

ART CATALOGUE

**“ON MATERIAL
SYMPATHY”**

**INES DOUJAK
DENISA LEHOČKÁ
URSULA MAYER**

DECEMBER 12, 2022

KÜNSTLERHAUS / FACTORY
KARLSPLATZ 5, 1010 WIEN

125

**YEARS
OF ENTHUSIASM**

ALU MENZIKEN

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Amongst high quality aluminum products Alu Menziken produced material and technical/techno-logical solutions also for many artistic and design commissions. There is a number of pre-products from such contexts of unknown origin archived at our premises. This anonymous "material" asked for postproduction.

For this reason, Alu Menziken invited **BORIS ONDREIČKA**, the artistic director of Vienna Contemporary, to take a closer look at the material, the test panels and their origins and, if interested, to develop an art project from them.

The result of his work:

"ON MATERIAL SYMPATHY"

"Paracelsus experienced the natural world as a complex order of sympathies, resonances, magnetic attractions, and analogies. Paracelsus was a physician, philosopher, alchemist, and herbalist, but also a physiognomist or practitioner of the art of discovering temperament and character from outward appearance. Each natural object bore for him a divine "signature" encoded in the thing's shape, smell, texture, color, posture. This equivocal sign served as a spur to the human perceiver to engage in the artistry -- the speculative thinking and practical experimentation -- that would give determinacy to the hidden "virtues" of the object. Paracelsus's practice of virtue was a medico-religious one, organized around the idea that meticulous attention to plants, to animal organs and fluids, and to minerals and rare earth would provide hints about how those bodies might be combined with a human body in pursuit of health, strength, vitality."

from *Of Sympathies Alchemical and Poetic* by Jane Bennett¹

We offered number of aluminium panels to 3 contemporary artists - **INES DOUJAK, DENISA LEHOČKÁ & URSULA MAYER** (one colour each) to experiment with them on carte blanche principle. They could do what ever they wanted with it. This panels could be considered as tabulas rasa. We consider this situation as a constellation of relational subjects speaking through material objects .

The individual approach (aesthetics, ethics and politics...sensitivity), a subjective action is what interests us the most. To deal with these panels of clandestine history means ambivalent issues of the iconic and iconoclasm, deconstruction or reconstruction, innovation or even analytic blasphemy and critical heresy (in a bit) according to particular historical canons, statuses, legacies, according to changing concept of authorship, authority, art-piece (art in general), materiality. There is metal and metallurgy and its influence on the development of society as described by Paracelsus, Sun Tzu or Mircea Eliade... There is space, centre, stage (agora and arena), dogma, unknown, lost...and construction of self and sculpture, figural and figurative present here.

These panels carry an aspect of unfinished (pre-product, element, part...), disturbed, intricacy, misunderstanding, left alone / alienation, and uncanny platform, substrate for further activity. These panels are posing questions of relation of arts and crafts and industry, an original and a produced. As between materials there is a sympathy between human bodies and minds, because body (soma) is material itself and mind (psyche) is its hyperobjective-emanation. Words and actions are radiations of humans. And many more.

by Boris Ondreička

1 a shortened and slightly revised version of her *Of Material Sympathies, Paracelsus, and Whitman*, which appeared in *Material Ecocriticism*, eds. Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann (Indiana University Press, 2014, 239–252) for *Rare Earth*, eds. Boris Ondreička and Nadim Saman (Sternberg Press and TBA21, 2016).

2 A basic distinction in philosophy is the difference between subject and object. We recognize this distinction in our terms “objective” (dealing strictly with the knowledge derived from our observation) and “subjective” (reacting in a manner based on emotions and attitudes of an individual). In psychoanalytic theory, the term “subject” refers to the sum of the physiological and psychological operations that sustain a human individual as a “person”. The human subject has both mental and bodily dimensions. Object may appear to need no definition—we all know what “things” are—but the term takes on a somewhat specialized meaning in philosophy and psychoanalysis. In philosophy, the “object,” the passive thing that serves as the content of conscious observation, is contrasted with the “subject,” the conscious agent who observes the object. In attempting to understand the relationship between subject and object, psychoanalysis describes “objects” that have been cathected, invested with libidinal energy. These objects can be other people (the “object of one’s affections”) or anything else (including abstract concepts like “freedom” or “justice”) that serves as a focal point of desire.

(CriticalLink | Lacan: The Mirror Stage | Terms)

INES DOUJAK

AUSTRIA



INES DOUJAK (born 1959, Klagenfurt) is an Austrian artist. Doujak graduated from Hochschule für angewandte Kunst in Vienna. She had her first solo exhibition in 2002 at the Vienna Secession in 2002 as part of which she took part in the Rainbow Parade of that year, the Viennese counterpart to the Christopher Street Day, for which she designed a float. Since then Doujak has exhibited worldwide ever since working with a variety of media: collage, sculpture, photography, film, audio and installation. Her work is included in the collection of the Reina Sofia Museum, the Kunstmuseum Linz, the MUMOK (Museum of Modern Art), Vienna, and the Österreichische Galerie Belvedere, Vienna.

Doujak has exhibited, among other venues, at Miami Art Central, Miami (USA), Witte de With, Rotterdam (NL), documenta 12, Kassel (DE), Kunsternes Hus, Oslo (NO), Para Site, Hong Kong (CH), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (ES), Royal College of Art, London (UK) and Total Museum, Seoul (KR). She was also project leader and key researcher of two large-scale artistic researches Loomshuttles/Warpaths (2010–2018) and Utopian Pulse: Flares in the Darkroom (2013–2014) situated at the Secession in Vienna, both funded by the FWF Austrian Science Funds (PEEK).

