

Cosmic questions and perceptions of reality

An exhibition is currently being held at *Spazju Kreattiv* which questions the idea of order as a concept. *About Order* looks at order from a wider view, from a universal and worldly perspective, alongside specific cultural and individual orders. The exhibition brings together a group of six international artists whose focus spans a variety of mediums.

María Tello Gutiérrez

María Tello Gutiérrez lives and works in Mexico City. As an artist, she investigates phenomena of vulnerability and healing. The objects she creates - the eye, the stomach, the skull, the skin - look like test objects on which she tests healing methods. Art, magic and ritual come very close.

The artful connection of the fine threads seem to contain old healing powers and secrets that need to be recovered.



María Tello, *Estado de Hidalgo*, 2018 Embroidery (threads and cotton fabric)



Anette Kuhn, *Metaphoric Rock 1*, 2008, pyrographic drawing on foam rubber

Anette Kuhn

Anette Kuhn works with heterogeneous visual worlds, which in the model reflect her view and experience of the world. Based on photography and drawing, her many work processes begin with the collection of image documents in a digital archive.

Mariel Poppe

Mariel Poppe starts from the object and the space, developing her works as a series that deals with the perception of symmetry and balance. She researches organic forms of growth such as coexisting systems in human, plant and animal organisms. Beauty, ambivalence and ambiguity are the defining aspects of her work. In the *Transplants* and *Pores* series, light, inflatable latex objects are created that are reminiscent of organs, cells or mem-

branes. The fragile shells are often connected by tubes, which hang down on IV poles, float in the air or lie on the floor. In the series *Fake Towers*, assemblies of used bricks and model bricks are shown. In recombining architectural stylistic devices as well as in the allusion to ruins, archaeological finds or remains of civilization, absurd architectural fantasies emerge - disregarding statics, gravity and possible realizations: towers that are crooked, perfectly imperfect, manneristically playful and bizarre surreal.



Sabine Linse, o.T. (*Moosmadonna*), 2015, photography

Sabine Linse

Sabine Linse deals with the interplay of expectation, perception and imagination. Her productions are permeated with an enigmatic, absurd atmosphere in which the connection between the familiar and the unknown creates an alliance with the comic and the uncanny. Her visual world is determined by a logic that is related to dreams.

About Order will run until December 6, 2020, and is being curated by Verena Voigt. The project is funded by the Berlin Senate Department for Culture and Europe, the German-Maltese Circle, Valletta and Frank Basten-Stiftung, Leipzig. Spazju Kreattiv encourages audiences to physically experience the exhibition; however, there are also opportunities to see the exhibition in its online gallery and to follow features from the artists and the curator at www.kreattivita.org/en/event/about-order.



Sandra Contreras, *Time Traveller*, 2020, linen fabric

Sandra Contreras

Sandra Contreras deals with cosmological questions about the beginning and end of the universe, its magnetic fields as well as the teachings of Pythagoras, Copernicus and Babylonian astrology. Her embroidered works follow the structures of nature, body and cosmos and create complex textile images. Narratives emerge which you can

read that are derived from cultural history and at the same time touch on contemporary issues. Contreras does not use a sewing machine, she sews 'by hand'. Such handmade objects have existed in people's homes for thousands of years. As aesthetic objects, they influence everyday life and are involved in religious and ritual acts. The interaction of hand, fabric and embroidery creates an impressive counterpoint to the digital.



Héctor Velázquez Gutiérrez, *Self Portrait*, 2018, polyester resin, with Mariel Poppe, *Fake Towers*, 2020, miniature bricks, bricks

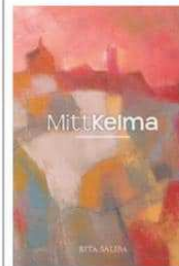
Héctor Velázquez Gutiérrez

In his works, Héctor Velázquez Gutiérrez examines the relationship between the human body and its surroundings. He explores physical forms and their perceptions and investigates the interactions between the different sensory organs. For him, art is almost a ritual process of introspection. Velázquez interweaves his complex ideas about the

human body with new and used 'skin surfaces'. In his artistic research, he traces the relationships between the human body, topographic maps, ornamental landscape formations, skin surfaces (dermis) and clothing. The use of mainly textile materials such as threads and used clothing, but also materials such as silver, meteorites and obsidians, create physical structures that invite the viewer to create an emotional relationship.

Intrigue, crime and comedy

A hundred mini-stories



MITTKELMA

by Rita Saliba. Available from Midsea Books.

PAUL XUEREB

Short stories can be very long, and even those of an average length can be a few thousand words long. In this collection, Rita Saliba has decided to write mini-stories, all exactly a hundred words long, and has written a hundred of them.

Many of them are first-person narratives, reminding the reader of what she says in her foreword to the book, that there are autobiographical elements in a number of the stories. Another interesting statement of hers in the foreword is that each story is by way of being a little trip she and the reader have 'woven' together, meaning, I imagine, that the stories are interplays of her reactions to her experiences of others.

Most of the pieces have a satisfying completeness. The best ones end with a punchy line that is amusing, such as *Rabja*, where the narrator suffers the tirade of a shrewish wife with equanimity, revealing in the last sentence that his hearing-aid had been switched off while she was speaking. More disconcerting to readers living through this pandemic

year is to discover at the end of *Passi* that the narrator's acts such as looking for remnants of food in an empty supermarket are due to his or her being the only person in town spared by a supervirus.

Terapija alternattiva is an amusing piece, surely autobiographical in nature. Gustav has tried to find means of ridding himself of his depression, and has failed again and again. He has always sought to do things, such as changing wives, to alienate him from his ailment, but succeeds only when he begins to write stories for others.

Another piece about making things for others is *Qlugh*, where a model yacht made by the narrator attracts attention for different reasons, but not for the one the maker had in mind. This seems to be a comment on the different ways in which a created work affects different viewers, and rarely to the maker's satisfaction.

In some cases the author wants to create a *frisson*. In *Forensika*, the story is narrated by a forensic scientist who finds herself the victim of a criminally-minded colleague, whilst in *Abrakadabra*, a woman who has served as a magician's subject for tricks lets us into a gruesome secret, while making us chuckle rather than shudder.

But perhaps the most chilling story is *Helsien*, told by an insane narrator. Indeed, each story in *Mittkelma* will make you eager to read the next.

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