

Maria Jansa and Uta Belina Waeger | Austria

Camera Miracula – Earth > < Iron

24 October to 17 December 2023 at Kunstraum Engländerbau

Two sculptors from Vorarlberg, **Maria Jansa and Uta Belina Waeger**, engage in a bold experiment, a process from the I to the You.

In the Kunstraum Engländerbau their respective works, **sculptures** in the broadest sense, enter into an exciting dialogue about seemingly incompatible things: on the one hand there are «mummified» iron utensils that almost mutate into beings, on the other there are fired clay forms, from organic to geometric.

Maria Jansa and Uta Belina Waeger approach each other by leaving their own «comfort zone». They exchange works with each other, let them «go astray». This procedure ranges from benevolently respectful, to edgily confrontational or even encroaching, to amicably harmonious. But in the sense of $1+1=3$, constellations arise that have not been seen before, **spatial installations and spatial interventions** with surprising complexity.

The white, windowless art space Engländerbau, measuring just under 27 x 14 m, acts as their stage.

Individual presentation

The two artists present themselves directly opposite the entrance with two small, individual works on the wall of a walk-in box, a room within a room. To its right and left - in the corners of the large hall - a representative group of works is installed on the floor: saw blades here, bowl objects there. The works have one external feature in common: their rounded shapes.

Double presentation

On both sides of the hall, sequences of sculptural pictures come into view, one horizontally arranged at eye level, the other grouped in a swarm up to the ceiling. In the **«Ahnengalerie»** (Ancestors' Gallery), circular ceramic frame reliefs hold idiosyncratically «be-skinned» devices. Opposite, paper covered iron rings with black clay cones play a game of **«vertical stick shooting»**.

The works make contact with each other.

Forest Poem

Column-like, seven cylindrical, one-metre-high pedestals in black and creamy white rise from the floor, while a room-high «thread» column breaks the entire symmetry of the hall. These elements take up different objects of both artists in unusual ways: sometimes laid, sometimes clamped, pinned or hung, sometimes solo, sometimes as a duo.

Chaos

Behind a transparent wall there is unrest. «Heavy, sharp equipment» fights against «sturdy, hard armour». Long martial arts like devices force themselves criss-cross between resting triangular forms.

The works wrestle.

Order

Individual parts form themselves into rows and grids.

Tight organisation is calming.

Field conversation

On the central axis of the hall, in front of the windowless rear wall, there is a band on the floor, approx. 1 m wide and 6 m long, with various, archaic-looking objects that peel or dig their way out of the earth in equal measure.

Earthy spiral curves enter into dialogue with angular field tools, groping their way along, but mutating into light wire lemniscates at the far end. These move quietly, casting shadows on the wall...

Camera Miracula

Back to the exit the path inevitably leads to a mysterious, dark room. This is the centrepiece.

Comparable to a cella of a Greek temple, to the lower church of a medieval cathedral or to a 16th century cabinet of curiosities, it can be entered through a string curtain from the side or from the front.

Bizarre objects by both artists now lie interwoven with and within each other on white pedestals. Under intimate spotlighting, they are reminiscent of fetishes.

A hemisphere resting on the floor and a figuration floating from the ceiling form the centre of the symmetrical arrangement.

A «marriage» of iron and earth almost takes place.

Maria Jansa (*1949 in Fraxern, AT) Magister Artium. Teacher training Feldkirch, Werklehrer:nenseminar Munich. 1972-1977 Linz Art University - plastic concepts and ceramics. From 1980 studio in Fraxern - architectural ceramics, vessels, objects. From 2000 installations, small sculptures, urns, objects. National and international exhibitions.

Uta Belina Waeger (*1966 in Lustenau, AT) Magister Artium & Master of Fine Arts. Lives and works in Dornbirn and Munich. 1991 Mag. Art. in Art and Art Education at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, AT. 1990 Master of Fine Arts in Painting and New Form at the Pratt Institute in New York, USA. 1992 to 2012 teaching at secondary schools and universities, etc. From 1992 object and installation art. Since 2014 additionally Belina Re-Design. Various state and national scholarships and prizes (2022 Outstanding Artist Award of the Rep. of Austria). National and international exhibitions in museums, art spaces, galleries, art fairs.