MORE



As a reflexion of predominantly masculine heroic world of commodity fetishism, Ines Doujak reduces famous quote of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe “less is more” (1947, iconic aphorism of Functionalist architecture which became a slogan of Minimalist sculpture later on) to laconic “More”. “More” is a magic formula of consumerism. But even ecstatic and orgiastic “More” is just a moment in the case of her live performance. As other “More” it is ephemeral and evanescent. The material of eternal life (aluminium) is just a platform for social symbolical action. Its consequence (left-over, tailing, installation) is certain critical discourse between formal and symbolical economies through a variant of genre of vanitas. “More” of Ines Doujak is a minimalism of minimalism.

Material: orange aluminum panels from Alu Menziken

More
Performance

DENISA LEHOCKÁ

SLOVAKIA



DENISA LEHOCKÁ (born 1971, Trenčín) is a Slovak artist. She lives and works in Bratislava, Slovakia. She studied at the Secondary School of Arts and Crafts and subsequently at the Academy of Fine Arts, both in Bratislava. Among many other venues she has exhibited at the Venice and Prague Biennials, as well as Manifesta-3 in Ljubljana (SI) and October Salon, Belgrade (SRB), Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (DE), Kunstverein Ulm (DE), Frankfurter Kunstverein (DE), Württembergische Kunstverein, Stuttgart (DE), Import a HKW (Transmediale), Berlin (DE) and BAK Basis voor Actuele Kunst, Utrecht (NL).

She has also exhibited at New Museum, NYC (USA), Austrian Cultural Forum, NYC (USA), DUMBO Art Cener, NYC (USA), White Columns, NYC (USA), in SNG, Bratislava (SK), tranzit.sk, Bratislava (SK), National Gallery in Prague (CZ), Futura, Prague (CZ) and Fait Gallery, Brno (CZ), Museum of Modern Art, St Etienne (F) Sammlung Friedrichshof, Vienna (AT), MUMOK — Stiftung Ludwig Vienna (AT), Kunsthaus Graz Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz (AT), Palazzo delle arti Napoli, Naples (IT), Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (CH), Kunsthaus Bern (CH).

UNTITLED



Denisa Lehocká confronts given industrially prefabricated panels of metal, sharp edges, precise geometry with self created / hand-made organicity, softness and fragility in her untitled object-installation (or “spatial collage” as she use to call her works). She creates an extensive cluster of material dialogue. It is materials which each has certain semantic, cultural and political (or even social, gender...) subtext. Lehocká hesitates to express herself in linearity of explicit narratives but rather presents poetic networks of synapses of open associations between inner physio, neuro and psychological realms and social internet of everything distributed all around. Her clusters are models of micro components of grand molecule of the universe.

Material: yellow aluminum panels from Alu Menziken

Untitled

High: 250 cm

Wide: variable

Aluminum, Laser cut

Price: 50.000 Euro

URSULA MAYER

AUSTRIA



URSULA MAYER (born 1970, Ried im Innkreis) is an Austrian multimedia artist living in Vienna. Her practice spans a variety of media, including: film, video and sculpture.

Mayer was educated at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and at the Royal College of Art in London and received a MFA from Goldsmiths College. Mayer interweaves myth, biopolitics and the semiotics of cinema to visualize and ruminate upon future post human ontology. In her single and multi-channel film installations are crystalline circuits of images, composed of signs borrowed from architecture, literature and personae. Mayer has had solo exhibitions at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, 21er Haus, Museum Belvedere, Vienna, Salzburger Kunstverein, Whitechapel Gallery and the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, at the LENTOS Museum, Linz.

She has also been included in exhibitions at the 16th Istanbul Biennale, Istanbul, SeMA Biennale Mediacity, Seoul, Hayward Gallery, Southbank, London, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, TBA21, Vienna and Kunsthalle Basel. In 2007, she received the Otto Maurer Prize. She was awarded the Derek Jarman award in 2014.

GONG 1 | GONG 2 | GONG 3



Gong 1



Gong 2 & Gong 3

Minimalists' enthusiasm was for installations and constructions in which the precise use of industrial materials and space became the essence of their work. Their many times theatrical approach was not grounded in the existence of a metaphysical world. Minimalist objects were based on a rationalist ordering of the world and corresponding manifestations of a Western art canon. Nevertheless, their ideas and sculptures could be related to Taoist cosmology in which the unified whole results from a fusion of different parts into an indivisible unity.

In Eastern philosophy, polarity in the paradigm of Taoism is not understood as a conflict or as an opposition, but symbolizes the interdependent and interdependent opposites. GONG 1, GONG 2, GONG 3 of Ursula Mayer play with the transcendent quality of the (industrial) material aluminum and explores its tonal qualities. The test panels are thereby transformed into sound tools or sound sculptures.

Material: Silver aluminum panels from Alu Menziken

Gong 1

Size 115 x 180 cm
Aluminum, Laser cut
Rahmen maßgefertigt

Price: 25.000 Euro

Gong 2

Size 120 x 60
Aluminum, Laser cut

Price: 25.000 Euro

Gong 3

Size 120 x 60
Aluminum, Laser cut

Price: 25.000 Euro

COLLECTORS' PREVIEW

THE ARTWORKS CAN BE VIEWED BY COLLECTORS ON
THE DAY OF THE EVENT. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE
GET IN TOUCH WITH US AT CONTACT@125-YEARS.COM.

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