

MYRIAM THOMAN
TEXTS

Mirjam Thomann
Theory and Action

*They did not miss a beat
when they put this house together
And you can find things to do
in every inch of this place
Well, show me something*

Dear Gallery Space,

it has been a while, I'm glad to be back. There were times when I was not sure if we would see each other again. We both changed. When I visited you a week or so ago, at night, with a full silver moon shining above me, I knew I'm not the same anymore and neither are you. Over time, you have become a place between vision and memory to me. I remember how we once called you ANGEL. People thought we are funny, but this was how we imagined you, a place close to the sky that we can inhabit, that spoke to a part of us that had not been reached before. We wanted to offer our gifts of transformation, sometimes mischief, and laughter to you. The specifics of these ambitions have been lost to me with time, but what remains is a sense of a burning from within. It seems to unfold and stretch in an environment in which history and ideas can be moved around like so many strips of film. But knowledge isn't fixed like it lives on a shelf somewhere. And it brings pain when we inherit old scripts that lack sense out of context. So, I guess it's time to carry the past somewhere else today.

Art doesn't divide, I believe, but these are difficult times and I still try to find some balance. I call it the daily task of Theory and Action. Joan Didion wrote that a place belongs to whoever claims it hardest, remembers it most obsessively, wrenches it from itself, shapes it, renders it, loves it so radically that she remarks it in her name. When I thought about coming here, this is exactly what I wanted to do, to wrench you from yourself. It is not that I think I could absorb you, certainly I am the one absorbed. This might be an unpopular thing to admit. After all they say you are operating a system today that is even more exclusive than before, and I guess it is right, you kind of didn't reinvent yourself. But still, even observing you from the outside I got immediately enveloped in that feeling of relaxed resignation which says that things are the way they are. Argh, this wild ambivalence of spatial production, how it is simultaneously material, subjective, unjust and a physical response. Your slick, shiny floor, your insistent material presence, is indeed a tempting backdrop to the delicate mixture of love, living, sculpture that I want to share.

I am interested in the architectural and political organization of space and in room as a social category, giving residence to the body. I know from Silvia Federici that reclaiming your body, reclaiming our capacity to decide about our corporal reality, begins by affirming the power and wisdom of the body as we know it, in that it has forced over a long period of time, in constant interaction with the formation of the earth, in ways that are tampered with at great risk for our well being. Thus, our bodies are shaped by social relations, as well as the decision we make in our lives, how we orient ourselves and how we are situating ourselves in relation to things. The things that I brought

here are neither manifest or passive, not fixed or static. They are rather fragile and solid at once. It all started with a hole I could fit through. A large, irregular opening, a prehistoric form, like a window or an entrance to a cave. It reflects its surrounding, the patterns of light and the movement of everybody passing by. My work with the whole room began with exactly this shape. But at the end, every space is invented by each person who walks into it, crosses through it and moves from position to position, leans on a railing, leaves a trace, looks into The Fall of flesh color, licks a salty brick, opens, or closes a door. It is true here as everywhere, my notion must stay open and the only way out is through.

Yours,
M.

Sources:
Virginia Dawn
@thejessicadore
Joan Didion
Heimo Zobernig
Etel Adnan
Silvia Federici
Lina Bo Bardi
Olivia de Oliveira
Selling Tampa

MIRJAM THOMANN
THE FEMINIST'S HOUSE

Dear Feminist,

I want to build a house for you and I want it to be beautiful. Let me guess, you would like a waterfall in the backyard? I imagine it with several fountains, lots of trees, next to solid columns covered with straw mats, along with some totems and other elements of union and transition. I picture a huge, red staircase at the entrance to the house, a wide opening. I see ramps at the exits, bridges between rooms, and walkways to adjoining buildings, like easy-to-access passages. I am really interested in how things are connected, and this house will have it all. To reinvent space, to produce tears, is everything I ever wanted – Patti Smith said that, but I feel it too.

I like to think of myself as a house with multiple rooms. Which is your favorite room in yourself? It is when our identities are challenged that they become important. Thinking about a house for you is part of my story of orientation now. I connect to the contours of this space. I read it backwards, see it through the mirror, adjust it at the edges and turn it at the corners. There are knots revolving in the rooms of this house. They say buildings are acts, not static preconditions, and that in any spatial activity, ideologies and norms are repeated. There have been several artistic attempts to show that this also works the other way around, where subject positions are construed through the enactment of architecture. With this approach, our understanding of space turns. It undermines the long-standing binary that founds our notions of space in gendered terms, that poses movement “conceptualized as masculine” and “related to linear modes of time” against location “conceptualized as feminine and related to static or cyclic temporalities.” I believe this is a good thing about spatial practice.

It is never just a metaphor, it is about the actual cooperation of objects, environments, and actions. You can read all this in a superb text by Meaghan Morris, titled “Great Moments in Social Climbing: King Kong and the Human Fly.”

I learned from Lina Bo Bardi that this is also how the past survives in the form of a “historical present” in buildings. Therefore, objects shouldn’t be presented as nostalgic relics. Past and present happen at the same time, right here, in this room. Bo Bardi thought of the past as a living thing we can only hold on to and understand through confrontation. Thus she based her understanding of time, space, and movement on processes of continuous transformation. The building really is a living organism, houses want to be learnt, possessed, captured, activated by rituals and repetitive gestures. Bo Bardi was really, really funny, people say. She imagined dancing as a preferred act, a practice of recreation and entertainment, between the earth and the unknowable, people and the natural worlds, play and everyday life.

I’m not interested in creating complicated space. When entering the house, you should get a clear understanding of it, where things are, how it works, where you’re supposed to go, where the light comes from. Anyway, how we deal with a house and with each other evolves constantly. And it is crucial to be honest, even when holding on to some unspoken feelings, some private questions, some sweet, secret knowledge that’s just for you and the building. I want to be very down to earth with this house, no Andromeda Heights above the clouds, next to the sky, and no building in the far-off future, where Paul B. Preciado likes to relocate. “I have no soul and no body,” he writes, “I have an apartment on Uranus, which

certainly places me far from most Earthlings, but not so far that you can't come to see me."

Maybe we will go there one day, but what we want to build down here can be tasted and licked. Like adobes of salt or clay with different flavors. It is really easy to become obsessed imagining the house. Especially because I am aware that there is always the option for the building to simply disappear. All rooms are future ruins, right? But did you know that there are houses that literally crumble away? How is that even possible? Sometimes it is because the house had had a good life. Fed, blessed, and healed, as it should have been, it is leaving. Time for it to go back into the earth, to start anew. I'm not sure if I believe in change, but I am certainly attracted to the concept of it.

This reminds me of something I recently saw on Netflix, where people are selling sunsets, and an impressive real estate agent presented "a Neutra" to her client. "I'm so excited to show you the property," she said, and he: "This is beautiful." "Isn't it?" – "This is nice!" "This is an architecturally significant property because it was built by Richard Neutra, who specialized in all these great lines that he did, the flat roofs, the wooden beams, the metal, the white." – "This is adorable! I love this wood." "Yeah. If you have to start over, I think this is a great place." Inspired by Freud, Neutra was very good in providing, especially to women, the feeling that change is near. Trisha Low writes that many of Neutra's clients were unhappy women who believed his "custom curative environments could fill a void – women who wanted to feel, in their own homes, that they were enveloped in the embrace of a lover, or that their surroundings would be conducive to conceiving a child." Well, do you think there is anything in this we can learn from for our real

lives today? Right now I see the flickerings of a fiery youth entering your house, and I like it.

This is it for now, this is what I wanted to share with you. I know, a lot of questions are left unanswered and the pleasure of making plans can't go on forever. But you see, I am writing this with my door open, I am here so you can walk through, again and again.

Love,

M.

Source material:

Etel Adnan
Lina Bo Bardi
Beatriz Colomina
Simone Fattal
Lucy R. Lippard
Trisha Low
Madame Clairevoyant's horoscopes
Meaghan Morris
Olivia de Oliveira
Paul B. Preciado
Patti Smith
Selling Sunset

CN
Galerie Christian Nagel

Berlin

AS IF WORDS MEANT NOTHING

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Mirjam Thomann, "Untitled (Poster)," 2007

Cabinet

a: archaic: a small room providing seclusion

b: a small exhibition room in a museum

I enjoy working with marginal places.

This is why I consider you a friend, *Tenibac*. You are neither an exhibition space, nor an living room, or a library. You are something inbetween, here to offer space for the art of conversation and to think about the ever compelling relation between intimacy and the public.

You are part of my story of orientation. Buildings are acts, they say, and not static preconditions and that in any space activities, of course, ideologies and norms are repeated. There have been several artistic attempts to show that this also works the other way around, where subject positions are construed through the enactment of architecture, where the inhabitant have been conscious of their double theatrical condition: serving at the same time as the actors and spectators. I believe that the good thing about spatial practices is that they are never just metaphors, they are also about the arrangement of objects, environments and actions. These links are real. When our hearts and minds are open we can recognize them.

With this approach, our understanding of space turns, it is no longer a prior condition of something else—like a specific *place*—but rather an outcome, the product of an activity, and thus it necessarily has a temporal dimension. I think that this is an incredibly important detail; it undermines the long-standing binary that founds our notions of space in gendered terms: that which poses movement (conceptualized as masculine and related to linear modes of time) against location (conceptualized as feminine and related to static or cyclic temporalities).

This shows that orientation is not so much about the relation between objects and their extend into space, rather orientation depends on the bodily inhabitation of that space, Sara Ahmed writes. Space then becomes a question of turning, of directions taken, which not only allow things to appear, but also enable us to find our way by situating ourselves in relation to such things. And yet, for me, learning left from right, east from west, forward from backward, mirror-inverted from straight, light from dark, does not necessarily mean I know where I am going. Just because you get one thing, doesn't mean you get it all. One thing is not the beginning of all.

Thus the important question is: How would you find your way to the door so you can leave the room if necessary? And who is waiting outside?

Hello there!

To shift the peripheral to the zone of perceptibility can easily be misunderstood in the sense of an egalitarian mission, a kind of ethical and aesthetic development aid for corners and niches. But such a mentality of care is not really the issue here. It appears as if she were less valorizing peripheral states and shoving them from the background to the foreground than seeking to make comprehensible how these border areas and the characteristic dualisms of inside/outside, private/public, side issue/main issue, are construed. She does so not by means of a spatial-sociological or perception-theoretical examination, but with allegorical manoeuvres that may look like quasi-scenographic proposals or experimentations with the sense of space and the willingness to participate, although they primarily revolve around a contradiction, if not a dilemma, that has to do with the difficult and at once privileging fact of being an artist.

Martin, get out of the corner and stop being ashamed!

Better check this out: This week's free video is about creating space. While it will create space in the parts of your body that need it most, it is also an opportunity for you to show up and ask: what do I want to make space for? We are working on creating space today from the inside out. Hop into something comfy and let's get started.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cabinet>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEFVxxNyFKA>

MILIEU

KATHARINA AIGNER, MARIA EICHHORN, MARILYN GREEN, SISKI K. JØRGENSEN,
TITRE PROVISOIRE, STEPHANIE TAYLOR, MIRJAM THOMANN, JENNI TISCHER

May 25 – July 28, 2018

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Opening hours: Saturday, 12–5 pm

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Milieu [mi'ljø:]

French milieu

from: mi- < Latin medius = middle

and lieu < Latin locus = place

What about your milieu? How would you describe it? Which images, words, commodities, animals, things, and information come to mind? How do you feel, how do you move, how do you communicate with and think about your environment? And how does your environment relate to you?

The interesting thing is that a milieu is something other than a fixed context or an inevitable situation. It is an intertwining and allows forming a theory of living relationships. Living beings and milieu are linked to each other and involved in a dynamic of permanent debate leading to reciprocal adaptations and transformations. This dynamism takes place in small and big things, in biological, physical and sociological terms, and it applies as much to a single cell as it does to a movement or an entire society.

There are milieus on which everyone immediately has an opinion. They are covered in the press and discussed in talk shows, for example: The workers' milieu used to vote for the Communist Party, today it votes for the Front National—a tendency that goes beyond the borders of France, as is known. In this context, Didier Eribon writes that people have lost their historical class consciousness. But inequality is more than the criterion of being left behind. There is no milieu that can be consistently defined based on shared interests and goals, independently of time and place, especially against the background of a world of work that is undergoing constant change. The challenge, according to Eribon, therefore consists in taking the step from knowledge to action, in joining heterogeneous battles and enduring the tensions.

Theories of the environment are always also theories of possible worlds. In this sense, the term milieu describes both possibility conditions and permeabilities. It focuses on what is conceivable or inconceivable under specific conditions, thus raising questions as to the perceptibility and representability of the environment. That is indeed reminiscent of art. The view of humans to their environment is thus a view that is itself determined by this environment, it is a corporeally determined view. Milieu, then, describes the relationship between body and environment, the interpenetration of environment and that which is in the environment. Are you aware that you are simultaneously a component and viewer of a state? That sounds pretty fictive and otherworldly! You inhabit the milieu and the milieu inhabits you. Precisely the engagement with this other makes the milieu conceivable, writes Maria Muhle, thus defining the place where the norm of life develops. It is autonomy and heteronomy, determination and agency, tension and complicity, susceptibility and dissolution of boundaries. Complicated conditions and palm trees in Kreuzberg.

Here, our milieu is that of the exhibition. We are interested in the specifications of this exhibition milieu, the actions that enable it and the interrelations it produces. The relationship established between the living being and the environment is like a debate to which the living being brings its own norms of

assessment of situations, in which it dominates the environment and adapts to it, writes Georges Canguilhem. What kind of dynamism unfolds between inside and outside? Where are the boundaries and how do the mutual references of body, material and environment take effect? How are transitions between natural circumstances and artificial ones that mimic a natural process visualized? We observe ourselves in the attempt to create counter-effects, to determine the milieu and temporarily set it in motion. Nice that you can join us!

Berlin, May 2018

Mirjam Thomann and Jenni Tischer

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Maria Muhle, "Mixed Milieus. Vom vitalen zum biopolitischen Milieu," in: Huber, Wessely, loc. cit., p. 35-48.

Laurent Stadler, "Milieu architektonisch. Die 'Wissenschaft der Planbildung' als Form von Umgebungswissen," in: Huber, Wessely, loc. cit., p. 72-87.

Michael Vester, "Die Gesellschaft als Kräftefeld: Klassen, Milieus und Praxis in der Tradition von Durkheim, Weber und Marx," in: Huber, Wessely, loc. cit., p. 136-175.

MILIEU was initiated by MIRJAM THOMANN and JENNI TISCHER.

Supported by Bezirkskulturfonds Berlin Lichtenberg.

MILIEU

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TITRE PROVISOIRE, STEPHANIE TAYLOR, MIRJAM THOMANN, JENNI TISCHER

25. Mai – 28. Juli 2018

Eröffnung: Donnerstag, 24. Mai 2018, 19 Uhr

after the butcher. Ausstellungsraum für zeitgenössische Kunst und soziale Fragen
Spittastr. 25, 10317 Berlin
www.after-the-butcher.de

Öffnungszeiten: Samstag, 12:00 bis 17:00 Uhr
und nach Vereinbarung: ina@after-the-butcher.de

Milieu [mi'ljø:]
französisch milieu
aus: mi- < lateinisch medius = mitten
und lieu < lateinisch locus = Ort, Stelle

Und Ihr Milieu? Wie würden Sie es beschreiben? Welche Bilder, Worte, Waren, Tiere, Dinge und Informationen fallen Ihnen dazu ein? Wie fühlen Sie, wie bewegen Sie sich, wie kommunizieren und denken Sie in Ihrer Umgebung? Und wie bezieht sich Ihre Umwelt auf Sie?

Das Interessante ist ja: Ein Milieu ist etwas anderes als ein festgeschriebener Kontext oder eine unausweichliche Situation. Es ist eine Verflechtung und ermöglicht eine Theorie der lebendigen Zusammenhänge. Lebewesen und Milieu sind aneinander gekoppelt und befinden sich in einer Dynamik der permanenten Auseinandersetzung, in der es wechselseitig zu Adaptionen und Transformationen kommt. Diese Dynamik gilt im Kleinen wie im Großen, biologisch, physikalisch und soziologisch betrachtet, sie gilt für eine Zelle ebenso wie für eine Bewegung oder eine ganze Gesellschaft.

Es gibt Milieus, zu denen haben alle sofort eine Meinung. Sie kommen in der Presse vor und werden in Talkshows diskutiert, zum Beispiel so: Früher wählte das Arbeiter*innenmilieu traditionell die Kommunistische Partei, heute den Front National – eine Tendenz, die sich bekanntermaßen weit über die Grenzen Frankreichs hinaus zeigt. Didier Eribon schreibt dazu, den Menschen sei das historische Klassenbewusstsein abhanden gekommen. Doch Ungleichheit zeichnet sich durch mehr aus, als das Merkmal, abgehängt zu sein. Es gibt kein Milieu, das sich widerspruchsfrei anhand von geteilten Interessen und Zielen, zeit- und ortsunabhängig, definieren lässt, besonders vor dem Hintergrund einer sich stetig wandelnden Arbeitswelt. Die Herausforderung besteht deswegen nach Eribon darin, von der Erkenntnis in ein Handeln überzugehen, sich den heterogenen Kämpfen anzuschließen und die Spannungen auszuhalten.

Theorien der Umwelt sind auch immer Theorien möglicher Welten. Der Begriff des Milieus beschreibt in diesem Sinne sowohl Möglichkeitsbedingungen als auch Durchlässigkeiten. Er richtet den Blick auf das, was unter bestimmten Bedingungen denkbar oder nicht denkbar ist und eröffnet damit Fragen nach Wahrnehmbarkeit und Darstellbarkeit von Umwelt. Das erinnert ja wohl sehr an Kunst. Der Blick des Menschen auf seine Umgebung ist damit selbst ein Blick, der von dieser Umwelt bedingt ist, es ist ein körperlich bedingter Blick. Milieu bezeichnet also das Verhältnis von Körper und Umwelt, die gegenseitige Durchdringung von Umgebung und Umgebenden. Ist Ihnen klar, dass Sie zugleich Bestandteil und Betrachter*in eines Zustands sind? Klingt ganz schön fiktiv und außerweltlich! Sie bewohnen das Milieu und das Milieu bewohnt Sie. Gerade in der Auseinandersetzung mit diesem Anderen wird Milieu denkbar, schreibt Maria Muhle, und definiert so den Ort, an dem sich die Norm des Lebens ausbildet. Das ist Autonomie und Fremdbestimmung, Determinierung und Handlungsmacht, Spannung und Komplizenschaft, Anfälligkeit und Entgrenzung. Das sind erschwerte Bedingungen und Palmen in Kreuzberg.

Hier ist unser Milieu dasjenige der Ausstellung. Wir interessieren uns für die Vorgaben, die dieses Ausstellungsmilieu macht, die Aktionen, die es ermöglicht und die Zusammenhänge, die es herstellt. Das Verhältnis zwischen Lebewesen und Umwelt ist wie eine Auseinandersetzung, in die das Lebewesen seine eigenen Normen der Bewertung von Situationen mitbringt, in der es die Umwelt beherrscht und sich ihr anpasst, schreibt Georges Canguilhem. Welche Dynamik entsteht zwischen Innen und Außen? Wo verlaufen die Grenzen und wie werden die gegenseitigen Bezugnahmen von Körper, Material und Umgebung im Ausstellungsraum wirksam? Wie werden Übergänge zwischen natürlichen Gegebenheiten und künstlichen, die einen natürlichen Vorgang nachahmen, sichtbar? Wir beobachten uns selbst bei dem Versuch, zurückzuwirken, das Milieu neu zu bestimmen und für einen Moment in Bewegung zu versetzen. Schön, dass Sie dabei sind!

Berlin, Mai 2018

Mirjam Thomann und Jenni Tischler

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Michael Vester, „Die Gesellschaft als Kräftefeld: Klassen, Milieus und Praxis in der Tradition von Durkheim, Weber und Marx“, in: Huber, Wessely, a.a.O., S. 136–175.

MILIEU wurde initiiert von MIRJAM THOMANN und JENNI TISCHER.

Gefördert durch den Bezirkskulturfonds Berlin Lichtenberg.

Dear Esther,

Although we have never met, it feels easy to write to you. You have the same name as my friend, Esther. Esther and I live in the same house, on the fourth and on the second floor; I just moved in some weeks ago. Although our apartments are of the same size, we live in quite different spaces. I wish I could show you; it is really striking how the shapes of the apartments differ. Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to live in Esther's apartment instead of mine. What kind of movements, actions, and behaviors would I get used to up there? The thing is, I am becoming more and more committed to the idea that it is not me who inhabits the space I live in but that it proposes some way of living to me instead. Do you know what I mean? Have you ever had the feeling that the house owns you, rather than you own the house? I realized that I feel this way when I started to blame the building for my failures. "Ugh, lucky me, it isn't my fault, it's the building's fault," I told myself when a plan I made up didn't work out. It's funny how the house is not really an object but more of a function, when I think about it like this.

Besides Esther's apartment, I imagine inhabiting other spaces, too. Therefore, I love to cruise the internet for floor plans. Some of them come by numbers. Lately, I got stuck with 4122WM, a "Country House Plan With Marvelous Porches" advertised as a "popular home plan with *options*." I found it on architecturaldesigns.com. It is a four-bedroom, modern-day farmhouse that offers a master layout with a wide-open floor plan. The bedrooms are big and private, and have high ceilings, and they open to the swimming pool, and one can imagine reading in one of them all night long, or writing a book, or closing the door and crying till dinner. Huge porches, front and back, and a third porch on the side give you great space to enjoy the fresh air. The big room has two-story ceilings and is open to the kitchen and the dining room. Comfort in this space is related to both intimacy and control. A large island in the kitchen hosts workspace and seating and there is a walk-in pantry providing a lot of storage space. The master has a tray ceiling as does the living room with its own fireplace. Upstairs, three bedrooms share two baths. A built-in desk gives you room to work in the common area. The third bedroom on the main floor could be used as an office. Here, too, the most intimate room is like a theater box, placed just over the entrance to the social area of the house, so that any intruder can be easily seen. It is the kind of house that has a refreshment center in the living room. It is the kind of house that offers plenty of possibilities to let routines be done by the Internet of Things. It is the kind of house in which one does not really live, but there is no way to say this without getting into touchy and delicate and, finally, awkward questions of taste—and ultimately of class. I have seldom seen a house plan so evocative of the unspeakable.

Esther, I am turning to you, because I want to work on a report on architecture and I want it to be interesting. Buildings are acts, they say, and not static preconditions and that in any space activities, of course, ideologies and norms are repeated. There have been several artistic attempts to show that this also works the other way around, where subject positions are construed through the enactment of architecture. I believe that the good thing about spatial practices is that they are never just theoretical

metaphors, they are also about material. I think it is much more constructive to identify these links between theory and practice rather than to further the assumption that there are no links. There are. When our hearts and minds are open we can recognize them.

For example I see it here: Lately I got hooked up on the concept of an "architectural autofiction," a notion Paul Preciado writes about in *Pornotopia*, from 2010. Autofiction is a term used in literary criticism to refer to a form of fictionalized autobiography. In this case, it would mean to write an autobiography based on the description and representation of spaces where one's life took place, like the sites where things actually happened. The interesting thing about Preciado is that he is not talking about vague symbolic influences; rather, he is talking about how architecture physically controls and constructs "technohabits." This is less a theory about subjectivities than it is an account of the total immersion of bodies and gender ideologies. "If you want to change a man, change his apartment," Preciado writes. "If you want to modify gender, transform architecture." Or to say it in the words of someone else: "Space is a pressing matter and it matters which bodies *where* and *how* press up against it."

Esther, I learned a lot from you about space and the arrangements of bodies and buildings that are affected by architecture. Your writing went deep, you understood the plot of every floor plan you ever walked. You had a natural interest in how things are put together, sorting out exactly how a story or a house is constructed. Your senses were keen and your words seem to enter a place, walk the floor, linger over objects, and reflect the changing light. People say you were born with an attraction to space. You wrote about how Rudolph Schindler's houses are *wrapped around space*, and how he has created a new definition of buildings: "His house is in movement," you state. "It is in becoming. Form emerges from form. It is like a bird that has just touched earth, its wings still spread but at once it is part of the earth." *A bird that has just touched earth...* Esther, you almost made me cry. To think about a building that hovers above things and is deeply connected to them at the same time touches me deeply. Wouldn't it mean that it is finally possible to get out of everything, at least for a moment? Free like an eagle while sitting inside? Such a "Better Living."

I can tell that writing is a lonely business and it wasn't always easy for you. Your books were sold under the counter; there was too much in them that didn't comply with the way architectural history used to be written. The difference is hard to describe, except that you valued the feeling that architecture does come out of people, and those people come out of backgrounds. Architectural history at this time was written from the point of view of the façade; there wasn't much emphasis on the floor plan. Knowing the importance of the floor plan as the basis of the creation, you gave it the attention it deserved. Your writing followed this interest closely, entering the rooms and capturing both appearances and experiences. With this approach, our understanding of space turns; it is no longer a prior condition of something else—like a specific *place*—but rather an outcome, the product of an activity, and thus it necessarily has a temporal dimension. I think that this is an incredibly important detail; it undermines the long-standing binary that

founds our notions of space in gendered terms: that which poses movement (conceptualized as masculine and related to linear modes of time) against location (conceptualized as feminine and related to static or cyclic temporalities).

To live is to leave traces, they say. Maybe that's why you liked to discuss the question of space as a personal one. That is at least true for your terrific short story "The Important House" from 1948, a wry domestic drama about Mrs. Blakely and her Los Angeles modern home, an architect-designed residence about to be photographed for the interior magazine *House & Garden*. As Mrs. Blakely waits for a couch to be delivered, she decorates the rooms with her favorite silver and flowers. The couch arrives and the magazine's photographer and Mr. Aiden, the architect, descend on the house. The two men quickly tear apart the interiors, rearranging everything. The couch is evicted, replaced by an empty metal-framed bassinet. "You have made it look like no one lived here," Mrs. Blakely said. "I want to convey the total idea of the house," the architect answered.

The total idea of the house... jeez, that sounds politically difficult and a bit like Adolf Loos. It is easy to understand why many critics do not speak very highly of his work. Loos always privileged the bodily experience of space over its mental construction. No wonder that the theatrical quality of his floor plans has often been described as voyeuristic. "My architecture is not conceived by drawings, but by spaces," he explains in a recorded conversation from 1930. "I do not draw plans, facades or sections ... For me, the ground floor, first floor do not exist ... There are only interconnected continuous spaces." The illusion of Loos as a man in control of his work, as an undivided subject, is suspect, Beatriz Colomina writes. In fact, he is constructed, controlled, and fractured by his own work. In the *Raumplan* for example, Loos constructs a space without having completed the working drawings, then he allows himself to be manipulated by this construction. The object has as much authority over him as he has over the object. He is not simply an author.

Me neither. I am no exception to this phenomenon. Incapable of detachment from my object, I simultaneously produce a new object and am produced by it, whether I am writing to you, or building a model out of concrete, like this one I built out of memory from Schindler's apartment in Miracle Mile. The question of space seems already inscribed in everything I am dealing with, at least when I abandon the idea that architecture is a confined entity addressed by an independent subject and experienced by a lonely body. More than ever, it feels like just another formation in this incredibly crazy power of representation.

You might wonder why I'm writing all of this to you. I don't even have a real question, let alone a proposal to make that could expand any of the assumptions so many others have already provided about your work—some of them I am even quoting here, quite frankly. Still, for some time now I feel the urge to talk to you.

My own thinking and production has focused on issues of space for some time now—ways of dislocating it, attenuating it, flattening it, turning it inside-out, always attempting to explore it without ever giving myself or others the permission to penetrate it. In 2014 and 2015, I stayed at the Mackey Apartments built by Rudolph Schindler in the 1930s in Los Angeles. At the end of the residency we were asked to exhibit the outcome of our projects. I didn't manage to come to terms with anything concrete. But I learned from you and other sources that I consulted during my stay that architecture must take hold of the public imagination in order to survive and to remain relevant in regard to the question of how we want to live. This was and is, says Kimberli Meyer, the director of the MAK Center, especially true in Los Angeles, where the forces of real estate speculation so often trump architecture (that was in 2011). However when I learned about you and your ideas, I realized what it means to say the story of a person can be a story of a city. You were concerned about the politics of the built environment you lived in and, like many of your contemporaries, insisted that architecture and urban space are not isolated entities but a crucial part of the social fabric.

The work I finally showed—and which only existed for a few days—was called *I Had The Key But Not The Key*. It consisted of three so-called “window splashes,” advertising signs which are applied directly to the window glass of shop windows. The window splashes that I designed and commissioned were completed by John King of the company King Sign & Graphics, West Hollywood. King, who usually works as a window painter in the commercial part of the city, painted large-scale splashes on the windows of my apartment. In this way, he combined the conventional, neon-colored advertising signs like arrows and ticks with the color palette Schindler has chosen for the original interior design of the Mackey Apartments: from downstairs to upstairs, from the basement to the penthouse, light gray to turquoise to orange. It was great. Especially from the inside, which only I could see as the resident of the apartment. The painted windows produced a peculiar intimacy and an almost uncanny weirdness inside of the apartment and at the same time they were bright, shining, message-less signs to the outside world.

In one of his *Architectural Site Drawings From Memory*, part of the 1995 project *Educational Complex*, Mike Kelley made a note about the four kinds of life happening in a floor plan: institutional life, daily life, symbolic life, and unconscious symbolic life. I agree with him; I believe that architecture is both real and imagined, open and fragmented, and we most often glimpse space in pieces: in the background, in our peripheral vision, and in our recollection. I built this floor plan out of concrete and from memory. It makes me think of you and everything I just said.

Yours truly,
Mirjam

Berlin, February 2017

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ARTISTS' CHOICE

Art has always responded to art; artists have always modified or appropriated other artists' work or turned it against itself. In an issue dedicated to idioms – the languages of art under the sociopolitical conditions of their production – the choice of references, aesthetic affiliations, and material forms of articulation is central. For this survey, we approached the following artists to comment on their idioms in light of their individual creative interests.

Mirjam Thomann, who conceived the issue together with Susanne Leeb, looks back on historic Land art to sketch an updated version of feminist theories of space. The filmmaker Anja Kirschner considers the nexus of

capitalism, technology, climate change, and toxicity in her de-spectacularized horror film. Linda Stupart writes about unsuccessful 3D models in relation to current sites of the abject, while Bouchra Khalili's contribution turns to Pier Paolo Pasolini's writings to explore contemporary narratives of resistance. In keeping with the sculptural-linguistic quality of his installations, Michael Dean's note on the garbage-language of the street is poetic and experimental; Lawrence Abu Hamdan (a contributor to the research group Forensic Architecture) writes about his practice intertwining two ostensibly incompatible domains: juridical systems and artistic presentations.

MIRJAM THOMANN

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN AND SPACE¹

"I believe this to be an authentically senseless chain of correspondences,"² or: What spaces come into being when materials and ideas are adjusted and updated?

Part of the chain is:

Land art has retained a reputation for being interested less in people and more in designing nature. Looking at images of Robert Smithson freewheeling along his "Spiral Jetty" composed of rock, mud, and salt crystal, and of him then reaching its end point and staring in utter solitude out over the Great Salt Lake, one has the impression of a person who has reached a path of contemplation.³ Secluded from museums, media, and masses, transcendence remains achievable – or so runs a creation myth of 1960s and '70s Land art and notions of the periphery. Meanwhile, historicization has taken precisely the opposite path, asserting that it was actually the supposed distance from economic and social centers that allowed

the emergence of new distribution and presentation models for sculpture in public space.⁴ Indeed, the images themselves show how Land art's mediation was always a constitutive structural component; they also show how the deafening noise of the helicopter tousles water and hairdos alike, as the airborne camera's vertical vantage point captures the entirety of the monumental spiral on the banks of the salt lake. Today's drone images capture rather more jittery excerpts of space, while Google Earth provides an abstracted view of control from the air; in contrast, the cinematic *aerial* view as deployed in the documentation of Land art can in fact be understood as the means through which geomorphological interventions into the surface of the Earth were first ever brought forth. This also applies to Heizer's classic and highly photographable "Double Negative" and to "The Lightning Field" by De Maria, recordings of these works having come to stand in for the actual. Have you ever been to Utah?

ARTISTS' CHOICE

Kunst hat schon immer auf Kunst reagiert, und Künstler/innen haben schon immer populäre visuelle Kultur sowie das Werk anderer Künstler/innen modifiziert, angeeignet oder konterkariert. Für ein Heft, das sich Idiomen widmet, also künstlerischen Sprachen unter den soziopolitischen Bedingungen ihrer Produktion, steht die Wahl der Referenzen, ästhetischen Anschlüsse und materiellen Artikulationsformen im Mittelpunkt. In dieser Umfrage äußern sich Künstler/innen zu ihren Idiomen vor dem Hintergrund eines je eigenen künstlerischen Interesses.

Mirjam Thomann, die diese Ausgabe zusammen mit Susanne Leeb entwickelt hat, entwirft mit Blick auf die historische Land Art eine Aktualisierung feministischer Raumtheorien. Die Filmemacherin Anja Kirschner

betrachtet die Zusammenhänge von Kapitalismus, Technologie, Klimawandel und Toxizität in ihrem spektakularisierten Horrorfilm. Linda Stupart schreibt über missglückte 3-D-Modelle und ihre Verbindung zu gegenwärtigen Orten des Abjekten, während es Bouchra Khalili mit Rückgriff auf die Schriften Pier Paolo Pasolinis in ihrem Beitrag um aktuelle Narrative des Widerstands geht. Michael Dean äußert sich analog zu seinen skulptural-linguistischen Installationen eher poetisch-experimentell zur Müllsprache der Straße, während Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Mitglied der Forschungsgruppe Forensic Architecture, über seine Praxis der Vermittlung zweier scheinbar entgegengesetzter Bereiche schreibt: juridische Systeme und künstlerische Präsentationen.

MIRJAM THOMANN

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN AND SPACE¹

„I believe this to be an authentically senseless chain of correspondences“,² oder: Welche Orte entstehen in der Adaption und Aktualisierung von Materialien und Ideen?

Teil der Verkettung ist das:

Der Land Art hängt ja der Ruf nach, sich nicht für Menschen, sondern nur für Naturdesign interessiert zu haben. Wenn man sich die Bilder von Robert Smithson anschaut, wie er total befreit die aus Gestein, Matsch und Salzkristallen zusammengetragene „Spiral Jetty“ entlangläuft und dann am Ende, angekommen in völligem Alleinsein, auf den Great Salt Lake hinausblickt, liegt der Eindruck tatsächlich nahe, dass hier jemand den Weg in die Kontemplation gefunden hat.³ In der Peripherie, abseits von Museen, Medien und Massen, ist Transzendenz noch möglich, so ein Anfangsmythos der Land Art der 1960er und 1970er Jahre. In der Zwischenzeit wurde genau in die andere Richtung historisiert: Gerade in der

vermeintlichen Distanz zu ökonomischen und sozialen Zentren entstanden demnach neue Distributions- und Präsentationsmodelle für Skulpturen im öffentlichen Raum.⁴ Dass die Medialisierung immer schon struktureller Bestandteil der Land Art war, beweisen auf jeden Fall die Bilder selbst: Der vertikale Kamerablick zeigt nicht nur, wie das Getöse des Helikopters Wasser und Frisur aufwirbelt, sondern erfasst auch die monumentale Spirale am Ufer des Salzsees erstmals als Ganzes. Im Gegensatz zu gegenwärtigen Drohnenbildern, die Raum eher nervös in Ausschnitten wiedergeben, oder zum abstrahierten Kontrollblick aus der Luft durch Google Earth kann der filmische *aerial view*, wie er in der Dokumentation der Land Art eingesetzt wurde, ja tatsächlich als Mittel verstanden werden, das die geomorphologischen Eingriffe in die Oberfläche der Erde überhaupt erst hervorgebracht hat. Das trifft auch auf die extrem abbildungstauglichen Klassiker „Double Negative“ von Heizer oder „The Lightning Field“ von



The history of "Perimeters/Pavilions/Decoys" by Mary Miss is rather different. "[A] slight mound, a swelling in the earth" was the hardly perceptible "warning" alluding to the existence of the work, as Rosalind Krauss writes at the beginning of "Sculpture in the Expanded Field."⁵ Beyond the mound, a precisely rendered square pit came into view, a small ladder protruding from within. 1978's "Perimeters" – a temporary installation in a Roslyn, New York park – took place within the land itself, the body forced into the cavity. In an underground structure comprised of huge, untreated wooden beams as used in architectural constructs, a network of gateways, corridors, and towers stretched out "under the skin of the earth,"⁶ with viewers required to enter and explore. There are no surface markings under the earth; rather a spatial topography that is only ever partially perceptible, documented only in detail-view photographs and technical drawings. Accordingly, Krauss's extended field is an abstract space, but thus by no means a non-social one. The longing for interaction, encounter, and even for

paranoia is at least as strong as that for eternity; "creating situations where our interior life and the public realm can come together is important to me," says Mary Miss.⁷

Sculpture is, here, a material-semiotic interplay expressing itself in the social and visual relationships it renders. It functions in reference to its architectonic and institutional placement and to its experience of nature, materiality, and the immediate environment. Atmosphere and presence arise somewhere in-between, belonging neither to the structure of the work itself nor to the bodies moving within it. This reminds me of Luce Irigaray's concept of *being two*, as described in "How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?": "The horizontal transcendence between the sexes creates space – spaces, whereas reducing it to a genealogy destroys them or at least fills them up. Of course spaces opened up by difference cannot figure directly in a home because they cannot be represented. However, they can be evoked and raised by maintaining and reawakening difference in the way of dwelling." And: "In



Mirjam Thomann, „Lean in 1–3“, 2016

De Maria zu; die eigentlichen Arbeiten wurden längst durch Aufnahmen ersetzt. Oder waren Sie schon mal in Utah?

Die Geschichte von „Perimeters/Pavillions/Decoys“ von Mary Miss geht anders. „[A] slight mound, a swelling in the earth“, eine leichte Erhöhung, war ein aus der Ferne kaum erkennbares „warning“, das auf die Existenz der Arbeit hinwies, wie Rosalind Krauss zu Beginn von „Sculpture in the Expanded Field“ schreibt.⁵ Hinter der Erhöhung kam eine präzise ausgehobene, quadratische Grube zum Vorschein, aus der eine Leiter herausragte. Die 1978 temporär in einem Park in Roslyn, New York, installierten „Perimeters“ fanden in der Erde selbst statt, der Körper musste ins Loch. In einer Untergrundstruktur aus massiven, unbehandelten Holzbalken, wie sie für architektonische Konstruktionen eingesetzt werden, entspannte sich „under the skin of the earth“⁶ ein Netz aus Zugängen, Korridoren und Türmen, das begangen und erforscht werden musste. Unter der Erde gibt es keine Markierungen der Oberfläche, sondern eine immer nur

limitiert erfassbare und nur in Detailaufnahmen oder technischen Zeichnungen dokumentierte räumliche Topografie. Entsprechend ist das erweiterte Feld der Skulptur, von dem Krauss spricht, zwar ein abstrakter Ort, aber deswegen noch lange kein asozialer. Die Sehnsucht nach Austausch, Begegnung und vielleicht auch nach Paranoia ist eben mindestens so stark wie die nach Ewigkeit „creating situations where our interior life and the public realm can come together is important to me“, sagt Mary Miss.⁷

Skulptur ist hier ein materiell-semiotisches Zusammenwirken, das sich in den sozialen und visuellen Beziehungen, die sie hervorbringt, im Bezug zum architektonischen und institutionellen Ort, an dem sie stattfindet, und in der Erfahrung des Umraums, der Natur und Materialität äußert. Atmosphäre und Präsenz entstehen irgendwo dazwischen, sie gehören weder zur Struktur der Arbeit selbst noch zu den sich darin bewegenden Körpern. Das erinnert mich an Luce Irigarays Begriff „of being two“, den sie in „How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?“ umschreibt: „The horizontal transcendence between the sexes creates space, spaces, whereas reducing it to a genealogy destroys them or at least fills them up. Of course spaces opened up by difference cannot figure directly in a home because they cannot be represented. However, they can be evoked and raised by maintaining and reawakening difference in the way of dwelling.“ Und: „In the activity of residing there must be some space fitted out for that which is particular to oneself, and also separate space for approaching the other.“⁸ In räumlichen Anordnungen kann es also darum gehen, Differenz aufrechtzuerhalten und so Nähe und hospitality erst möglich zu machen. Für Irigaray gehen Raumangelegenheiten deswegen

the activity of residing there must be some space fitted out for that which is particular to oneself, and also separate space for approaching the other.”⁸ Spatial arrangements can therefore be about maintaining difference, thus achieving the prerequisites for closeness and hospitality. This is why issues of space have, for Irigaray, always been of collective relevance; likewise, she sees the use and transformation of materials via techniques and technology as part of the process. It is exactly here that my connections lay. They reveal themselves in individuating sculpture and in spaces of collective perception, in temporary interventions at the edges of architecture and in expansions of the space at hand, in recycled elements and the use of construction materials, flesh-colored tones, ashtrays, and leather, in the adaptation of historical concepts and the updating of inherited ideas; in the attempt to translate bodily experience into text and in search of visions for a disposed public space.⁹

Translation: Matthew Scown

Notes

- 1 This text draws on a series of eponymous works, beginning with the “Mirjam Thomann: Women and Space” exhibition at Galerie Krobath in Vienna, January 20–February 2, 2016.
- 2 Cited from “Joan Didion: The Center Will Not Hold,” 2017, directed by Griffin Dunne, 78 minutes.
- 3 Visible in “Spiral Jetty,” 1970, directed by Robert Smithson, 36 minutes.
- 4 See Philipp Kaiser/Miwon Kwon, “Ends of the Earth and Back,” in: *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles/Haus der Kunst, Munich, 2012, p. 17ff.
- 5 Rosalind Krauss, “Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” in: *October*, no. 8, 1979, pp. 30–44.

- 6 Mary Miss, untitled (Responses), in: Spyros Papapetros/Julian Rose (eds.), *Retracing the Expanded Field: Encounters between Art and Architecture*, Cambridge, UK/London 2014, p. 180.
- 7 Zoë Ryan, “Interview with Mary Miss,” in: *Log*, no. 9, 2007, pp. 111–18.
- 8 Luce Irigaray, “How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?,” in: *Key Writings*, London/New York 2004, pp. 132–33.
- 9 The work “Lean In 1–3” (2016) depicted here was created for the “Nordkystens Kunst Triennale/Northcoast Art Triennial” in Gribskov, Denmark. The work is comprised of three steel structures painted in flesh colors and installed at selected positions within the landscape, functioning as markers of this environment as well as being available for use by visitors to the exhibition as sculptures for viewing and smoking. “The steel structures are prefabricated leaning rails which are usually installed in public places like transit stops or waiting areas. Like benches they are part of an urban furnishing but refer even more to a status of inbetweenness: not properly sitting, neither standing, leaning rails are used by people to take a small break and to relax while waiting. Detached from the public realm they are originally planned for [...] they primarily seem to foreground their peripheral surroundings as much as they are foregrounded by exactly this periphery [...] For visitors in favor of smoking, small ashtrays are fixed to the steel structures.” (From “Unknown Landscape: Nordkystens Kunst Triennale/Northcoast Art Triennial, Gribskov,” exh. cat., 2016.)

immer schon alle gemeinsam an, wie sie auch die Verwendung und Transformation von Materialien durch Technik und Technologie als Teil des Prozesses sieht. Meine Anschlüsse sind genau hier. Sie zeigen sich in Skulpturen für Vereinzelung und in Orten kollektiver Wahrnehmung, in temporären Eingriffen an architektonischen Rändern und Erweiterungen von vorhandenem Raum, in recycelten Stoffen und im Einsatz von Konstruktionsmaterial, Fleischfarben, Aschenbechern und Leder, in der Adaption historischer Milieus und der Aktualisierung geerbter Ideen, in dem Versuch, körperliche Erfahrung in Text zu übersetzen, und in der Suche nach Imaginationen für den abgeschafften öffentlichen Raum.⁹

Anmerkungen

- 1 Dieser Text knüpft an eine Serie von Arbeiten mit gleichem Titel an, die mit der Ausstellung „Mirjam Thomann: Women and Space“, Galerie Krobath, Wien, 20. Januar bis 2. Februar 2016, begann.
- 2 Zit. nach „Joan Didion. The Center Will Not Hold“, 2017, Regie: Griffin Dunne, 78 min.
- 3 Zu sehen in: „Spiral Jetty“, 1970, Regie: Robert Smithson, 36 min.
- 4 Vgl. Philipp Kaiser/Miwon Kwon, „Ends of the Earth and Back“, in: *Ends of the Earth. Land Art to 1974*, Ausst.-Kat., The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles/Haus der Kunst, München, 2012. S. 17ff.
- 5 Rosalind Krauss, „Sculpture in the Expanded Field“, in: *October*, 8, 1979, S. 30–44.
- 6 Mary Miss, ohne Titel (Responses), in: Spyros Papapetros/Julian Rose (Hg.), *Retracing the Expanded Field. Encounters Between Art and Architecture*, Cambridge/London 2014, S. 180.
- 7 Zoë Ryan, „Interview With Mary Miss“, in: *Log*, 9, 2007, S. 111–118.
- 8 Luce Irigaray, „How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?“, in: *Key Writings*, London/New York 2004, S. 132f.
- 9 Die hier abgebildete Arbeit „Lean In 1–3“ (2016) entstand anlässlich der Nordkystens Kunst Triennale/Northcoast Art Triennial in Gribskov, Dänemark. Die Arbeit besteht aus drei fleischfarben lackierten Stahlstrukturen, die an ausgewählten Orten in der Landschaft installiert wurden

und sowohl als Markierung dieser Umgebungen funktionierten als auch von den Besuchern/Besucherinnen der Ausstellung als Warte- und Rauchskulpturen genutzt werden konnten: „The steel structures are prefabricated leaning rails which are usually installed in public places like transit stops or waiting areas. Like benches they are part of a urban furnishing but refer even more to a status of inbetweenness: not properly sitting, neither standing, leaning rails are used by people to take a small break and to relax while waiting. Detached from the public realm they are originally planned for [...] they primary seem to foreground their peripheral surrounding as much as they are foregrounded by exactly this periphery [...] For visitors in favor of smoking, small ashtrays are fixed to the steel structures.“ (aus: *Unknown Landscape. Nordkystens Kunst Triennale/Northcoast Art Triennial*, Gribskov, Ausst.-Kat., 2016).

NAGEL GALERIE DRAXLER

Mirjam Thomann
Better Living

We offer you a warm welcome. On this planning page, you will find useful information for arranging your trip, including getting here, finding your way around and to our show—we wish you a memorable stay.

Dear Suitcase,

Of course it's strange writing to you. You're just a suitcase. But I'm concerned about you—I've had to deal with you for so long. Ever since I moved out, I've been pulling you behind me, having you stand beside me, you're waiting for the next employment or the return. I hear you all hours of the day and at night, as well. And I watch you whenever I get the chance. I've noticed that many people don't have a good grip on you. You often topple over if you haven't been packed well, your wheels break if you're too cheap, or the zipper jams if you're too fat. Even when you do your job smoothly, moving around with you in one's hand often looks strange. As if you were always standing in our way while simultaneously bringing us ahead. There's this commercial in which a woman rides you like a horse, plays you like a guitar, hangs you over her shoulder like a handbag, and hugs you like a monstrous friend.

I need you. They want to make us believe that mobility is a game, an almost light-footed affair, but of course we both know that isn't true. At times, our movements appear nothing less than choreographed, like a disciplined workflow. I really can't remember the last time I spontaneously broke character or stepped out of line with you. The ideal of movement is apparently different than what we actually experience. Why is that so? Are there too many barriers? Does mobility love ambivalence? Is it an endless interplay of relief and hardship, leeway and restriction, dynamism and interruption, transgression and limitation? Many places spontaneously come to mind where there's no way forward, where motion comes to a halt—for example, in waiting zones, deportation camps or border regions. And then there's the projection onto the potential objects in the suitcase. In the press, there were recently two very different examples: an eight-year-old boy smuggled across the border from Morocco to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, whose huddled silhouette appeared in a luggage X-ray scan, and a bomb. But the latter was just a rhetorical question on the front page of a news magazine next to the photo of a suitcase left behind on a station platform.

Dear suitcase, you are the zero point of temporal and symbolic change of location, of an original moment after which all familiarity is lost and change and difference begin shaping life. A gallerist interviewed for a travel magazine went on record as saying: "I'm definitely a different person when I travel. Usually I'm really polite, but the first thing I tell the stewardess is: 'Please don't wake me up'. And then another one will come and ask: 'Don't you want champagne?' I'm like 'No, I don't want your fucking champagne!'" – You'd really say "fucking champagne?" – Yeah, well... (laughs) maybe. I curse a lot, it just comes out. And then the next one will come and ask 'But what about the biscuits?' And I'm like 'Fuck your biscuits!' Keep your goddam biscuits! I want to sleep! I haven't slept in three days!" – Poor transnational professional assholes.

Better living is just a stale promise. That's why I like to withdraw to the world of ideas. I imagine the movement of people, thoughts, images, objects, news, waste products, and money. That reminds me of the paradoxical state of always to a certain extent remaining at the place one started off. Movement is a state in which individuals are at once present and absent at a place, or are simultaneously in another place. One then has a relationship to both places. But one shouldn't project all that much onto this state, I once read, neither being euphoric about movement nor scandalizing it are appropriate—one should instead understand it. A famous philosopher sees it similarly, but he also says: "My intensities are without exception motionless."

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In his view, travels always have something of a false break about them, a break that is obtained too cheaply. He cites Beckett: "We're stupid but not to the point that we travel for pleasure," and adds with a peal of laughter that most people travel to find a father. And they even admit it – to find a father! Haha!

One always wished to come back changed. Maybe that's why "global" rhymes especially well with "legal", "mental" and of course "fatal". At any rate, it doesn't make sense to grasp you as a metaphor. You stand neither for the new beginning nor for the tragic end. Your narration is different: Something is always permanently in motion here and you have to do with that. You are a language and dynamism itself. You are what is out of the ordinary, out of the context and the invisible net of belonging. You are the feeling of sadness, sadness at leaving, sadness of parting and of memory. You are matter and mind. You are poetry: a movement, a process, a melancholy, the promise of learning something new, of getting rid of old knowledge, and forbidden nostalgia. You are the material reality of displacement, of flight, of exile and migration. You are the past that cannot be exchanged and the future that one cannot imagine.

But the world has long been explored, processed and conveyed. One click and we know where the journey leads to. We don't even have to take it ourselves anymore. Perhaps that's the newest luxury, the ultimate privilege: sedentariness. Don't move. Don't even travel failingly, have the entire world before your eyes and be everywhere without moving. In one way or the other we traverse space and time, circulate faster, and are today here with you more or less by chance.

See you soon,
Mirjam

Los Angeles, Berlin 2015

Sources:

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Translated by Karl Hoffmann

NAGEL GALERIE DRAXLER

Mirjam Thomann
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We offer you a warm welcome. On this planning page, you will find useful information for arranging your trip, including getting here, finding your way around and to our show—we wish you a memorable stay.

Lieber Koffer,

natürlich ist es seltsam, an dich zu schreiben. Du bist ja ein Koffer. Aber ich mache mir Gedanken über dich, ich habe schon so lange mit dir zu tun. Seitdem ich auszog, ziehe ich dich hinter mir her, habe ich dich neben mir stehen, wartest du auf den nächsten Einsatz oder die Rückkehr. Ich höre dich zu jeder Tageszeit und auch nachts. Und ich beobachte dich, wann immer ich Gelegenheit dazu habe. Mir fällt auf, dass viele Leute dich nicht im Griff haben. Du fällst oft um, wenn du schlecht gepackt wurdest, deine Rollen gehen kaputt, wenn du zu billig warst, oder dein Verschluss klemmt, wenn du zu dick bist. Selbst wenn du reibungslos deine Dienste erledigst, sieht Bewegung mit dir an der Hand oft komisch aus. Als würdest du uns immer schon im Weg stehen, während du uns gleichzeitig nach vorne bringst. Es gibt diese Werbung, da reitet eine Frau auf dir wie auf einem Pferd, spielt dich wie eine Gitarre, hängt dich über die Schulter wie eine Handtasche und umarmt dich wie einen monströsen Freund.

Ich brauche dich. Zwar will man uns weismachen, Mobilität sei ein Spiel, eine geradezu leichtfüßige Angelegenheit, aber wir beide wissen natürlich, dass das nicht stimmt. Manchmal erscheinen mir unsere Bewegungen geradezu choreografiert, wie ein disziplinierter Arbeitsablauf. Ich kann mich wirklich nicht daran erinnern, wann ich zuletzt mit dir spontan aus der Rolle gefallen oder aus der Reihe getanzt wäre. Das Ideal von Bewegung ist offenbar anders als das, was wir wirklich erleben. Woran liegt es? Gibt es zu viele Barrieren? Liebt die Mobilität Ambivalenz? Ist sie ein ewiges Zusammenspiel aus Erleichterung und Erschwernis, Gewährleistung und Restriktion, Dynamik und Unterbrechung, Entgrenzung und Eingrenzung? Es fallen einem ja auch spontan viele Orte ein, an denen gar nichts mehr geht, an denen die Bewegung stoppt, z. B. in Wartezonen, Abschiebelagern oder in Grenzgebieten. Und dann gibt es die Projektion auf die potentiellen Objekte, die sich in einem Koffer befinden. In der Presse gab es in letzter Zeit zwei sehr unterschiedliche Beispiele: ein achtjähriger Junge, der über die Grenze von Marokko in die spanische Exklave Ceuta geschmuggelt wurde, und dessen zusammengekauerte Silhouette bei einem Gepäckröntgenscan zum Vorschein kam, und eine Bombe. Letztere stand aber nur als rhetorische Frage auf dem Titelblatt eines Nachrichtenmagazins neben dem Foto eines am Bahnsteig zurückgelassenen Koffers.

Du bist der Nullpunkt, lieber Koffer, der zeitlichen wie symbolischen Ortsveränderung, eines ursprünglichen Augenblicks, nach dem alle Vertrautheit verloren geht und Wechsel und Differenz das Leben zu formen beginnen. Ein Galerist, der für ein Reisemagazin interviewt wurde, gab zu Protokoll: „I'm definitely a different person when I travel. Usually I'm really polite, but the first thing I tell the stewardess is: 'Please don't wake me up'. And then another one will come and ask: 'Don't you want champagne?' I'm like 'No, I don't want your fucking champagne!'“ – You'd really say „fucking champagne?“ – Yeah, well... (laughs) maybe. I curse a lot, it just comes out. And then the next one will come and ask 'But what about the biscuits?' And I'm like 'Fuck your biscuits!' Keep your goddam biscuits! I want to sleep! I haven't slept in three days!“ – Poor transnational professional assholes. Das bessere Leben ist doch ein olles Versprechen. Ich ziehe mich deswegen gerne in die Welt der Ideen zurück. Ich imaginiere Bewegung von Menschen, Gedanken, Bildern, Gegenständen, Nachrichten,

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Abfallprodukten und Geld. Das erinnert mich an den paradoxen Zustand, dass man ja auch immer ein Stück weit an dem Ort verbleibt, von dem man ausgegangen ist. Bewegung ist ein Zustand, an dem Individuen an einem Ort anwesend und zugleich abwesend sind, bzw. sich zugleich auch an einem anderen Ort aufhalten. Man hat dann eine Beziehung zu beiden Orten. Aber man sollte auf diesen Zustand nicht zu sehr projizieren, habe ich gelesen, weder Euphorie noch Skandalisierung der Bewegung seien angebracht, es ginge ja viel mehr darum, sie zu verstehen. Ein berühmter Philosoph sieht das ähnlich. Allerdings sagt er auch: „Meine Intensitäten sind ausnahmslos bewegungslos“. Er findet Reisen habe immer etwas von einem falschen Bruch, einem Bruch, der zu billig erkaufte sei. Er zitiert Beckett: „Wir sind zwar bescheuert, aber nicht so bescheuert, zu unserem Vergnügen zu reisen“, und fügt unter schallendem Gelächter hinzu, dass die meisten ja reisen würden, um einen Vater zu finden. Und das auch noch zugeben – einen Vater finden! Haha!

Man wünscht sich doch immer, verändert zurückzukommen. Vielleicht reimt sich „global“ deswegen insbesondere auf „legal“, „egal“, „mental“ und natürlich „fatal“. Es macht auf jeden Fall keinen Sinn, dich als Metapher zu verstehen. Weder stehst du für den neuen Anfang, noch das tragische Ende. Deine Narration geht anders: Irgendwas bewegt sich hier permanent und du hast damit zu tun. Du bist eine Sprache und die Dynamik selbst. Du bist das, was in einem Moment der Unterbrechung aus dem gewohnten Rahmen fällt, aus dem Zusammenhang und dem unsichtbaren Netz der Zugehörigkeit. Du bist das Gefühl der Traurigkeit, *sadness at leaving*, des Abschieds und des Gedächtnisses. Du bist Stoff und Geist. Du bist Poesie: eine Bewegung, ein Prozess, eine Melancholie, die Verheißung, Neues zu lernen, altes Wissen loszuwerden und verbotene Nostalgie. Du bist materielle Realität der Vertreibung, der Flucht, des Exils und der Migration. Du bist die Vergangenheit, die nicht eintauschbar ist, und die Zukunft, die man sich nicht vorstellen kann.

Dabei ist die Welt längst erschlossen, aufbereitet und vermittelt. Ein Klick und wir wissen, wohin die Reise geht. Wir müssen sie dafür nicht mal mehr selbst antreten. Vielleicht ist das der neueste Luxus, das ultimative Privileg: Sesshaftigkeit. Nicht rühren. Nicht mal mehr scheiternd reisen, die ganze Welt vor Augen haben und ohne Bewegung überall sein. So oder so durchqueren wir Raum und Zeit, zirkulieren schneller und sind heute irgendwie nur zufällig mit dir hier.

Bis bald,
Mirjam

Los Angeles, Berlin 2015

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Yellow Knows No Limits

Notes on Color as an Infinite Attribute by Mirjam Thomann

I came upon color just recently. Color never really meant much to me before. I simply found color unnecessary in my works. As a medium, it appeared too vague, too unspecific. And making a decision in favor of a certain shade of color seemed to be purely arbitrary, or – following a specific color theory – as ideologically overshadowed. I usually dispensed with color altogether, except for white and black, which mark the extremes of any color chart and, in the exhibition space as white cube and black box, additionally stand for the way spaces are structured.

For me, black and white function as reliable points of reference to establish spatial relations, meaning to expand or interrupt space. Therefore my use of white and black inevitably results from dealing with the question of how I can create installations in regard their context – the respective exhibition space – in the first place. In my works, other colors mostly appear as mere reflections, for example, caused by persons moving through the installations or other objects reflected in the space. Being such a *mediated* element, color plays a rather fleeting role in my works, as reflected movement and remaining a momentary manifestation.

In the case of “Shapes, Dimensions, Possibilities”, my dealing with the immediate context of the installation was expanded by the architecture of the urban space in Utrecht. I made use of the color selection of Rietveld, to whose architecture my installation refers. I was particularly interested in the interplay between color and architectural function, and in transferring both elements to a spatial model based more on the reception of the Rietveld-Schröder House than on its actual shape. It appears as if Rietveld didn’t have painterly ambitions in the traditional sense. Instead, he intended to create a direct relationship between space and color, and therefore fell back on the three primary colors, in addition to black, white and gray. Thus, he decisively contributed, like other De Stijl activists, to the cultural coding of red, yellow and blue. Although the approach of repeating these visual codes was in line with my concept, it failed to answer one of my questions: What is it exactly that I am working with when I work with color?

In the video interview *Abécédaire*, Gilles Deleuze says that his relation to the history of philosophy can be vividly compared with the relation of van Gogh's work to color. Van Gogh's early work, he explains, is dominated by the so-called potato colors, earthen hues that do not shine at all. The painter didn't limit himself to this range of colors because he found it to be so decorative – which it quite obviously is not – but because he didn't dare to deal with color, because he wasn't able to choose among the infinite possibilities of its application. Color made van Gogh all but "panic-stricken", it caused "a great tremble", says Deleuze. "For a painter, it verges on insanity to take up the challenge of color, it is a real threat to reason." So, one needs many years of experience before taking up color, and it is an extremely tricky affair. Deleuze states that this is quite similar in the case of philosophy. "Many precautions must be made before getting involved in philosophy. I would say, before conquering the philosophical color – and in philosophy, the concept is the color – before arriving at the point where one invents concepts, a lot of work is required!" Color, then, possesses a preparatory function and is simultaneously a value in itself. And it allows us to "take something up".

But it is hard to grasp. In his *Remarks on Color*, Ludwig Wittgenstein writes: "When we're asked 'What do 'red', 'blue', 'black', 'white' mean?' we can, of course, immediately point to things which have these colors, - but that's all we can do: our ability to explain their meaning goes no further."¹ It is a consensus among scientists that color does not exist as a physical entity. "Color is actually part of our perception, rather than something we perceive,"² writes neuroscientist Dr. Beau Lotto. Classifying colors according to spiritual and scientific rules, as has been done in numerous color theories, seems to say more about the desire for an hierarchical order than about color itself. "Things don't hit us with meaning, we construct the meaning."³ (Lotto) Therefore, the way we react to colors is always already based on what we know or expect – color is less a fact than part of a collective affect. Beside the attempts to write linear and objective treatises about the order of colors, there are also writings on color composed in the form of notes, for example, Derek Jarman's *Chroma* and *Remarks on Color* by Wittgenstein. The textual form of small observations and aphorisms says a lot about the subject matter at hand. The

¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Color*, University of California Press, 1977, I 1

² Charlie Porter, "Men in Color", in: *Fantastic Man*, Issue No 10, Autumn and Winter 2009, p. 102

³ Ibid.

subjective and expressive power of affecting, which emanates from color, seems to be unsuitable for a causal line of argumentation. Color is neither immediate nor systematic, but is also not free of rules.

