

CHANGE THE SKETCH! [KISMODOTI-SKETU]

GABRIELE HORNDASCH



OCTOBER 20. - DECEMBER 30, 2022

EXCERPTS FROM THE ARTIST CONVERSATION BETWEEN IRENE WEINGARTNER AND GABRIELE HORNDASCH

IW: Yes, I thought long and hard about how to start this conversation. On the one hand, of course, there is the title of the exhibition or the question of where all the shoes in the front exhibition room come from... I already know some of your works, from the light installations to the anagrams, and it is now nice to see this complex of very different works come together. – Something happens in the brain, new connections are created between the works. I wonder how much you would link these works together in terms of content? That's exactly what I'd like to talk about. But first to the title *Ändern Sie die Skizze!* [*Kismodoti-Sketu*] – *Change the Sketch!* in English, that I found very interesting.

I also noticed a bit how the exhibition had changed, because at the opening there were far fewer works to see and then the exhibition filled up more and more over time... The shoes in the front exhibition room and the video installation in the back room were already there, but the neon signs were still missing. These were only added step by step in the course of the exhibition and I asked myself whether the title *Change the sketch!* was a kind of order or commission to yourself to approach the exhibition as a sketch that you constantly change?

Exhibition view front room: *Case de Sandales* (with Modou Case and Papa Gora Kane, Dakar), 2022 and one-channel video installation *Case de Sandales; My first line* (part I), neon installation and installation with shoes *Post Scriptum*





Exhibition view rear room, video installation *Change the sketch! [Vampires]*, 80 min color, using the play *Disease or Modern Women* by Elfriede Jelinek - courtesy of the publisher: with Caro Adam Bay and Diana Natalia Seyerle (actresses), Tino Kukulies (camera, sound, color grading) and *My first line* (part 3), neon installation

GH: That's a nice interpretation.

But the title actually comes from a different context. *Kismo-doti-Sketu* was created from an annagram from a cosmetics studio, the lettering that I had once installed in a pond in a park in Düsseldorf/GER. During the evening two women sat down in front of the work and told everyone that in Lithuanian or Latvian that meant: *Change the sketch*. I'm pretty sure that's not true, because I checked in advance if the new wording could mean anything.

I liked this story so much that I thought I had to call an exhibition like that.

IW: The neon letters you work with are usually found objects and you use the original terms to build anagrams of them. For example, with the illuminated letters *Schaden Schnell-dienst* (engl.: damage express service), with which you repeatedly formed new texts and terms with in a perfor-

mance as part of PASSAGE (2021) – an exhibition project in a shopping mall with vacant shops during the corona lockdowns, organized by DAS ESSZIMMER.

And this also makes me think of the sketchiness of your exhibition that I mentioned earlier.

Whenever I think about your work, I wonder if you consciously want things to remain sketchy. I wonder how important is it for you that the works, which are created from found footage, so to speak, retain their own interpretative openness?

GH: Well, I actually always or very often work with rubbish and ultimately, for example, the light installation, that was added during the exhibition, was originally intended for disposal.

The change in the exhibition over time ultimately also has something to do with the fact that we were only able to

start the scenic readings of the Jelinek play for the video installation in mid-September; and the opening of the exhibition at DAS ESSZIMMER was in mid-October. So it was clear I had to choose one or the other for the opening. I then decided to do the video installation in the back room and to install the light installation in the weeks following the opening.

The rooms at DAS ESSZIMMER are super nice and big, but I also found them incredibly difficult, especially the front exhibition room. It was also important to me to connect both rooms.

A long time ago, an artist friend of mine gave me fluorescent tubes, which I always wanted to do something with. – I think it was originally advertising material for Grundig and this is how this light installation came about, which runs through all the exhibition rooms and through the

IW: And how did you get the title *My first line*?

GH: Maybe because I've been drawing and teaching drawing for two years just recently. – Funny enough, during my art studies, one of my first assignments was, what Stefan Demuth, my teacher at the time, gave us. We should make our first conscious stroke. This task kept me motivated.



Exhibition view, back room: My first stroke (part 3), neon installation

IW: The flip-flop installation in the front exhibition room is a result of a collaboration during a residency in Dakar/Senegal, which was primarily about design...

GH: I changed this installation again today. All materials, i.e. the flip-flops and the rice bag as sun protection are actually rubbish. The rice sacks are always in the sun and fade, so I turned the travel sack from the roof over, so that you can see the unfaded, protective eagle better, which also creates a nice association. The whole thing was installed on the beach in Dakar and is also something like a simple beach box.

It's also important for me to say that this work is a collaborative effort with two local artists and an environmental activist who fights against plastic waste in Dakar. Thanks to *Design Up*, I was able to work together with many other artists from Germany, local craftsmen and artists in Dakar. The flip-flop tower did not arrive in Wuppertal until one day after the opening, which is why only the beamer stood in the sand at the opening of the exhibition and projected the video of the installation that was made in Dakar.

The idea for the *flip-flop installation* came to me while looking at the many unfinished buildings in Dakar that shape the cityscape with their skeletons. Flip-flops already have these 3 holes for mounting the toe loops, which are ideal for pulling something through.

I wanted to transfer this concept of flip-flops as a building material to our Western context, and that's how the shoe installations developed. Since the European adaptation of the flip-flop tower cannot/must not stand in the sand, I had to think of something else. The Jelinek play, from which passages are read in the rear exhibition room, helped me. In the play itself there are about 5 persons who race back and forth on roller skates in the background throughout the whole play. – That's why the shoe towers are now on roller skates.

IW: These two works, in the front and rear exhibition room, which at first are not so obviously related to each other, but which then belong together, even if one does not have the information about the roller skates in the Jelinek piece, i.e. when sketches unexpectedly form a whole, the Flip-Flops from Senegal meet Central European shoes and... are these strategies in your work?

GH: I think we still live in very colonialist structures. We were able to travel to Dakar because the Federal Foreign Office funded the project. But artists in Dakar cannot come to

Germany because there are no funds. That simply does not work. That's pretty bitter. Well, that alone is, I think, colonialism.

Independently of that, I came across Jelinek's play because I wanted to get involved with theatre. On the one hand because I've become increasingly interested in theater lately and on the other hand because I've also worked there. In the theater it's usually not about food, it's always about relationships. – And of course working in Dakar is also about relationships. But when I was looking for a piece about food, I came across Jelinek, of which I'm very happy about, since the play is also about vampirism.

IW: This Jelinek piece is also a bit brutal and the empty pairs of shoes from the front exhibition space create associations after the Jelinek passages that make you wonder what happened to all the people to whom the shoes belonged...

GH: I'm very happy and a little surprised by this work. I got the shoes relatively quickly from a Catholic second-hand shop in Düsseldorf. Very kindly they gave me shoes that they didn't sell. Then I perforated them all. Then they lay perforated in a big heap in my studio and I got chills down my spine from these mountains of shoes. My very first thought was Auschwitz and then my second association was a wonderful detective story by Fred Vargas. Where limbs were found still in their shoes.

But after I skewered the shoes – which was really hard work because the flip-flops already had holes and all I had to do was use this red electric tube that is used in construction works and is also easy to find in the garbage pull throughout Dakar. – It was really hard work with the shoes.

In addition to the unpleasant associations that the shoe installation evokes, one thinks more of a shoe shop – especially when it comes to the prettier models – with which the association with consumption and, above all, disposable consumption gains more weight again.



Exhibition view front room: *Case de Sandales* (with Modou Case and Papa Gora Kane, Dakar), 2022 and single-channel video installation *Case de Sandales; My first line (part 1)*, neon installation and installation with shoes *Post Scriptum*

IW: The play by Elfriede Jelinek *Illness or Modern Women*, premiered in Bad Godesberg/GER in 1987, was the basis for your video installation in the rear exhibition room. Diana and Caro, the two actresses, each play a woman and a man, i.e. 4 roles. – The male part can be recognized by the raised mustaches. The women there become vampires in the second part of the play.

GH: I didn't use the whole piece and it's not a real staging. It used the second part of the play and it is a scenic reading. Well, I don't think I could have afforded to pay the actresses to memorize the entire play...

For my production I wanted to create a connection to the so-called *China Girls*¹, how the test shots for the color calibration of a film have been called. In the days of analogue film, every film laboratory had its own color chart. Sometimes that was the prettiest women in the lab, and sometimes they became really famous. I have worked a lot on this material and also collected it. That was the starting point for my stage design for the video installation.

