

MONIKA GRABUSCHNIGG | FANTASY ELECTRIFIES MY HAND

OPENING | **SATURDAY, 12 JANUARY, 11AM - 8PM**

LEIPZIG | 04179 SPINNEREISTRASSE 7

EXHIBITION | **12.1. - 16.3. 2019**



MEDIA | INFORMATION . DATES . TEXT (P. 2) . CV ARTIST (P. 3/4)

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We are beginning the year with the first exhibition of Monika Grabuschnigg in Leipzig and cordially invite you to the opening and winter tour of the SpinnereiGalleries!
All galleries at the Spinnerei will open new exhibitions that day.

Monika Grabuschnigg (*1987) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem and at the Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago. She lives and works in Berlin and was awarded the Berlin Art Prize 2018.

»Fantasy electrifies my hand« presents the work of Monika Grabuschnigg from the last two years, that deals with contemporary intimacies and focuses on the politics of love, desire, and (be)longing in the age of rapid technological advancement - specifically, the internet. The underlying question that connects these works is: Where are our bodies and minds located, in an environment constructed on the pillars of neoliberalism, emotional capitalism and globalism, in a world split between the virtual and real? To understand how we engage with each other is a primary way to understand the system(s) in which we live and crucial to being able to shape the world we inhabit.

Monika Grabuschnigg's solo exhibition at REITER | Leipzig revolves around a central question: what is the place of love and intimacy in our present-day environment split between the virtual and real?

Cognitive psychology tells us that romantic fantasy can be elicited by the smallest of details, the flick of a hair, the dimple in a smile, which constitute the 'signature' of the desired person. Sociologist Eva Illouz, whose writings are central to Grabuschnigg's work, tells how current-day relationships mediated by technology – screens, websites and dating apps – flip this theory on its head: instead of desire being prompted by gestures remembered from the past, it is the product of anticipated imagination. No longer based on real-life touch, technology-enabled intimacy is shaped through other, bodiless gestures – from right swipes and double-taps to sliding into DMs.

This change in tactile function is apparent in Grabuschnigg's new series of ceramic reliefs, where hands are a recurring motif. In *Place yourself where my eyes can feel, where my skin can see* (2018), the near-disembodied fingers tangle and twist, fondle and feel, accentuating the visceral materiality of the clay in which they are inscribed, which is at odds with our digital age's preoccupation with all things slick and smooth. Or again in *Speeding through gestures* (2018), where contorted hands seem to have etched themselves deep into the earthenware, confronting us with the intense physicality of Grabuschnigg's working process: the handling, lifting and glazing of the clay, and her rhythm as she moves around the objects.

The titles of Grabuschnigg's works are rife with allusions to poetry, sociology and philosophical writings on love – Roland Barthes, Alain Badiou, and Eva Illouz, to name a few. They are also peppered with references to time and longing. In works from her series of drawings on paper and clay, like *Awaiting for the sky to overwhelm* (2018) or *Rooted in the dark interior of delay* (2018), we see loose groups of nude figures – a take on Renoir's *Bathers*, perhaps? – engaged in familiar, yet indistinct gestures, their contours suggesting snapshots of moments in time. At the same time, they are infused with a dose of anxiety of the kind commonly induced by contemporary digital romance: how long to wait before double texting after you've been left on 'read'?

"Every contact, for the lover, raises the question of an answer: the skin is asked to reply", Roland Barthes wrote in *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments* (1977), from which the exhibition's title is drawn. Love, as encountered in Monika Grabuschnigg's work, thus evolves in two temporal dimensions. The one, proper to the digital realm of data flows, creates a version of romance fed to us by neoliberalism which makes us ignore material reality in favor of fantasy. The other is embodied in the tactile viscosity of objects fired, punctured, scribbled upon, water spurting and bubbling. Grabuschnigg makes no attempt to conceal cracks in the clay: instead, she highlights them, like the visible relics of trauma – or of a broken touchscreen. Together, these works create a liminal space where desire vacillates between the real and the imagined, a world where fantasy and embodied experience collide and coalesce, electrified.

Text: Rachel Walker

1987	born in Vorarlberg. Austria
2011	Degree Magistra Artium (M.A.), Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Austria
2005-2011	Fine Art studies, Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Austria
2010-2011	Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago de Chile. Chile
2008-2009	Bezalel Academy for Arts and Design, Jerusalem. Israel

Monika Grabuschnigg lives and works in Berlin.

