, even if the expression unequivocally conveys irony. It should be noted that the title refers to Gil Funccius, a graphic artist and musician who designed several covers for techno and electronic music albums and who was temporarily in a relationship with Kippenberger. Her name is the Latinized form of the word "fox." It is probably an encrypted biographical metaphor, a volte that is not uncommon for Kippenberger.

A different view of *Camouflage* as a method offers George Condo's contribution. His semi-abstract picture *Funny Landscape*, 1985, shows the artist's method of deliberately blurring the border between symbolic figuration, comics, and abstraction. Since the beginning of the 1980s, Condo, who was previously inspired by Surrealism, painted a series of pictures that he called "expanding canvases." In doing so, he reflected on the idea of Jackson Pollock's "all-over paintings," albeit without their dogmatic interpretation. Abstract and comic forms populate the picture surface without a center or a clear boundary, break the hierarchy of individual parts and form a moving, open field of symbols that communicate with one another. The picture can be read as a musical score or as a "peinture automatique" of surrealist provenance; both components exist here alongside and with one another. *Funny Landscape* is reminiscent of certain paintings by André Masson from the 1940s and 1950s, in which knotted lines create semi-figurative, semi-abstract configurations. However, Condo has a large portion of humor with which he knows how to animate and de-ideologize his amorphous forms. The installative, three-dimensional works by the American Pieter Schoolwerth also move on insecure, hybrid ground. First, he was working in Los Angeles, where he

came into contact with psychedelic ideas and rituals, after moving to New York he then created figural oil paintings on the subject of landscapes and portraits, sometimes combined with elements of classic Dutch painting. Later he created multi-layered pictures with people and furniture. In the booklet accompanying his exhibition at the Kunstverein Hannover 2019 one reads: "Figures emerge from the background like ghosts. Schoolwerth is concerned with the dissolving space, the representation of which that could be imagined and implemented by using image processing programs in the form of overlapping layers, at the latest since the turn of the millennium. The abstraction in the sense of a no longer real, but virtual space, from which people seem to communicate with us over the phone, have become everyday routine for us today." Within this complexity, the question of the content of the virtual "reality" arises. Schoolwerth's sculptures / paintings do not give a clear answer, but open up further perspectives by including video games and virtual image communication to examine and deconstruct these channels as parallel worlds.

While human figures appear as virtual animated robots in some of Pieter Schoolwerth's "sculpted paintings," artificial people appear as avatars in the installations by the Czech artist Klára Hosnedlová. In her installation, reminiscent of a stage set, which is now being shown in Vienna, one sees two figures, one half lying, the other leaning against the wall. They look scary because, despite their almost natural posture, they are headless. They are dressed in strange, old-fashioned outfits, the shape and style of which alternates between the leather doublet with tied sleeves and the leather suit, usually worn by motorcyclists. They wear old, used stockings and strange fabric breast garments. The recumbent figure appears to be female, the kneeling figure, male, but this, too, is ambiguous. On closer inspection, it is noticeable that they, in some places, are infested with fungi or are in the process of examining these overgrown, reddish fungal stems. On the shoulder of the reclining figure one discovers a butterfly, on the floor there are puddles made of transparent plastic as if they were secretions. Are there two researchers looking for pharmaceutically usable organisms or breeders of insects? One has to know that the strange mushrooms are the Chinese "reishi mushrooms," "parasites that grow on deciduous trees and look like they are covered with a shiny varnish" (Wikipedia). They are also called "mushrooms of eternal life" because their extract, carefully dosed, is used to detoxify and cleanse the human organism. In any case, this is less about fictional narratives than it is about hybrid processes that take place between the social needs and natural supplies that are crucial for humans. The work has dystopian features, but deals with utopian problems, and is filled with a deep interest in the relationship between man and nature.

The human body and its functions are at the center of Berlin-based Swedish sculptor Anna Uddenberg's current art production. She studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, then switched to the Royal Academy of Liberal Arts in Stockholm and has lived in Berlin since 2011. A major exhibition was held in 2019 at the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn. It is a strange oeuvre that she produces. At first glance, her current three-dimensional works seem like devices from Frankenstein's laboratory or props from a studio specializing in sado-masochistic practices. Uddenberg creates "artificial bodies" out of fiberglass, vinyl, leather, and chrome-plated metal, some of which are reminiscent of avant-garde furniture or medical equipment. Women's bodies can be seen, tied in leather straitjackets, which show off their feminine shapes and characteristics in seductive positions. Associations with the erotically charged doll monsters by Hans Bellmer from the 1930s and his no less obsessive photographs emerge involuntarily. But the female fetishes of Louise Bourgeois and Sarah Lucas, built from artificial body fragments, also force themselves as spiritual relatives. The impression of kinship, however, is deceptive. Anna Uddenberg's sculptures are not so much about the sexual connotations, but about the modes that are used in capitalist society to explore femininity as a fetish of perfection and beauty.

One can find out more in the catalog for the exhibition in Bonn: "Uddenberg exaggerates the female body, and she combines the handmade with the found (ready-made). Her strongly overstretched, seemingly flawless figures offer almost an acrobatic still life and a dense, suspenseful narrative that also questions our completely exaggerated notions of perfection." Anna Uddenberg leads the viewer into a laboratory in which new forms of the "intersexual" human image are tested and examined. Provided that dystopian approaches mix with utopian content in the assemblages by Anna Uddenberg and Klára Hosnedlová, the sensual, physical, and life-affirming aspects seem to predominate in the work of Estonian artist Kris Lemsalu. At least at first glance. Lemsalu studied painting in Tallinn and Stockholm, but turned to the

medium of ceramics because, according to her admission, she had already enjoyed making things out of clay as a teenager. The sculptor and installation artist, who commutes between Europe and America, became known for her original assemblages in which she combines various materials, preferably fabrics, clothing, metal, and ceramics, to create human figures, each of which is placed in specific situations with different props.

In the Estonian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2019, she showed a monumental installation on the theme of the mythical, omnipotent, primordial mother whose ability to give birth is a prerequisite for the renewal of life. Several enlarged ceramic vulvae, transformed into springs with running water, made a lasting impression on the large audience of the pavilion during a musical performance. Similar to the English sculptor Sarah Lucas, with whom Kris Lemsalu often works and curated the exhibition *SEÑORA!* in Vienna in 2020, her works try to “undermine psychological, social and historical prejudices and are kitschy, scary, sometimes dystopian, but also absurd yet playful” (Attilia Fattori Franchini). A group of seated and praying figures recently produced by Lemsalu, however, aims in a different direction: these oriental-clad figures with their heads and hands made of ceramic, with multiple eyes on their faces that can see a lot, represent East Asian priests, whose prophetic Wisdom can stimulate and guide the European, rationally managed imagination. They hide their skills behind luxurious robes and masquerade, but can help and heal.

The four members of the group gelitin also aspire to have an impact on social reality through artistic interventions. Internationally known beyond Austria’s borders, the group, founded in 1993, acts as the “enfant terrible” of the art scene, much loved by young audiences and often attacked by those who feel attacked by the group’s actions. The artists Ali Janka, Wolfgang Gantner, Tobias Urban, and Florian Reiter appear collectively as an intellectual community. In numerous often provocative performances, they “adopt the codes of relational aesthetics in their practice and have invented an anarchist and unconventional language and approach. Humor and logic, but also chaotic accuracy, are the key instruments in the conception of new works,” one can read in a statement from Kunsthalle Wien from 2019.

In the *Camouflage* exhibition, gelitin is presented with some pictures on the theme of the most famous painting in art history: the *Mona Lisa*. In contrast to countless paraphrases and variations of the notoriously well-known image that have long recognized the value of this work of art down to kitsch and trash, gelitin deliver a series of reinterpretations in plasticine that do not approach the *Mona Lisa* phenomenon with awe (which would not be possible with gelatin anyway), but with an enjoyable and humorous thirst for discovery. It does not examine the concept of Leonardo da Vinci’s image, nor its art-historical significance or iconographic secrets. What is more interesting is the possibility of translating the iconic motif into one’s own language, of deconstructing it with one’s own specific means, of making it a gelitin object. It’s interesting to see how variable a familiar motif can be when it is implemented with courage and ingenuity. Behind the disguise as “Outsider Art” a conceptual transformation arises that defies convention and provides a new, playful approach to an idol.

The focal point of the exhibition is Franz West’s contribution. In his overall work, the method of camouflaging ideas and concepts plays a prominent role. The exhibition shows painted posters from a larger series that the artist developed over several years and to which he said in an interview: “I have always wanted to advertise, to attract visitors. And then I just wanted to copy the effect of the picture: depict reality, generate expectations with others and then put something completely different in front of them. Like the advertisement in which you see a couple on the palm beach and then realize that it is an advertisement for margarine” (Franz West catalogue, Autotheater, Museum Ludwig, Cologne 2009/2010). This quote excellently reflects the problem and also the idea of *Camouflage* as an exhibition and concept, and it should therefore appear as a programmatic epilogue at the end of the accompanying text. Thank you, Franz West, for that!

## Boltenstern.Raum

Michèle Pagel  
Creature of Habit / Creature of Love  
September–November 2021  
Location Eschenbachgasse  
invited by Julian Inić  
(ill. p. 784)

Text  
Thomas Brandstätter, in: Michèle Pagel, Kulturboom, hrsg: Verlag für moderne Kunst, 2011, S. 129

Home Entertainment

*Bunte Haushaltsgegenstände, die anzeigen, wie gewöhnlich Brutalität ist und wie schmerzlich stumpf der Affekt dahinter. Aus Ziegeln nachgebaut enthüllen sie jenen tieferen Zweck. Die Umwidmung ist eine sensible Behauptung: Transformation. Der Kopfkratzer, die Fernbedienung, der Badeschlappen, die Kaffeekanne, die Gegenstände der häuslichen Machtverteilung erhalten in Ziegelmasse ihr wahres Gewicht. Dann: Karotte, Hand, Fuß, ein Baby! Das Rohmaterial der Wertewelt – Haus, Garten und Familie – gebrannt und glasiert. Fehlt nur noch Erziehung, Ausbildung, Bildung, Formenbildung, Formenbau: Dorthin blickt Pagel mit größeren, raumgreifenderen Skulpturen, die aus dieser Ziegelwelt von Gegenständen erwachsen, umgeben von inneren, äußeren, systematischen Einschränkungen, von denen die Figuren in Ihrer Entwicklung gezeichnet sind. Sie tragen die Insignien ihrer Balance, ihrer Sturheit und ihrer Freiheit als Baumstämme, die sich Gitterstäbe einverleiben und mit ihren Wurzeln den Asphalt aufreißen. Tragische, tagträumerische und heldenhafte Gestalten, denen es glückt, von sich selbst zu erzählen. Als Chronistin beobachtet Pagel die schicksalshaften Zusammenstöße von Leben und Lebenswelt mit poetischem Blick und begreifenden Händen.*

## Rachel Harrison

Scanner Pro Paintings  
November–December 2021  
Location Eschenbachgasse  
Publication  
(ill. p. 786)

Press Release

The eight wall-mounted works on view (all 2021) were made using a new process in Harrison’s cross-medial arsenal, conspiring with a piece of consumer-grade technology put to discrepant use. Here a smartphone app for scanning documents is turned instead on everyday scenes, and software optimized to read text on a page struggles with three-dimensional space. The final works retain the idiosyncrasies of a technique beyond the artist’s control—the distorted colors and grainy passages of digital interference the app imposes on what it sees. Designed for the accurate replication of text, in Harrison’s hands the program becomes a means of abstracting the landscapes and still lifes of her surroundings: a trip to the hardware store or a neighborhood restaurant, cooking a meal or driving at night. The works both catalog the world around her and tacitly register how very different it has come to look.

Each Scanner Pro image has been augmented with sparse applications of paint, which rests atop its slick metallic surface with heightened physicality. Palette-knifed swipes,



Sunflowers, 2021  
dye sublimation print and flashe on aluminum  
157.5×121.6×3 cm

a handprint, and “expressive” drips appear on separate works, painted with deliberate restraint in relation to the image underneath: pinkish daubs resemble the highlights on the glistening skin of Harrison’s *Chicken*, and lavender swaths partially “redact” the user info in her *Add a Comment*. Paint is a reassertion of the human presence these works have otherwise ceded to the app. Harrison uses as little as possible—“just enough and nothing more”, she has said—to make these images her own.

One Scanner Pro Painting depicts a studio image of the Infanta Margarita marred by ink trails from a faulty printer; upstairs, she reappears in photos of the U.S. Capitol Rotunda on January 6th, mid-insurrection. Clipped to suspended lengths of rope and parachute cord like the proverbial dirty laundry, these doctored images join sundry objects in a thicket of string titled *Hot Topic Framing Device*.

Harrison’s device suggests a kind of map or diagram of the paranoid thinking that thrives online: it’s as if the Infanta had secretly led the charge to overturn a national election (trending alongside topics like JFK Jr. surviving his plane crash and plotting to be Trump’s next Vice President). Wild turkeys cross the road, obstacles abound, and democracy hangs by a thread.