IW: So that's how the colored areas came about?

GH: Yes, exactly.

I chose the second part because it is the story of two heterosexual couples. In the first part and in the second part they reversed the roles. So it's Emily and Dr. Cliff, Emily is a nurse and vampire and Dr. Cliff is a specialist in spine and gynecology and also has the appropriate chair in his practice, but only in the first part. The second couple is Doctor Benno Suitcase, a tax consultant, and his wife, housewife Camilla, who is heavily pregnant with their sixth child. And then she loses it at the end of the first part and then she becomes a vampire too. And then the women and the men always appear one after the other. That's why I was able to do it in such a way that the two actresses play all the roles. – They only had to hold a mustache in front of their face. Each scene has a different background color and different color-coordinated clothing. – The mustaches also change all the time.

Footnote 1:

In the film industry, a *Chinese girl* is a type of test film, an image of a woman accompanied by color bars, appearing for a few frames (usually one to four) at the beginning of the film. A *China Girl* was used by the lab technician for calibration purposes when developing the film (the photographic equivalent being a *Shirley Card*).

The origin of the term is disputed^[2] but is usually accepted as referring to the models used to make the film the frames were used - either they were actually porcelain mannequins or the makeup worn by the living models made them appear like mannequins.

Shirley Card: <https://hdkv.de/leseraum/shirley-card/>



Exhibition view rear room, video installation *Change the sketch! [Vampires]*, 80 min color;
using the play *Disease or Modern Women* by Elfriede Jelinek - courtesy of the publisher:
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Education

- 2016 Video-Installationen & Videos (2007 - 2016) in Archiv und Vertrieb für internationale Videokunst imai
- 2002 Ankauf von Kurzfilmen (1997 - 2002) durch das Filmmuseum Düsseldorf
- 1998 Akademiefest bei Irmin Kamp und Jannis Kounellis / Meisterschülerin von Irmin Kamp
- 93/98 Kunstakademie Düsseldorf / Bildhauerei und Film / Video (Nan Hoover; Stephan Sachs)

Stipends, Residencies (selection)

- 2020 2. Preis Ideenwettbewerb 39er Denkmal Düsseldorf mit BIERBAUM. AICHELE.landschaftsarchitekten
Atelierstipendium Salzamt Linz/AT
- 2018 Etaneno: Artist in Residence / Namibia
- 13/14 Gastaufenthalt Organhaus Art Space / Chongqing/CN
- 2013 Arbeitsstipendium Stiftung Kunstfonds / Bonn
- 2012 Fundaziun NAIRS, Zentrum für Gegenwartskunst / Scuol/CH
- 10/11 Cit. Internationale des Arts Paris / Auslandsstipendium Nordrhein-Westfalen
- 2010 Seoksu Art Project / Stone&Water Residency / Anyang/Südkorea
- 2009 Auslandsstipendium NRW / Gachang Art Studios Residency / Daegu City/Südkorea
- 2007 Gastaufenthalt Changdong & Goyang Art Studio / Seoul/Südkorea
- 2006 Arbeitsstipendium der Kunststiftung NRW / Nachwuchsförderung
- 1997 Reisestipendium des Kunstvereins für die Rheinlande und Westfalen

Relevant Activities

- 21/22 Lehrauftrag: Bild & Narration / Zeichnung & Illustration / 8 SWS / Design / HSD Hochschule Düsseldorf
- 19-21 Lehrauftrag: Grundlagen der Gestaltung / 7 SWS / Digital Media & Experiment / FH Bielefeld
- 17/20 Führungen:Theorie und Praxis mit Kindern / Museum Kunstpalast Düsseldorf
- 2017 Kuratieren der Ausstellung: Bettina Gruber; Luise Heuter; Georg Jansen / Kunstraum Düsseldorf
- 2014 Kuratieren: 16mm Cinema Reihe in der Julia Stoschek Collection / Düsseldorf
- 1997 Reisestipendium des Kunstvereins für die Rheinlande und Westfalen

Solos Shows (selection, since 2012)

- 2017 ein autohaus im park Parkhaus im Malkastenpark / Düsseldorf
- 2016 S letter MMIII Kunstverein Mönchengladbach e.V.
- 2015 stereoskopie Onomato Künstlerverein / Düsseldorf
- 2013 guests from all directions... Organhaus Art Space / Chongqing/CN
kigilser penön Kunstverein Brühl
- 11/1 zwischen den zeichen* mit Maiko Sugano, Japanisches Kulturinstitut /Köln
- 2011 course de carottes Performance Place de la Nation Paris/F
- 2010 ottenSmann / wo taut es nu Kiosk 24 / Herford
schadenschnelldienst in der Reihe Now & Next / tanzhaus nrw/Düsseldorf
- 2007 visitenkarte Goyang Art Studio Gallery / Seoul/Südkorea
lesezeichen Comme ci Comme .a II / Köln

- 2005 guckkasten / taucher Wunderkammer / Stuttgart
die großen maler und ihre werke Raum Claudia Simon / Düsseldorf
- 2004 kußfilm... Filmabend Galerie Van Horn / Düsseldorf
- 2003 ne pas se pencher au dehors... Comme ci Comme .a III / Leudersdorf
- 2002 filmriß Kunstverein Kohlenhof / Nürnberg
- 2001 chinese girls infection manifesto ausstellungsraum / Düsseldorf

Group Shows

- 2021 guests from all directions... in man-made landscape_Hotel Asia Project
Chengdu Times Museum/CN
les oiseaux et le poulet mit Daouda Diouma / Senegal / Kunstbüchchen
Ratingen-Lintorf
ercedes enz in wenn ich ihr wäre mit Grundmann / Kleppe / Niehaus / St.
Gertrud K.In
kot tod – sei musik in die grosse NRW-Forum Düsseldorf
schadenschnelldienst, Ausstellungsprojekt PASSAGE u.a. mit Camenisch/
Vetsch initiiert von DAS ESSZIMMER – Raum für Kunst+, Bonn
- 2020 benefit for artists Pilotprojekt einer digitalen Verkaufsausstellung von taifun
project e.V. / Düsseldorf
typografische übung in 800 mÇ eingeladen von Klaus Schmitt / Textilhaus
Sinn / M.nchengladbach
- 19/20 kunst am bau - modellentwürfe für das rathausfoyer ratingen Museum Ratingen
- 2019 d-polytop – Kunst aus Düsseldorf* Kunsthalle Düsseldorf
schloss raum körper* Schlo. Ratibor / Roth
fire flies kuratiert von Thomas Klein / Malkastenpark Düsseldorf
- 2018 S letter Beitrag zu digital gods / kuratiert von Wilko Austermann / Welt-
kunstzimmer / Düsseldorf
versteckte cathrine in The Bodies Speak in Tongues Screening kuratiert
von Anne Bitterwolf,
Berlinische Galerie / Deutscher Künstlerbund / Berlin
heterotopia on the route* kuratiert von Ni Kun / Galaxy Museum Art /
Chongqing / China
onomato stipendiaten ausstellung Onomato / Düsseldorf
- 2017 14' 15'' * im Programm der Stiftung Imai / Internationale Kurzfilmtage
Oberhausen
3 S letters in das esszimmer goes weltraum Weltraum / Basel / Schweiz
die grosse* Museum Kunstpalast / Düsseldorf
- 2016 filosofen flüstern Beitrag zu invasion 02 von Wicky Reindl und Henrike
Franz, plan.d / Düsseldorf
- 2015 back from chongqing Atelier am Eck / Düsseldorf
konjunktion im 47. haus Beitrag zu Oktoberfilme kuratiert von Birgit
Martin / BBK / Düsseldorf
i never got a PhD mit Berti, Teich, Rasch; Ballhaus im Nordpark / Düsseldorf
- 2014 elan – arbeiten aus paris Galerie Sittart / Düsseldorf
another place another space together Off-Spaces Quadriennale / Düsseldorf
malaise dans l'esthétique Siedlung der ehemaligen Kupferfabrik /
Chongqing / China
- 2013 bilder der nacht Kunst Galerie / Fürth
die grosse* Museum Kunstpalast / Düsseldorf
- 2012 jahresausstellung Bündner Kunstmuseum / Chur / Schweiz
das eigene... hommage an hannah h.ch Deutscher Künstlerbund / Berlin



Exhibition view inner courtyard: *My first line (part 2)*, neon installation

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image on front:

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