This is the field of tension in which Joseph Vogl, following Deleuze, localizes the use of red, blue and yellow in Godard's *Lé Mepris* from 1963. Here, color enters into a virtual connection with cars, garage doors, bicycles, towels, sweaters, neckties, and ashtrays. "Nice yellow color," says Fritz Lang in a short scene in which he passes by Francesca who is leaning in a light yellow bathrobe against a house wall with peeling red paint. The primary colors form the order of the film, they recur time and again, are transferred from objects to persons and vice versa, they are either in motion (the blue ocean, the red car, the woman wearing a yellow sweater etc.) or static (the thrown red towel, the red sofa etc.). Red, blue and yellow have no fixed attributions in *Lé Mepris*, they go beyond characters and situations and creep into all narrative levels of the movie. They seem to lead a life of their own, they belong to a certain object or person only for a temporary period of time. It is futile to attribute a metaphoric function to them, because they are always only temporarily charged with meaning. "Color," says Vogl, "is not under the regime of the signifier", yet it is not without expression. On the one hand, it is "a trait, a feature or a symbol" and, on the other, "a shining surface, an absorbing veil or objectless monochromatism."⁴ In the case of Godard, color detaches itself from both objects and metaphors, its sensuous intensity creates a fragile reference between what is displayed and what is seen. Color, then, does not qualify a certain state of being but is, at best, an infinitive attribute. It insists on posing an open question. Joseph Vogl: "Color is not the feature of an object, not the final point of reference, not what can be shown; but it is also not a metaphor or the combinatory element of a code – in short, it is what cannot appear or be realized in the relationality of a signifying structure."⁵ A sign, an interruption, "an interval", in Vogl's words, which in its incompleteness resists metaphORIZING and generates an affect. "Thus, an aesthetic presents itself that places its stake not on bodies, figures, signifiers, and interpretations, but on affects, ideal events and non-corporeal

⁴ Joseph Vogl, "Schöne gelbe Farbe", in: Gilles Deleuze – Fluchtlinien der Philosophie, Friedrich Balke, Joseph Vogl (eds.), Munich 1996, p. 253

⁵ Ibid., p. 257

effects,"⁶ Vogl continues. They are signs that do not impart meaning but signify – and along with these signs, events start to evolve.

This is perhaps similar to the hope with which Rodchenko introduced the monochrome into painting as a sign, devoid of all figurative or abstract relations. His legendary triptych, *Pure Colors: Red, Yellow and Blue* from 1921, liberated color from its spiritual, emotional and psychological associations. Instead of charging color with meaning, Rodchenko brought the examination of the materiality of color to the fore – with color against color, so to speak. As with Godard, the primary colors were detached from their representative function and meant to refer only to themselves. The project of the historical avant-garde – to create concepts for a "collective culture" – not only intended to abolish art's elitist status in society, but also to demystify production. *Pure Colors: Red, Yellow and Blue* is based on a conceptually strict approach that was to be transparent and comprehensible for everyone. In his text, *The Primary Colors for the Second Time: A Paradigm Repetition of the Neo-Avant-Garde*, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh describes how this radical claim became poetry within just a few decades. Although the method of producing monochromes – in the case of Yves Klein in a structural manner – was identical with its predecessors in formal and material terms, Klein's deep-blue and golden-colored surfaces had an entirely different effect than what Rodchenko had hoped for with "de-personalized" pictures. They turned into fetishes, enticed intensive viewing and brought the individual and atmospheric features of all kinds of painting to the fore. Instead of being a means to transfer art, as a social practice, to the reality of everyday life, the monochrome suddenly became part of the spectacle: "Klein's triptych," Buchloh writes, "resuscitated the idea of art as a transcendental negation and esoteric experience precisely at that moment when the mass culture of corporate capitalism was in the process of dismantling all vestiges of bourgeois culture's individual experience and liquidating the oppositional functions of high art."⁷

What becomes clear here, at the latest, is that color is culture, and that context is everything. Falling back on commercial color charts – which I am at the moment especially interested in and which also played an important role in my current work, –

⁶ Ibid., p. 265

⁷ Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time: A Paradigm Repetition of the Neo-Avant-Garde", *October*, No 37, Summer 1986, p. 52

with the aim of rationalizing and standardizing colors, does not mean that the aesthetic effect is rational or standardized. The use of color as an industrially produced readymade offers the possibility of a double bottom. Red, yellow and blue, as they can be seen here, make reference to the Do-it-yourself center from where they come, to paint as a mass-cultural product, to the way Rietveld used color in architecture, to the claim of creating a relation between the individual and the collective, to the modernist style program of replacing the "brown world" with a new world, and so forth. At the same time, red, yellow and blue make reference to themselves and to reference as such. There is no work with pure color, only with color as pure difference.

WARHOL, ANDY
MIRJAM THOMANN



Andy Warhols anekdotische Auskünfte über das Pop-Phänomen im New York der sechziger Jahre beginnen mit einer ebenso prophetischen wie koketten Selbsteinschätzung: „If I'd gone ahead and died ten years ago, I'd probably be a cult figure today.“¹ Obwohl er Valerie Solanas' Angriff überlebte, war Warhol zu dieser Zeit natürlich längst ein Star. Heute, zwanzig Jahre nach seinem Tod, ist sein Ruhm selbst mit Superlativen nicht mehr zu fassen und seine künstlerische Produktion noch für jede thematische Ausstellung oder kunsttheoretische Debatte von Interesse – kaum jemand wird so häufig als Referenz angeführt wie Andy Warhol: Eine junge Künstler/innen-Generation, die für eine Weiterentwicklung von Aneignungsverfahren steht, beruft sich auf Warhol als Protagonisten einer repräsentationskritischen Überführung massenmedialer Bilder und banaler Gegenstände der kapitalistischen Konsumgesellschaft in die „high culture“. Im Museumsbetrieb hingegen wird Warhol zumeist als „klassischer“ Malerfürst gehandelt, dessen Bilder im Extremfall für Argumentationen herhalten müssen, die in ihnen katholische Moral thematisiert sehen wollen. Dass er als Künstler einerseits seine eigene Involviertheit in den Kunstbetrieb mit dem Ziel sozialer Anerkennung und ökonomischen Erfolgs vorantrieb und gleichzeitig den Konventionen des Marktes beispielsweise mit seinen Underground-filmen und dem bohemehaften Factory-Leben einiges zumutete, wird als aktuell relevante „marktreflexive“ Position diskutiert; seit einiger Zeit wird

die Bedeutung des Warhol'schen Werks und seiner Rezeption im Kampf queerer Identitätspolitikern ebenso hervorgehoben.²

Die Vielschichtigkeit und das Ausmaß solcher Bezugnahmen und Vereinnahmungen lassen sich – neben der Tatsache, dass Warhol in extrem viele Projekte verwickelt war und mit ebenso vielen unterschiedlichen Medien gearbeitet hat – wohl auch darauf zurückführen, dass Warhol fast jede Frage mit einem programmatischen „No“, „Uhhh, I don't know ...“ oder auch „Well, I'm not sure ...“ beantwortet hat und damit eine weitaus größere Projektionsfläche zur Verfügung stellte als ein sich selbst eindeutig zwecks Rezeptionssteuerung positionierender Künstler. Exemplarisch für Warhols Verweigerung einer deutlichen Stellungnahme ist ein absurdes Gesprächsfragment von 1965, das hierzulande sogar auf Kunstpostkarten gedruckt wird, die sonst eher die aktivistischen Sprüche Joseph Beuys' wiedergeben: „Do you think pop art is ...“ – „No.“ – „What?“ – „No.“ – „Do you think pop art is ...“ – „No ... no I don't.“³ Egal mit welcher Herangehensweise Interviewer versuchten, dem Superstar ein klärendes Statement zu entlocken, die Fragen stellte am Ende fast immer Warhol selbst, mit schrulligen Aussetzern brachte er stets das auf, was er offensichtlich für wichtig hielt, zum Beispiel: „What color are your eyes?“⁴

Warhol stand mitten im Zentrum, kümmerte sich um seine Selbstdarstellung und künstlerische Produktion gleichermaßen und entzog sich einer eindeutigen Bedeutungsstiftung. Dieser Form der ambivalenten Involvement, die weder zustimmend noch ablehnend, weder total affirmativ noch distanziert ist, ermöglicht nicht nur, wie bereits angeführt, vielseitige Bezugnahmen, sondern steht auch für ein Identifikationsmodell, das vor allem in Warhols Werk selbst angelegt ist.

José Esteban Muñoz⁵ wendet den Begriff der „Desidentifikation“ auf Warhols disparates Werk an, in dem das Verhältnis zwischen Künstler und angeeignetem Material zwischen Indifferenz und Fansein zu changieren scheint, und beschreibt eine entsprechende subjekttheoretische Position, die von einem schmalen Grat zwischen Kritik und Teilhabe ausgeht. Im Gegensatz zum öffentlichen Akt heroischen Aufbegehrens bezeichnet „Desidentifikation“ ein in gesellschaftliche Herrschaftszusammenhänge eingelassenes Verhältnis, das sowohl gegen subversiv aufgeladene Widerstandskonzepte gewendet werden kann als auch gegen eine reibungslose Vereinnahmung in subjektivierende Kalküle und Machttechnologien. Statt geläufige Symbole zu verwerfen, werden sie in einem Akt der Aneignung transfiguriert und mit neuen, minoritär codierten Inhalten gefüllt. Matthew Tinkcom⁶ beschreibt diesen Vorgang anhand Warhols Arbeiten als *campe* Ästhetik, die einen Rezeptionsmodus herstellt, der queere Belange in offizielle Repräsentationsformen einschließt, ohne sie eindeutig als solche zu erkennen zu geben – eine Deutung, die dem homophoben politischen und queeren sozialen Umfeld Rechnung trägt, in dem Warhol lebte. Gerade die Rückgriffe auf Warhol, die eine Reintegration seines Werks in ein modernistisches Malereiprogramm unternehmen, müssen, wie Douglas Crimp bemerkt hat,⁷

zwangsläufig scheitern. Denn sie kann nur unter der Bedingung funktionieren, dass die identitätspolitischen Parameter, die seiner Arbeit immanent sind, geleugnet werden.

Warhol wandte sich nie gegen den kommerziellen Mainstream, gerade seine nach 1967 produzierten Filme lehnten sich an gängige Hollywood-Formate an. „Lonesome Cowboys“ zum Beispiel ist einerseits klassischer Western mit schönen Männern und starken Pferden, der andererseits die sexuell aufgeladenen Sujets des Undergroundfilms der sechziger Jahre aufgreift. Die Pop-Art-spezifische Affirmation der Omnipräsenz von Hollywood lässt sich als eine Form der Partizipation beschreiben, die in der abweichenden Wiederholung normierten Materials besteht. Auch wenn die Ausläufer von Camp wiederum zu einem verwertbaren Glamour geworden sind, ermöglicht es diese Wiederholungsstrategie, widerstandsloses Aufgehen ebenso wie Selbstmarginalisierung zu hinterfragen – und bietet somit auch aus der Warte einer aktuellen künstlerischen Produktion, die ihre eigenen Bedingungen zu reflektieren und thematisieren versucht, elementare Parameter. Weniger als ein Instrument der Kritik, das frei zur Verfügung steht, ist die desidentifikatorische Praxis Warhols eine Form immanenter Emanzipation, die nicht zuletzt Platz für das eigene Vergnügen schafft.