AWARDS AND PRIZES

2018	receives Berlin Art Prize
2016	receives Fine Art Grant by the State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019	Upcoming: »45 cbm« project space, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (May) »Fantasy electrifies my hand« R E I T E R Leipzig
2018	»What Satisfaction Could You Possibly Have« Carbon 12, Dubai. United Arab Emirates
2015	»Rest, you restless guardians« Cosmos Galerie, Bilbao. Spain
2014	»Warporn« IN:SURGO, curated by Vincent Surmont. Berlin

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019	»Nightshades« Polansky Galerie, Prague. Czech Republic (March) Pina – project space Vienna. Austria (TBA)
2018	»A strong desire« PS120. Berlin »Berlin Art Prize« group exhibition of finalists, The Shelf. Berlin »Haptic House« Horse and Pony Fine Arts. Berlin »NGORONGORO 2« Lehderstrasse 34. Berlin »Inside Töpfern« Städtische Galerie Lichtenberg. Berlin
2017	»Auf Einladung« Künstlerhaus Villa Claudia, Feldkirch. Austria
2016	»Bilbao-Bregenz« Bildraum Bodensee, Bregenz. Austria »Visceral Silence« Duo show, Carbon 12 Galerie, Dubai. United Arab Emirates »Flight suit« Alfred Galerie, Tel Aviv. Israel »Eau & Gaz Jahresausstellung« Lanserhaus Eppan, Eppan. Italy »UNEARTHED« Rockelmann & Galerie. Berlin
2014	»Revealing the concealed« P8 Galerie, curated by Shimon Lev, Tel Aviv. Israel
2013	»Open Door Exhibition« Bilbao Arte Foundation, Bilbao. Spain
2012 2012«	»Montag ist erst übermorgen - Junge Kunst auf Papier. Ankäufe des Kupferstichkabinetts 1997- Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Austria
2010	»...and the travel goes on« Galerie Schillerplatz, curated by Edek Bartz, Vienna. Austria
2006.	»walking doubting rolling shinning and musing« Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, curated by Adam Budak, Vienna. Austria

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

2018	Vorarlberger State Museum Collection, Vorarlberg. Austria
2014	Vorarlberger State Museum Collection, Vorarlberg. Austria
2012	The Federal Artothek, Vienna. Austria
2011	The Graphic Collection of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Austria

RESIDENCIES / COLLABORATIONS / FUNDING

- 2019 Upcoming: Queens Collective, Artist in Residence, Marrakesch. Marocco (May-June)
- 2017 »SoART artist in residence« Millstätter See, Kärnten. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- studio funding in Berlin for 6 months. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- 2016 public discussion and tour with Kirsten Helfrich (education department) to Wael Shawky's solo exhibition at KUB Bregenz. Austria
- exhibition funding „Flight suit.“, Alfred Galerie. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- Artist in Residence, Va Independent Space for Contemporary Art. Isfahan. Iran. Funded by: Austrian Forum in Berlin and Tehran, the Federal Chancellery of Austria and the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- Studio funding in Berlin for 12 months. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- 2015 Artist in Residence with Zohar Gottesman, EAU & GAZ, Eppan. Italy
- »We know what's hot where and when« Stage design. Theatre Act by Amit Jacobi, Ufer-studios for contemporary Dance. Berlin
- Artist in Residence. Bilbao Arte Foundation, Bilbao. Spain
- Studio funding in Berlin for 6 months. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- »Ehevuni - Love me Catalog« Collaboration with the Israeli artist Shony Rivnay, single edition, Tel Aviv. Israel
- 2014 project grant Israel. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria
- 2013 Artist in Residence exchange. Bilbao Arte Foundation, Bilbao. Spain. Funded by the Federal State Government of Vorarlberg. Austria

PUBLICATIONS

- 2015 Literatur Vorarlberg special edition "Visuelle Poesie", published by Günter Vallaster and Erika Kronabitter
- 2013 BilbaoArte 2013, Artist in Residence catalog, published by BilbaoArte
- 2006 walking doubting rolling shining and musing, exhibition catalog, published by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna