

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
T. +43-1-587 53 07, F. +43-1-587 53 07-34
office@secession.at, www.secession.at

Press release

ANNE SPEIER

September 14 – November 4, 2018

Press conference: Thursday, September 13, 2018, 10 a.m.

Opening: Thursday, September 13, 2018, 7 p.m.

Many of Anne Speier's works document the distensions and deformations that objects and figures undergo in order to both understand and transcend the limitations of the meaning ascribed to them, their potentials and interrelations. Yet the artist also subjects the media she works with to such stretching. Aesthetic qualities are one way to defy certain expectations; absurdity and otherness are another. In her exhibition in the Secession's sublevel gallery, Speier intertwines painting and sculpture in a kind of utopian architecture, short-circuiting its spatial premises with its metaphorical purport. The show examines the challenges that teachers and students at art schools face along images and installations that limn psycho-emotional topographies.

They counter the distrust of art education and the associated hierarchical understanding of aesthetic phenomena with an ambivalent desire for the responsibility that is needed for analyzing the objects in one's environment and making something new out of them.

The point of departure is an empty space rendered in a series of industrially manufactured silkscreen prints on various media in colors determined by an algorithm. These elements serve to furnish the existing underground space with architectural components: exterior façades that address persistent stereotypes; niches in which scenes from a school production play out; roofs and additional basements. The middle of the room, the central and representative scene of the exhibiting institution, remains as a figurative blank space.

The exhibition opens with a room that conveys an impression of a building's "exterior" with an ensemble of three paintings. Two pictures, on the right and left, show figures holding up a structure or institution. The reference is to a scene in Agnès Varda's film "Les dites cariatides" (1984) and the titular caryatid, a sculpted female figure serving as an architectural support. Such figures are often set in symmetrical arrangements but rarely identical, propping up a portal as doorkeepers or framing a window. What made them interesting to Varda is that they look good doing what they do and seem fairly relaxed. Labor is often not recognizable as such in the final result: that is the theme of a picture between the caryatids addressing the questionable fictions that lie dormant in art-making's unconscious. It shows a group of women drinking tea while dismantling a building: industry is genius's ugly sister. The bird's-eye perspective suggests a survey of structures that uncovers their secret rules and mechanisms.

In the pictures emerging between these elements, rampage seems to be in the air. The motif derives from a *South Park* episode that first aired in September 2017. It begins with a scene in which the high school's students collectively overturn their lockers and set scattered papers on fire to protest the cancellation of

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their day off on a politically incorrect holiday. The episode traces the complete arc from paranoia across the characters' latent ambivalent feelings about themselves to a counterproductive outburst of violence. The riot that ensues is an expression of defiance; though bound to fail, it makes for a good mental image of the fantasy of refusing to submit or function. Burning paper appears in Speier's pictures with some frequency, hovering above the figures like a gentle reminder that change is always possible.

The picture with the cock the visitors need to squeeze past on their way to the next room can serve to represent the pushiness of intended meanings implanted in art; later on, a dying lobster is a pretty good example of how the painted figure is put on, inserted into space. It also raises the curtain on the school production, fragmentary documentation of which appears in the paintings in the large gallery. They are snapshots from a series of ill-conceived or certainly not yet entirely functional scenes of a musical. The plotline loosely weaves around the act of ordering lobster in a bad restaurant. Everyone present (cooks, wait staff, patrons, owners, animals) panics because this has never happened before. The lobster must say farewell to life; the restaurant's operator, to the notion that hers is a unique establishment serving fine cuisine; the diner, to the idea of pleasant taste. The pictures/niches along the walls illustrate how the performers—genuine and pretend lobsters and other animals—break out in elegies about love, death, and rebellion. They may be said to enact crucial moments in an aesthetic education that can never proceed independently of a canon of formal codes, organizing not just art but also the individual's social habitus.

The roof sculptures in the floor installation take this challenge to and inquiry into the bounds of the space/the institution further, encountering hierarchies as structures that define space, deferring to them, but also ignoring or flouting them. What is quite manifestly happening here is a displacement of the center. The floor panels on which rooms are printed add another sublevel to the Secession's basement, while the roofs turn that basement itself into an intermediate floor. The resulting space remains vacant and may be read as a crisis of the prevailing order or as a blank slate awaiting future events and uses, for example for the own art.

Pedagogy, creative labor, and the unconscious, whose traditional home is in the metaphorical underground, trisect a possible version of postmodern subjectivity. The sublevel installation employs these factors to play off the putatively settled relationship between individual and institution against its unpredictability.

(Text: Inka Meißner)

Anne Speier was born in Frankfurt am Main in 1977 and studied at Frankfurt's Städelschule. She currently lives in Vienna, where she teaches in the Object Sculpture Studio at the Academy of Fine Arts.

The exhibition program is conceived by the board of the Secession.
Curator: Bettina Spörr

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Curators' guided tour

Friday, September 28, 4 p.m.