## Raphaela Vogel

Mit der Vogel kannst Du mich jagen  
January–March 2022  
Location Eschenbachgasse  
Publication  
(ill. p. 790)

Review  
Steph Holl-Trieu und Sophia Rohwetter, Texte zur Kunst, Mai 2022

### WHO LET THE MEN OUT?

Nachdem sie auf ihre Frage „Where have all the interesting women gone?“ keine Antwort gefunden zu haben scheint, widmet sich die Philosophin und Kulturkritikerin Nina Power (der man angesichts ihrer Hinwendung zu neokonservativen Positionen diese Frage wohl selbst stellen könnte) nun den Männern, insbesondere Incels und anderen Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW). Ihr neues Buch *What Do Men Want? Masculinity and Its Discontents* (2022) befragt das Begehren des Mannes und findet es in der Vaterfigur, jener paternalistischen Instanz, die laut Power vom feministischen Kampf gegen das Patriarchat und der infantilisierenden Cancel Culture zu Unrecht mit abgeschafft werden soll. Unter dem Vorwand einer Kritik am Lifestyle-Feminismus, der mit „Smash the Patriarchy“ bedruckten Tassen auskommt, begibt sie sich auf die Suche nach den verloren gegangenen Vätern und greift dabei nach einer anderen Tasse: „I have a mug with Putin riding a bear and Trump holding a gun and riding a lion that a friend brought back from Russia.“<sup>1</sup> Obwohl diese Formen der Männlichkeit oft Ekel und Abneigung hervorriefen, müsse ihr Erfolg, so Power, auf ein bestimmtes Bedürfnis, Begehren oder gesellschaftliches Desiderat hindeuten. Verkörperungen von dominanter, monumentaler Männlichkeit finden sich auch in „Mit der Vogel kannst du mich jagen“, Raphaela Vogels erster Einzelausstellung in der Wiener Galerie Meyer Kainer. Vogel behauptet und betrauert aber im Gegensatz zu Power nicht den Verlust dieser Männlichkeit. Vielmehr konfrontiert sie diese mit einem heterogenen Ensemble männlicher Archetypen aus Mensch- und Tierwelt, verdichtet und zerschlägt maskuline Bilder und patriarchale Vorbilder und setzt dabei zeitgenössische sowie historische Männlichkeitsfantasien in surrealen Bilderwelten und absurden Kompositionen neu zusammen. Besinnt Power sich zurück auf traditionell männlich kodierte Werte und Tugenden wie Ehre, Treue, Mut und die „gute“ Vaterfigur, treten bei Vogel König, Hooligan, Liebhaber, Exfreund, Protz und Schlappschwanz in einer Fabel ohne Epimythion auf.

Der König der Tiere, der auf Powers Tasse von Trump geritten wird, hängt als erster Teil der Installation *Für uns* (2021) herrenlos und vom Sockel geschlagen in zweifacher Ausfertigung, Pfote an Pfote, den Hintern in Richtung Decke gestreckt, an einer Stahlrohrkonstruktion im Vorraum der Galerie. Aus Kugellautsprechern, die jeweils von einem Septumpiercing aus der Nase des Tieres hängen, skandiert ein Männerchor: „Für uns!“ Dass es sich hierbei um Stimmen von Fußballfans handelt, wird erkennbar, sobald die Borussia-Dortmund-Torhymne „Olé, hier kommt der BVB“ ertönt. Diese entstand 1993 während eines Auswärtsspiels bei Brøndby Kopenhagen, in jenem Jahr, als das Pet Shop Boys-Cover des Village-People-Disco-Hits „Go West“ die Charts stürmte. Fußballfans ersetzten den Songtext „Go West! Life is peaceful there“ mit ihrem eigenen Schlachtruf. So kam es, dass die kommunistische Hymne – „Go West“ beruht ursprünglich auf der Melodie und Harmonie der Nationalhymne der Sowjetunion – von der Gay Liberation zum BVB wanderte und die gleiche Fußballkultur, die bis heute mit Maskulinität und Homophobie zu kämpfen hat, die Erfolge „ihrer Jungs“ mit der Melodie einer „Schwulenhymne“ ehrt. Aber was und wen meint „Für uns“ eigentlich? Versteht es sich als kommunistische Forderung (als Expropriation der Expropriateure), als Siegesruf (eines Sportvereins, einer Gemeinschaft, einer Nation), als Solidaritätsbekundung unter Männern oder doch als Rückzug ins Private (in die RZB, in die Kernfamilie)?

Der zweite Teil der Installation *Für uns* (2021) besteht aus einer Videoskulptur, die sich im Mezzanin der Galerie befindet. Der aus Bronze gegossene griechisch-mythologische Held Bellerophon hält den Beamer, während er den sich aufbäumenden Pegasus zu zähmen versucht, aus dessen Maul die Verkabelung austritt. Das Video erscheint auf einer gelb gefärbten, lederen Leinwand. Wieder ertönt der Sound aus Kugellautsprechern, die von gedoppelten Bronzegüssen an Stahlrohrkonstruktionen herabhängen. Diesmal sind es keine Löwen, sondern Gefäße, die an die Rubinsche Vase erinnern, bei der die visuelle Wahrnehmung zwischen dem Bild einer Vase und dem Bild von zwei einander zugewandten Gesichtern oszilliert. Das Video, das in typisch Voogesquer Manier im Kugelpanorama Schwindel erregt, beginnt mit einer ein Reklameheft fressenden Katze, die von dem aggressiven Flügelschlag einer Drohne wie von einem Helikopter-Vater umkreist wird. Die geografisch unspezifische Straßenkatze wird im Begleittext von Rollo du Chateau (vermutlich ein Pseudonym Diedrich Diederichsens und nicht Rollos, Vogels Pudel) in Thailand lokalisiert. Gerade weil sie keine thailändische Siamkatze ist, sondern eine „universelle, skeptische, lakonische“, verschlinge die Katze neben den Versprechungen der Konsumgesellschaft auch die exotistischen Erwartungen westlicher Tourist\*innen.

Mit der universellen Katze und dem Kugelpanorama, das zugleich sphärisch und klaustrophobisch wirkt, evoziert das Video eine globale Welt, in der Bangkok nur einen kurzen Drohnenflug von Berlin entfernt ist. Dieselbe Drohne steigt jetzt über das vom Architekturbüro Bruno Paul entworfene Kathreiner-Hochhaus am Kleistpark, dessen Bau 1928 unter der Bedingung genehmigt wurde, dass auf der anderen Seite der barocken Königskolonnen ein weiteres Hochhaus errichtet werden würde. Als dieser Forderung nachgekommen wurde, war es bereits 1938, die Nazis waren an der Macht, und die Bauleitung der Reichsautobahn zog ein, gleich neben der Hauptvereinigung der Deutschen Milch- und Fettwirtschaft. Über Ecken und Rotationsbewegungen verbindet sich die Geschichte des Kleistparks wieder mit dem BVB, erinnern Akronym und Logofarben des Vereins doch an die BVG (Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe), die das Verwaltungsgebäude unmittelbar nach Kriegsende bezogen.

Die Drohne in Vogels Video dreht sich Richtung Westen, im Hintergrund ist nun das Kammergericht zu sehen, wo 1971 das letzte Viermächteabkommen unterzeichnet wurde. Rollo (Diederichsen, nicht der Hund) läuft ins Bild und auf die Künstlerin zu, küsst sie zur Begrüßung. Ein Kamel nimmt den Kuss auf. Indem der Kleistpark als historischer Ort und unmittelbarer Lebensraum der Künstlerin mit dem Mittelmeerraum, wo sie Tiere aus Südeuropa und Nordafrika trifft, eingemeindet wird, wird ein gewisser Bedeutungszusammenhang und ein bestimmtes „Für uns“ zwar arbiträr, aber bestimmt konstruiert. Grenzziehungen zwischen „uns“ und „nicht uns“, wie diejenigen entlang der Nord-Süd-Achse, des eigenen und des gegnerischen Teams, vermengen sich mit privaten Ein- und Ausschlüssen. Fußballgegröl wird von Babygeschrei überlagert, der Kussversuch des Kamels wird von Vogels gesanglicher Interpretation eines passiv-aggressiven Briefes ihres Exfreundes und einer Schubert-Paraphrase begleitet: „Wenn du mir etwas Gutes tun willst, dann geh mir aus dem Weg.“ Ähnlich beleidigt erscheint ein balzender Pfauenhahn, der, obwohl er einer Henne sein Federkleid protzend zur Schau stellt, von dieser kaum beachtet wird.



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