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jevouspropose#14

Sarah Annelle Schönfeld. *Tout Doux: Gong Bath*

Exhibition: 2 June – 16 July, 2023

Opening: 1 June, 6 – 8 pm

Sound performance by Sarah Annelle Schönfeld

10 June, 11 - 11.30 am

For *jevouspropose#14*, Elise Lammer (Swiss curator and author) invites the artist Sarah Annelle Schönfeld (*1979, lives and works in Berlin).

Tout Doux: Gong Bath features three sonic sculptures whose form evokes the figures of female bodies. Made of blue-coated steel, each figure comprises two gongs that are hung at chest level. Like two breasts, the bronze gongs can be touched, or rung in an implicit invitation geared at the viewers.

Drawing on her long-time interest in myths and magical attributes associated with the female body, the artist produced a series of simple line drawings, which she translated into the three-dimensional figures formed from single steel round bars.

Reflecting on *Homo sapiens'* unique cognitive capacity for abstract thinking, which enables us to understand ideas and forms, the artist streamlined the figures of *Tout Doux: Gong Bath* to a point where they could only be fully realised through human interpretation. With a minimum amount of visual clues, a human body appears. The economy of means and the modesty of expression reinforce the figures' allegorical presence, while their perfectly round, dangling breasts transform them into incredibly fleshly creatures.

Exploring the role of the viewer as an active part of the installation, the works on display were conceived to be activated by exhibition visitors or by the artist herself. Similar to Paleolithic cave paintings that could only be brought to life with the help of a torch, the outlined figures of *Tout Doux: Gong Bath* need to be drummed to unleash their liveliness. The sounds produced by the harmonic gongs trigger an array of vibrations that reverberate through the air, moving from the metal structures into the human and non-human bodies in the exhibition space. An ancient form of sound therapy, gong baths were used as early as 4000 BC for their calming and healing effects. In fact, the physical property of sound is what confers the gongs the ability to prompt what is known as hypnotic trance, by means of ear, skin and bone conduction.

As is often the case, a seemingly mystical experience has a very rational explanation. Reflecting on this phenomenon, Sarah Annelle Schönfeld pays homage to the wise-women who were persecuted for their alleged witchcraft, which was actually an astute understanding of nature. Ultimately, the goddesses of *Tout Doux: Gong Bath* challenge the classical exhibition curriculum and invite us to reconcile with everyday magic.

Elise Lammer

Elise Lammer

Elise Lammer (born in Lausanne, CH) is a curator engaged with exhibition making, public programming, archiving, teaching and gardening. Her work is committed to questions related to the role of space (public, domestic) in defining the construction of identity. Working across media and with a transgenerational and intersectional approach, her work aims to question and re-assess narratives that have suffered from monolithic, one-sided integration within History, while looking at such issues from a contemporary prism. She is currently a PhD candidate at Institute Art Gender and Nature in Basel, and University Linz, Austria, producing research on the garden of British artist, filmmaker, author and gay rights activist Derek Jarman (UK, 1942-1994). Since 2019, she's been developing a garden in homage to Jarman's Prospect Cottage at La Becque | Artists Residency, La Tour-de-Peilz, where she's also putting together an archive and artistic programme aimed at raising awareness around Jarman's legacy. In 2015 she founded the research platform and collective Alpina Huus, a performance-led project and research collective dedicated to investigating the relationship between performance and domestic space. Alpina Huus has authored projects Europe-wide, including at Fondation Beyeler, Riehen; the Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon; mumok, Museum Ludwig, Vienna; the Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin; and Arsenic, Contemporary Performing Arts Center, Lausanne.

Sarah Anelle Schönfeld

Based on the assumption that our western liberal understanding of the world is not sufficient to cope with the ever increasing global mess, Sarah Anelle Schönfeld continuously designs various mysterious laboratories, treatments and environments, in which solutions, healing and meaning are attempted to be generated anew with diverse interdisciplinary methods. Schönfeld is jestingly looking for relevant updates of so-called folk wisdom. Her labs materialize through installations, performances, sculptures, instruments, photographs and collages. She includes approaches from various fields in her practice like science, religion, mythology, magic and technology. She investigates different kinds of knowledge – and truth-production which constitute, control and reproduce the human self and reality in our world.

Sarah Anelle Schönfeld lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Her works have been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions including Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz (2023), Art Geneve Musique (2022), HKW Berlin (2021), Belo Campo Lisbon (2021), Berghain (2014/2020), Strasbourg Biennale (2019) Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (2018), MAK Wien/Vienna Biennale (2017), Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2017), Kunstverein Wolfsburg (2016), Hamburger Kunsthalle (2012) and Berlinische Galerie (2010/2011). Schönfeld was granted a travel scholarship by the DAAD to Siberia in 2005, has been a resident at Villa Aurora Los Angeles in 2011, received the FOAM Talents Award of the Foto-Museum Amsterdam in 2014 and a grant of Stiftung Kunstfonds Bonn in 2012 and 2020 and a research grant from the Berlin Senate in 2022. She was commissioned a public sculpture by the New Mexico State University in 2020.

jevouspropose

jevouspropose is a curatorial series by Sabina Kohler and accomplices.

Several times a year, jevouspropose invites a personality to propose an artist with a specific group of works. The works will be installed in the space of jevouspropose, celebrated with an opening and remain on view for a while. At the same time, the respective presentation is expanded and continued in virtual space: the proposer and the artist will have a chat, a visual ping-pong on the works and themes on display ([instagram.com/je_vous_propose](https://www.instagram.com/je_vous_propose)).



Opening hours during Zurich Art Weekend

Friday, 9 June, 11 am – 8 pm

Saturday, 10 June, 11 am – 8 pm

Sunday, 11 June, 11 am – 6 pm

Special Event

Saturday, 10 June, 11 – 11.30 am

Tout Doux: Gong Bath

Sound performance by Sarah Anelle Schönfeld