Anmerkungen:

- 1 Andy Warhol und Pat Hackett, „Popism. The Warhol '60s“, New York 1980, S. 3.
- 2 Vgl. z. B. Kelly Walker, „My Pop“, in: *Artforum*, Oktober 2004, S. 173; Heiner Bastian (Hrsg.), „Andy Warhol Retrospektive“, Ausstellungskatalog Neue Nationalgalerie, Köln 2001; Isabelle Graw, „Der Gefallsüchtige“, in: *Die Tageszeitung*, 22. 2. 2007; Douglas Crimp, „Getting the Warhol we deserve“, in: *Texte zur Kunst*, Nr. 35, September 1999, S. 45–65.
- 3 Joseph Freemann, „Andy Warhol Interviews Bay Times Reporter“, in: *I'll be Your Mirror. The Selected Interviews by Andy Warhol*, hrsg. v. Kenneth Goldsmith, New York 2004, S. 119.
- 4 Joseph Freemann, „Andy Warhol Interviews Bay Times Reporter“, a. a. O., S. 119.
- 5 José Esteban Muñoz, „Famous and Dandy Like B. 'n' Andy. Race, Pop and Basquiat“, in: Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley, José Esteban Muñoz (Hrsg.), *Pop Out. Queer Warhol*, Durham/London 1996, S. 144–179.
- 6 Matthew Tinkcom, „Warhol's Camp“, in: Fabio Cleto (Hrsg.), *Camp. Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject. A Reader*, Michigan 1999, S. 344–354, erstveröffentlicht in: Colin Mac Cabe, Mark Francis, Peter Wollen (Hg.), *Who is Andy Warhol?*, London/Pittsburgh 1997, S. 107–115.
- 7 Douglas Crimp, „Der Kampf geht weiter. Ein E-Mail-Austausch mit Douglas Crimp über Appropriation Art“, in: *Texte zur Kunst*, Nr. 46, Juni 2002, S. 35–43, hier: S. 39.

WARHOL, ANDY

Andy Warhol's anecdotal remarks about the pop phenomenon in sixties New York begin with an equally prophetic and coquettish self-assessment: “If I'd gone ahead and died ten years ago, I'd probably be a cult figure today.”¹ Although he did survive Valerie Solanas's attack, Warhol had at the time of course long been a superstar. Today, twenty years after his death, his fame is impossible to comprehend even in superlatives, and there is no thematic exhibition or art-theoretical debate for which his artistic production is not of interest – virtually no one is adduced as a point of reference

as often as Andy Warhol is: a young generation of artists that stand for a continuing development of procedures of appropriation invoke Warhol as the protagonist of a critique of representation by force of the transposition of mass-media imagery and banal objects from capitalist consumer society into "high culture". In the museum business, by contrast, Warhol is most often traded as a "classical" master of painting, and his paintings are, in an extreme case, made to serve arguments that wish to discern catholic morals addressed in them. That Warhol was, on the one hand, an artist who actively pursued his involvement in the art business, aiming for social recognition and economic success, and, on the other hand, more than once stretched the conventions of the market to the limits, as he did with his underground films and the Bohemian life at the factory, is currently being discussed as a "market-reflective" position; the importance of Warhol's work and its reception for the battles of queer identity politics has also been emphasized for some time.²

The fact aside that Warhol was involved in an extraordinary number of projects and worked in just as many media, the complexity and the extent of such references to and appropriations of Warhol can probably be traced also to his way of answering almost any question with a programmatic "No", "Uhhh, I don't know...", or else "Well, I'm not sure...", and thus offering a much larger screen for projections than artists who position themselves unambiguously in order to control the reception of their work. Exemplary of Warhol's refusal to adopt a distinct position is an absurd fragment from a 1965 conversation, which is even printed, in Germany, on art postcards that otherwise usually bear Joseph Beuys's activist dicta: "Do you think pop art is..." – "No." – "What?" – "No." – "Do you think pop art is..." – "No... no I don't."³ No matter which approach interviewers took in the attempt to worm a clarifying statement out of the superstar, it was in the end almost always Warhol who asked the questions, and with wacky conversational blanks, he always brought up the subjects that he obviously thought important, such as "what color are your eyes?"⁴

Warhol stood at the very center, managing with equal attention his self-presentation and his artistic production, and eluded any imposition of unequivocal meaning. This form of ambivalent involvement, one that is neither approval nor rejection, neither entirely affirmative nor distanced, not only permits, as discussed, references in many directions, but also stands for a model of identification that is implicitly present most importantly in Warhol's work itself.

José Esteban Muñoz⁵ applies the term "disidentification" to Warhol's disparate work, in which the relation between the artist and the material he has appropriated seems to oscillate between indifference and fandom, and describes a corresponding subject-theoretical position that presumes that a fine line separates critique and participation. In contradistinction to the public act of heroic rebellion, "disidentification" denotes a relation embedded in social structures of domination that can be turned equally

against conceptions of resistance charged with subversion and against a smooth inclusion by subjectivizing calculations and technologies of power. Current symbolisms, instead of being rejected outright, are transfigured in an act of appropriation and filled with new content that bears minoritarian encodings. Matthew Tinkcom⁶ describes this process, using the example of Warhol's work, as a camp aesthetic producing a mode of reception that includes queer issues in official forms of representation without disclosing them unambiguously as such – a reading that takes the homophobic political and the queer social contexts of Warhol's life into account. Particularly those recourses to Warhol that undertake a reintegration of his work into a modernist program of painting cannot but fail, as Douglas Crimp has remarked.⁷ For such reintegration is successful only under the condition that it denies the identity-political parameters immanent to Warhol's work.

Warhol never turned against the commercial mainstream; especially his films made after 1967 borrowed from current Hollywood formats. "Lonesome Cowboys", for instance, is, on the one hand, a classical western with handsome men and strong horses and, on the other hand, draws on the sexually charged themes of sixties underground film. The affirmation of Hollywood's omnipresence specific to pop art can be described as a form of participation that consists in the deviant repetition of standardized materials. Even if camp developed, in the long run, into another form of commercially viable glamour, this strategy of repetition permits a critical interrogation of both unresisting immersion and self-marginalization – and thus offers fundamental parameters also from the perspective of a contemporary artistic production that seeks to reflect upon and address its own conditions. Rather than being a freely available instrument of critique, Warhol's disidentificatory practice is a form of immanent emancipation that creates not least a space for its own pleasure.

(Translation: Gerrit Jackson)

Notes

- 1 Andy Warhol und Pat Hackett, "Popism. The Warhol '60s", New York 1980, p. 3.
- 2 Cf. e.g. Kelly Walker, "My Pop", in: *Artforum*, October 2004, p. 173; Heiner Bastian (ed.), "Andy Warhol Retrospektive", exh. cat., Neue Nationalgalerie, Köln 2001; Isabelle Graw, "Der Gefallsüchtige," in: *Die Tageszeitung*, 2/22/2007; Douglas Crimp, "Getting the Warhol we deserve", in: *Texte zur Kunst*, No. 35, September 1999, pp. 45–65.
- 3 Joseph Freemann, "Andy Warhol Interviews Bay Times Reporter," in: *I'll be Your Mirror. The Selected Interviews by Andy Warhol*, ed. by Kenneth Goldsmith, New York 2004, p. 119.
- 4 Joseph Freemann, "Andy Warhol Interviews Bay Times Reporter", loc. cit., p. 119.
- 5 José Esteban Muñoz, "Famous and Dandy Like B. 'n' Andy: Race, Pop and Basquiat", in: Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley, José Esteban Muñoz (eds.), *Pop Out: Queer Warhol*, Durham/London 1996, pp. 144–179.
- 6 Matthew Tinkcom, "Warhol's Camp", in: Fabio Cleto (ed.), *Camp. Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader*, Michigan 1999, pp. 344–354, first published in: Colin McCabe, Mark Francis, Peter Wollen (eds.), *Who is Andy Warhol?*, London/Pittsburgh 1997, pp. 107–115.
- 7 Douglas Crimp, "Der Kampf geht weiter. Ein E-Mail-Austausch mit Douglas Crimp über Appropriation Art", in: *Texte zur Kunst*, Nr. 46, 2002, pp. 35–43; here: p. 39.

gien und Verbürokratisierung den Traum vom Superstudium garantiert nicht erfüllt. Auch hier gilt: Fassade polieren, egal wie marode die tragende Struktur auch sein mag. Bei dem kürzlich stattgefundenen Streik an Berliner Universitäten und Hochschulen, an dem sich die UdK zwar etwas zögerlich, aber dennoch beteiligt hat, spielte die Einführung von Bachelor und Master nur eine geringe Rolle, da vorerst die Verhinderung von Studiengebühren auf dem Plan war.

Nicht nur die Einsparungspolitik im Bereich Bildung hat die Berliner Studierenden mobilisiert, sondern der soziale Kahlschlag per se. So protestierten Studis mit Kita-Eltern, Schüler/innen und Gewerkschafter/innen Seite an Seite, was sicherlich zu einem der besonderen Merkmale dieses Streiks gehörte. Aber was war nun eigentlich mit den Kunststudierenden? Es ist erstaunlich, mit welcher Unbekümmertheit viele der angehenden Künstler/innen fernab von jeglichen gesellschaftlichen Geschehnissen stetig die Welt in den Ecken und Winkeln ihrer Ateliers neu erfinden.

Das liegt auch in diesem Fall u. a. daran, dass bewusst inhaltliche und gesellschaftspolitische Diskurse an der Akademie ausgeklammert werden und die Autonomie der Kunst für die Mehrzahl der Professor/innen immer noch als Grundvoraussetzung gilt.

Die sich in den letzten zwanzig Jahren drastisch veränderte ökonomische Situation, die Privatisierung von Bildung und Kultur lässt die klassische Karriere, Akademieabschluss und dann ist man Künstler/in, nicht mehr zu. Dem größten Teil der Kunstproduzent/innen gelingt es ausschließlich durch Tätigkeiten in anderen bzw. angrenzenden Bereichen ihre ökonomische Basis zu sichern. Es ist somit geradezu erforderlich, dass eine völlige Umstrukturierung und Erneuerung der traditionellen

Lehrinhalte an Kunsthochschulen endlich stattfindet. Die Rolle/Aufgabe des Künstlers/der Künstlerin muss parallel zu diesen Tendenzen, zu gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen ständig neu definiert werden und sollte Verantwortung der Kunstausbildung sein, da die Kunststudierenden ihre Aufgabe/Verantwortung sonst in einem gesamtgesellschaftlichen Kontext nur schwer erkennen, geschweige denn wahrnehmen können. „Die Auseinandersetzung mit Kultur-, Gesellschafts- und Medientheorien, Gender, Cultural und Critical Studies, Curatorial Studies und Vermittlungspraktiken, Kulturpolitik, interkulturelle[n] sowie poplärkulturelle[n] Themen in Lehrplänen“¹ sind keine modischen Erscheinungen, die den Künstler/die Künstlerin von seiner/ihrer wahren Bestimmung abhalten, sondern notwendige Ergänzung zeitgenössischer kultureller Praxis.

Anmerkung

¹ Ute Meta Bauer, „Education, Information, Entertainment“, in: dies. (Hg.), Education, Information, Entertainment. Neue Ansätze künstlerischer Hochschulbildung, Wien 2000, S. 22.

KAROLIN MEUNIER/MIRJAM THOMANN

Ich kann auf verschiedene Weisen sichtbar werden und auch wieder verschwinden. Ich kann mich zum Beispiel außerhalb organisieren und dann innerhalb groß rauskommen. Besser wäre umgekehrt. Jede Hochschule bringt ihre eigenen Zentren und Ränder hervor. Ich kann mich davor auch verstecken wollen und auch das kann ich als Gruppe tun: Indem wir uns selbst an den Rand stellen, um von dort aus in die Mitte zu sehen oder in relativer Abgeschiedenheit nach Kriterien für das eigene Arbeiten suchen.

Die Aufnahme durch eine Kommission bezeichnet eine Art offizieller Ankunft in der Institution. Was folgt, sind zahlreiche Strategien der Studenten/innen, um weiterhin sichtbar zu bleiben. Die Sichtbarkeit wäre hier als Qualität verstanden, die

Mitteilungen möglich macht, eine Fähigkeit des Sich-Äußerns. Was wäre aber die Struktur, der man sich hier wiederholend hingibt, ohne einen Zustand davor oder danach benennen zu können? Wie sieht wohl der zeitgenössische Akademismus aus?

Ich will auch ein vielversprechendes Modell haben!

In den ersten beiden Semestern gibt es Aktzeichnen ohne Anleitung als Zusatzangebot, man verwirft es aber schnell und macht es nie wieder.

Jeder entscheidet für sich, was er vermitteln will, und die Studierenden suchen sich dann (bestenfalls) aus, wer ihnen was beibringen soll. Festgelegte Formen und Inhalte gibt es nicht, dafür steht jeder der Lehrenden in einem Kontext, der auch während der Lehre nicht abzuschütteln ist, man bekommt ihn mitvermittelt, als Gratis-Prägung.