Guided tour through the exhibitions with curators Jeanette Pacher, Bettina Spörr und Annette Südbeck

Publication

An artist book is being published in conjunction with the exhibition.

Anne Speier. *KEEP IT COMPLEX AND KEEP THE JOB*

Softcover, 20x28 cm

128 pages (36 individual screen prints)

Concept: Anne Speier

Text: Inka Meißner

Secession 2018

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EUR 36,-

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Press images

Installation views are available for download at www.secession.at/en/presstype/aktuell

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Wiener Secession, Association of Visual Artists

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Tuesday – Sunday 10 am – 6 pm

Permanent presentation: Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze*

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Biography Anne Speier

1977 born in Frankfurt am Main, lives and works in Vienna.

Solo exhibitions (selection)

- 2017 *Wild*, Galerie Meyer Kainer, Wien
- 2016 *WellWellWell*, Wien (mit Judy Fiskin)
- 2015 *Feeling the Contemporary*, Silberkuppe, Berlin
Seeing the Contemporary, Galerie der Stadt Schwaz, Tirol
Smuggeler, Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt
- 2014 *Lurk-Hive Balance*, What Pipeline, Detroit
Two Parks, Vilma Gold, London (mit Philipp Timischl)
The Composing Rooms, Berlin
- 2013 *Identity Entity 2*, HHDM, Wien
- 2012 *Identity Entity 1*, Pro Choice, Wien
- 2010 *Vertical Panel Discussion*, Silberkuppe, Berlin
Spoonology, Pro Choice, Wien
- 2007 *Romantizitäten der Beobachter*, Ritter&Staiff, Frankfurt

Group exhibitions (selection)

- 2018 *Kunstpreis der Böttcherstraße*, Kunsthalle Bremen, Deutschland (demnächst)
Painting: Now & Forever, Part III, Greene Naftali, Matthew Marks, New York (demnächst)
- 2017 Kardinal König Kunstpreis, Salzburg
BC21 Art Award 2017, 21er Haus, Wien
Portikus XXX, Portikus, Frankfurt am Main
Pink Moon Pink Wind, MAVRA Paros, Griechenland
Oh... Jakob Lena Knebl und die mumok Sammlung, MUMOK, Wien
Tasting Esterhazy, Schloss Esterhazy, Eisenstadt
- 2016 *Belong Anywhere*, Garret Grimoire, Wien
Ein Schelm wer Böses dabei denkt..., Kunsthalle Bremen
Fantasie, Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg
The Squatter, Gaudel de Stampa, Paris
- 2015 *The Funnies*, MOT International, Brüssel
Curated by..., Veit Loers, Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman, Wien
Joyful Limitations 2, Black Bridge Off, Beijing
Kim Gordon, Constanze Schweiger, Anne Speier, Pinacoteca, Wien
Sweating as Distribution, Treize, Paris
Was die Wange röthet, kann nicht übel seyn, Kerstin Engholm Gallery, Wien
- 2014 *Joyful Limitations 1*, Black Bridge Off, Beijing
- 2013 *Reproduction*, What Pipeline, Detroit
Vertical Club, Bortolami, New York

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Gerry Bibby, Kunsthaus Bethanien – Prisma Pavillion, Berlin

Celluloid Brushes, Ludlow 38, New York

2012 *Celluloid Brushes*, Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin

2011 *Celluloid Brushes*, Etablissement d'en Face, Brüssel

2009 *Bulletinboard Blvd*, Pro Choice, Wien

Angst, Adam-Opel-Haus, Rüsselsheim am Main

2008 *Boxer*, Literaturhaus, Frankfurt

Jana Euler und Andrei Koschmieder pendeln aus..., Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt

Sammlung Rausch – Hotel Marienbad, Kunst-Werke, Berlin

Schwarz und Weiss Ausstellung, Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt

Hit the Road Jack, Städelmuseum, Frankfurt

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List of Works

Die Schwestern Fleiß, 2018
141,5 x 230 cm

Karyatide rot, rauchend, 2018
141,5 x 118,5 cm

Karyatide gelb, 2018
141,5 x 118,5 cm

Tote Natur Sub-Kultur, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Brennendes Papier, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Brennendes Papier mit Dach, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Auge des Betrachters, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Interessant, 2018
Iron, wood, varnish, industrial screen print, dimension variable

Sehr Interessant, 2018
Iron, wood, varnish, industrial screen print, dimension variable

Ordering Lobster; Panik, Angst, Ende, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Elegie des sterbenden Hummers, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Regie-Genie Wake-up-Call, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Intertextueller Alptraum, 2018
198 x 137 cm

Real Rare Blue Lobster und Unechter Lobster Küssen sich: Gesang der Bedingungslosen Liebe. Tod,
2018
167 x 137 cm

If not stated otherwise: manual and industrial screen print, oil on canvas
Courtesy Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna