

GALERIE SANDRA BÜRGEL

Sandra Hauser
Mein Schwein!

Opening Reception, December 1st 2018, 7-10 p.m.
Exhibition Dec 4 – Feb 23 2019

Meat Display

Sophie Baumgärtner, Catherine Biocca, Gabi Blum & Paulina Nolte, Katie Jayne Britchford, Anna McCarthy, Damenkapelle / Edition Julia Pfaller, Lena Gätjens, Matthias Glas, Kristina Heinrichs, Simone Kessler, Edie Monetti, Domino Pyttel, Lisa Reitmeier, Andrea Salvino, Lorenzo Scotto di Luzio, Wolfgang Stehle, Tatjana Živanović-Wegele

The second solo exhibition of Sandra Hauser in Berlin, „Mein Schwein!“, borrows motifs from the film "Porcile" (1969) by Pier Paolo Pasolini and follows the initial commercial use of the exhibition space. Until the 1960s, the gallery housed a branch of the eldest Berlin meat products factory („Berliner Fleischwarenfabrik“), A. Hefter, „Purveyor to the Royal Court“ since 1878, and one of the first caterers after the First World War with rolling kitchen vans („Stadtküchen“). It is therefore a space "that carries with it an unyielding cohesion" (Hauser). Moreover, as part of her solo exhibition, Sandra Hauser has asked other artists to help her fill a meat counter display.

In „Porcile“ („Pigsty“), Pasolini sets out to "crystallize horror," in his own words, „an upsetting, and gentle, film“, that „proposes no outcome nor solution“. In „Porcile“ we find two stories unfold simultaneously in alternate montage. The first, referred to as „silent, meta-historical“ by the director, is set in a distant past: A man dwelling in a dusty volcanic landscape for unknown reasons turns to cannibalism, until he and others joining him are caught and fed to the dogs by a punitive village community. The Cannibalism, with severed heads thrown into a smoking crater, acts like a drastic lapse of Christian iconography, of a primordial society, or its opposite. The second "talking, historical“ episode, equally more bestial and humorous, centers around an old industrialist family in a bourgeoisie residence in West Germany's Bad Godesberg. (Only 300 meters far from here in Berlin lies the Kruppstraße.) Mr. Klotz, armourer in the Third Reich, now sells "cheese, wool, buttons, beer" and is involved in merger discussions with his rival Mr. Herdhitze, a former KZ doctor with a new, neo-capitalist identity. The catatonic son of Klotz only feels well with pigs. He will be devoured by them with skin and hair. There is no possibility for disobedience.

Geflügel, Hammel, Schwein, Kalb, Leber, Zunge, Ohr, Krebs, Sülze, Gemüse in Aspik. Poultry, mutton, pork, veal, liver, tongue, ear, crab, brawn, vegetables in aspic. From a recipe book by A. Hefter, 1933: "Dear housewife! You can safely send children or domestic servants for shopping / pickup where there is a ‚National Control‘ cash register. You swiftly receive a printed receipt.“

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These advertisements bear witness to sterile roles of men and women as well as an advancing automation. Not only in slaughterhouses do split pig crowds correlate with an increase in hygiene. A butcher doesn't just take the knife in his hands and the killing off from others, he also praises his meat. Our relationship to him is as unmistakable as it is insane. It is based on prohibition and recommendation and has long been delegated to machines. Does the degree of industrialisation of meat production say anything about the degeneration of society?

Sandra Hauser, who has worked as a stage and costume designer and in direction before studying fine arts in Munich and Rome, works uncommonly theme-related, with an affinity "for the display of propertied bourgeois attitude" and the "tightrope walk between classical novel and dime novel" (Stephan Huber). In doing so, she devotes herself to stagings in the true sense of the word: she reveals objects, situations and works, retrieves them, sets them up in public. Similarly, a certain illustrative character of some drawings and paintings, when sometimes you aren't sure whether they have been newly made or have existed already before, results from this context. "He slept all his life in the bed of his birth" („Er schlief sein Leben lang im Bett seiner Geburt“), this is the title of an ink drawing (2014) apt to express the entanglement of poetry and violence, of severe seriousness and humor in the art works of Sandra Hauser. Meanwhile, her interest in characters and figurines has shifted to social spaces and their cultural-historical dimensions. In "Fahrenheit ° 451" (2017), she paved a room with 950 library books, published from the Second French Republic to the 1960s, technically intended for decay in the cellar of the mayor of Villemur-sur-Tarn. A floor mosaic that could only be read by stepping on it. The upset community would commit to an archive later on. In some of the artist's works time arises like a heavy, bare body, otherwise fallen ill with pulmonary consumption, if we do not address it.