Dieter Roth hat auf die Frage, ob er ein Rezept für junge Künstler hätte, gesagt: „Einfach. Tun, was sie tun.“ Anlässlich der Retrospektive in Köln musste man noch mal denken, dass es sich bei Roth um einen legendären, viel produzierenden, wild bastelnden und exzessiven Charakter handelt mit einem originellen Riesen-Werk. Ein echter Meistertyp. Es war zu vermuten, dass er genauere Vorstellungen davon hatte, was denn so in den Anfängen zu tun sei, aber entweder wusste er es tatsächlich nicht, oder es ließ sich nicht ohne weiteres in einen Rat verpacken. Vielleicht wollte er auch nichts raten, weil er auf das Authentische eines jeden hoffte, der tätig wird. Also voller Vertrauen einfach tun, was man tut. Wie romantisch.

Auch an Kunsthochschulen gilt, dass die Lehrenden in eine Position versetzt werden, die es nicht gibt. Dass sie eine Macht ausüben versuchen, die ihnen nicht gegeben sein kann. Dass sie sich einem Erziehungsauftrag gegenübersehen, zu dem sie nicht befugt sein können: Es ist nicht mehr als die für einen bestimm-

ten Zeitraum formalisierte, durch Vereinbarung verliehene Macht.

Als Student/in kann ich auf Professoren/innen treffen, die den Anspruch haben, die ihnen verliehene Autorität infrage zu stellen, so diese sich aus einem Selbstverständnis gegenüber der Bedeutung des eigenen künstlerischen Werkes und dessen Rezeption herleitet. Stattdessen verstehen sie die Lehre von Kunst als eine Haltung, die mit dem Prozess des künstlerischen Arbeitens zusammenhängt, diesem entspricht und somit spezifisch wäre. Diese Erfahrung ermöglicht es ihnen, einen Umgang zu entwickeln, auf das jeweils Singuläre, das sich in den Arbeiten der Studierenden zeigt, zu reagieren. Dennoch sehe ich auch jene Lehrenden, die einen Umgang größtmöglicher Offenheit und gleichzeitiger Differenziertheit zu etablieren suchen, der Schwierigkeit ausgesetzt, die Machtkonstellationen einfach aufzulösen. Ihre Versuche, den konventionalisierten Abläufen und Zuständigkeiten etwas entgegenzustellen, setzen präzise und damit wiederum formalisierende Vorstellungen voraus – davon, wie es stattdessen sein könnte. Es entstehen auf diese Weise zwar Räume innerhalb der Hochschule, in denen sich zusammenfinden kann, wer vorher verstreut war, doch auch wenn die Konstruiertheit der Situation hier immer mitgedacht wird: Die sich um Professoren gruppierenden Klassen entwickeln häufig eine erstaunlich eigene Sprachlichkeit miteinander. Dieses Sprechen ermöglicht tatsächlich mehr Spielräume in der Auseinandersetzung mit Autoritäten, und gleichzeitig frage ich mich, wie es zu bewerten ist, dass selbst in einer Konzeption der Offenheit ein (heimlicher) Ausschluss nicht zu verhindern ist.

Und eine Vielproduziererin will ich sein!

Manchmal denke ich jetzt: Ich habe es verpasst. Ich war am falschen Ort, mit den falschen Vorbildern und den falschen Inhalten beschäftigt.

Scheinbar wiederholt man an der Hochschule dann erfolgreich (wenn auch nicht unbedingt effektiv in dem Sinne, dass mehr als eine Mode und deren Wirkungspotenzial übernommen wird), wenn man dazu aufgefordert oder zumindest eingeladen wird. Wiederholen ohne Einladung wäre naiv. Man stellt sich außerhalb derer, die ja ohne-

hin schon außen stehen möchten, das heißt, man ist dann wirklich allein. Es gibt wenige Beispiele, die ein Randständigendasein in der Randgruppe so nutzen konnten, dass sich eine intensive künstlerische Position entwickelt hat, die unverzichtbar für das Gesamtbild ist und für die innere Dynamik auch war. Es ist die gelungene Ausnahme, die zu sehen für uns so wichtig ist.

„Da denken wir immer, wir wären ganz außerhalb. Und plötzlich spricht uns jemand an. Dann stehen wir auf einmal ganz woanders. Wir wollten, dass es so kommt. Hier kann man sich umsehen und wird gesehen. Hier ist der Ort, den wir schon lange im Auge hatten. Doch musste uns eine andere zeigen, wie man dort ankommt. Hier. Hat sie gesagt. Und wir. Hat sie auch gesagt. Und es nicht so gemeint. Sie hat wir gesagt, und nun bin ich hier. Du bist auch dabei. Ich bin auch jemand, der stehengeblieben ist, um sich umzusehen. Wie alle. Wir alle. Wir haben es gut. Wir machen es auch nicht schlecht, sondern so gut wir können. Wir laden Dich ein.“¹

Letztens auf dem Gang im zweiten Stock habe ich gehört, wie jemand aus dem Verwaltungsbüro der Hochschule gesagt hat, dass sich vor nicht allzu vielen Jahren die Studierenden noch in den Schränken versteckt hätten, um dem Pförtner zu entkommen, der bei Feierabend alle aus dem Gebäude geworfen hat. Damals hat man nicht nur die Nacht im Atelier verbracht, sondern sich auch noch richtig was einfallen lassen, um das tun zu können.

Wo sind sie denn alle? Raus hier? Das ist nicht neu, aber immer noch Aufsehen erregend.

Ich will singulären Ausnahmecharakter haben!

Ein Text über Martin Kippenberger (von Lucy McKenzie in: „Nach Kippenberger“) hat den Titel: „Jetzt, nachdem das erledigt ist, muss es nie mehr gemacht werden“. In Hamburg hat man gerade

wieder ein gut funktionierendes und kommunikatives Verhältnis zu seinen Vorbildern. Man tritt begeistert das Erbe von Entwürfen an (man wurde dazu eingeladen), deren Status nicht mehr gerechtfertigt und deren Wirkung nicht mehr erprobt werden muss. Sie sind aber auch noch nicht erledigt, es ist sinnvoll, es noch mal zu machen. Man bemüht sich mehr um die Produktion von Orten und die Erforschung von Räumen als um die Schaffung von Objekten, mehr um den sozialen Zusammenhang und das gedankliche Experimentieren als um das selbstgefällige Monologisieren und Produzieren. Das ist nicht zwangsläufig nachahmerisch, wirkt aber mitunter wie: „Klemmer blickt Erika in Liebe und Verehrung an, als blicke ihn jemand an, wie er Erika in Liebe und Verehrung anblickt.“ (aus: „Die Klavierspielerin“ von Elfriede Jelinek). Wie und ob etwas gemacht wird, hängt davon ab, wessen Blick man vermutet.

Anmerkung

¹ Text aus einem Film von Karolin Meunier, 2003.

MAX HINDERER

Es geht mir nicht um bloße Situationskomik, wenn ich zu einer kleinen Momentaufnahme ansetze: Während ich diesen Text schreibe, befinde ich mich in der Hochschule in meinem „Klassenraum“. Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien. Wir sind circa sechzig Studenten in der „Klasse für konzeptuelle Kunst“. Zwei Computer älterer Jahrgänge stehen hier rum. Wenn ich mit diesem Text fertig bin, frage ich mich, wie ich den denn eigentlich verschicken soll, wenn doch die Internetverbindung im Hause ständig zusammenbricht. Ein eigenes Zuhause habe ich nicht (obwohl mir diese Investition manchmal sinnvoller erscheinen will als die 378 Euro Studiengebühren pro Semester in Wien).

So now I have a life.

For the first time.

Out in the fields Standing next to each other for a while Sharing paranoid ideas with many others (but) Everybody with his own strategy to get by.

Small communicative gestures full of redundancies and repetitions No wider context (though)

A strangely empty gesture.

Later on, I am a bit behind my real life A rational behavior with clearly hysterical traits Hysterical traits of normality.

Reintegrate into your own perception (:) The loud image (and) The soft sound (and) the cinematic metaphor (and) After all, coming off the streets yourself (and) Screaming and trembling and running for their lives (and) Half an hour later Exploding almost at the same time Something does not exist anymore.

The world is waiting.

Rebuilding normality (however) Barely any more chances despite the indefatigable effort The world stands still The world cries.

How I am no longer part of my real life for a moment No protection No rescue Drop, in an unexpectedly quiet way (but) Permanently comparing One has to get used to it The comparison is only partially true.

Another panicky attempt Actually there are no words for it The best lines have stuck in your throat.

Or worse?

It was a beautiful day.

God bless everyone Every repetition stabilizes.

A scenario, foreboding (however) No panic here Collapsing and breaking down (instead)

Sinking, almost at the same time, in black clouds Apocalypse now.

As if somehow it had to come like that The unrepeatable moment Gone, everything is gone

Nobody wants to go into the streets God bless everyone Repetition stabilizes.

To explain something, while it turns red, while it turns green, while it turns red and blinks He screams at cars, which do not exist Tranquillized (however it is) Something that future generations will read in a different way.

Even in waking up in panic I succeeded Just when you are waking up and it is coming back to your mind It's down It's down.

They were not all too social (and) Than there was no doubt anymore There was a roar (and)

Then it turned dark and totally silent Shining blue sky I am shocked.

Can you tell me what is exactly happening in there? This is important, that's why they ask again Update The worst vision Became total in an absurd way (and) Not finding words with a choked voice.

I can not reach her 18 Minutes later 37 Minutes later The first reaction just a few minutes later About nine o'clock in the morning local time (it was) A beautiful free world When the heart stood still For everybody, forever The essence of cinema.

The dust will disappear, but the stillness remains (as does) Visual silence Someone will have to pay for it Is the world able to?

The sun-drenched days of high summer (and) To have a sense for the invasion of tragedy (but) No time to sharpen the senses.

Where yesterday we believed the future was, today the past appears Out of necessity and great fear Invisible and unrecognised.

Thinking failed miserably.

The clouds turning day into night By the abyss Beyond the 40th degree of longitude (but) Probably not one of the targets (and) Promising full support Right after take-off Before the eyes of the world.

A mentality which allows itself big gestures (a) Carefree optimism Images of power and prestige A sign of human arrogance People going down The invulnerability. Dreams and obsessions Speed and precision I can't believe it, they are making pictures I can't live here anymore.

Forever be.

Imagine you are sitting in a sauna (and then) Falling, pure and shining like cherry blossom in spring A prize, which is not awarded in the West The better life on the other side (it is) the neglecting of your own life With a red headband.

The island of those blessed people who managed to rescue themselves.

Something that fell out of the building Unmistakable (but) it is not unusual The idea is already part of every day life To all appearances they showed talent Black brilliance.

Everything's totally normal here.

We have to do something.

Searching for all the things that one has lost With deadly pale face and toneless voice (a) detestable helplessness and embarrassing nervous debility All the lightness is gone (but) managing to leap into comedy.

(Just) One who hides cowardly One probably has to get used to them here (but) a bit of everyday-life, one should not forget to mention The famous everyday-life ability A mixture of lethargy and hectic activity A common form Completely or partially broken down Reflecting the sun in different angles.

The world is getting colder, the words are missing.

Moonlandscape Overexposed, strangely flat All contrasts swallowed There will be nothing to see, absolutely nothing.

I know people in there The part of the hero in the tragedy Mysteriously lost The legend of the big narration Porous, gnawed A theme, a myth (a) piercing concert.

Taking your breath away Interrupted or overloaded Done a very good job

She is just focussed on the result Breaking away, heading for a new target Everything closed, ordered back and redirected Cannot be missed Farewell-letter.

It remained unclear (then) Confirming a loss Denying any connection One has to expect it Pack in, together in the back. Emotionless.

(Now:) To find something unoccupied Music and loud prayers Living absolutely legally This is something different, though Missing pictures

So now I have a life Here of all places First floor, left side.

Theory and Action
Exhibition text, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Cologne
2022

The Feminist's House
Texte zur Kunst #120
2020

Tenibac
Exhibition text, Nagel Draxler Cabinet, Berlin
2018

Milieu (with Jenni Tischer)
Exhibition text, After the Butcher, Berlin, and Galerie Krobath, Vienna
2018

She Was Born With an Attraction to Space
Lecture, Kunstverein am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, Berlin
2017

Chapter 3: Women and Space
Texte zur Kunst #108
2017

Better Living
Exhibition text, Galerie Nagel Draxler, Berlin
2015

Yellow Knows No Limits
Lecture, Casco Art Institute, Utrecht
2009

Warhol, Andy
Texte zur Kunst #66
2007

Ohne Titel (mit Karolin Meunier)
Texte zur Kunst #53
2004

A Menetekel
Lecture, Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Hamburg
2002