

KW

Anna Daučíková

7 June – 18 August 19

Schering Stiftung Art Award 2018:

Anna Daučíková

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Opening: 6 June 19, 7 pm

Anna Daučíková (born in 1950, Bratislava, SK) is the recipient of the Schering Stiftung Art Award 2018, which is bestowed by the Schering Stiftung in cooperation with KW. Over the last five decades, the artist has developed a comprehensive oeuvre that comprises painting, photography, collage, film, and sculpture. Her approach is characterized by an extraordinary sensibility for the way overarching societal structures shape self-definition and personal expression. In her work Daučíková negotiates a space where linear authorship and customary rules no longer apply.

Daučíková moved to Moscow in the late 1970s and remained there for over a decade. During this time she started to develop a practice that explored the concept of the “mental body,” a result of her preoccupation with what she coined as “inbetweenness,” a term used to express her transgender identity. Her practice unfolded during the dissolution of Soviet modernism and was significantly shaped by a conceptual approach, which included documenting her surroundings and exploring numerical systems and the notion of abstraction as a way to find the personal in abstract orders. Since the 1990s and after the end of the bipolar Cold War era, the artist not only became an advocate for the LGBTQ community back in Bratislava but also turned her eye inwards, focusing increasingly on manifestations of her queer self-understanding within the profound changes of post-Cold War society.

The large-scale monographic exhibition at KW surveys work from the past four decades alongside a new commission, which reaches back to the artist’s early training in glass work as part of her fine and applied arts study as well as her fascination for glass and its ambiguous status between materiality and immateriality, craft and concept.

Upon entering the exhibition’s first room, viewers are introduced to the artist’s persona through one of the central pieces in the show: *Upbringing Exercise* (1996), a work consisting of eighteen black-and-white images, organized through the punctuation of horizontal and vertical lines, where the resulting grid mirrors the rhythmic movement of the images themselves. The images capture the artist’s various poses as she presses a big sheet of glass against her chest with great bodily tension. Her chest, in turn, is flattened into a two-dimensional surface. Hardly autonomous, the glass here serves as a tool for the performative act whilst simultaneously creating its image. The body is captured in a state of becoming, anticipating a yet to be constituted way of existing in the world. The newly designed exhibition architecture, consisting of large-



Anna Daučíková, *Upbringing by Touch*, 1996, photograph, Courtesy the artist, photo: Anny Daučíkovej

scale glass panels, follows this trajectory by treating glass as the locus of image production.

Moving on to the second room, one encounters an early work entitled *Family Album* (1988), which was made during the artist’s Moscow years. While in *Upbringing Exercise* the moment of abstraction occurs through the scheme of flatness, here drinking glasses are abstracted from their original utilitarian reality, acting as substitutes for bodies. Representing various configurations of and relationships between family members, they comment on normalized gender roles within the domestic sphere, which in turn predetermine the overall organization of society. This is suggested by their placements in front of windows.

And even though these works are determined geometrical principals of form, they equally come into being through an all-pervasive poetic sensibility. The latter surfaces in the three-channel video work *On Allomorphing* (2017), which testifies to the artist’s literary attitude in combining autobiography, history, and philosophy. This attitude is also manifested in the style of filming, in which the “camera as prosthetic”¹ acts like a viewer’s or reader’s eye wandering over a book page or screen. The motif of the prosthetic also reappears in the jewelry works which Anna Daučíková made while studying at the Academy of fine Arts in Bratislava. Shown within a newly conceived glass display alongside self-made polaroids that show the artist cutting her nails in an overly sexualized manner, the jewelry’s shiny surfaces and stylized shapes come to signify a playful sense of desire which is also echoed in the large scale installation in the KW’s hall.

The newly commissioned work *Expedition for Four Hands and Accompaniment* (2019) consists of a three-channel film projected onto screens, engraved glass sheets positioned on the floor, and an accompanying publication available in the space. The work sets out on the journey of trying to articulate oneself without relying on secure, finalized notions of identity. The artist therefore introduces the scenery of a cave, which, with its psychological and metaphorical connotations, functions as the film's visual and symbolic backdrop. In front of the blurry, dark imagery, schematic drawings of hands repeatedly appear, showing long-lost folkloristic dance instructions originally from the Caucasus. The screens on the left and right side show two hands performing two different actions. While on the left side the artist cuts glass, supposedly male hands handle cloths on the right, both playfully navigating traditionally gendered movements. Both the installation of glass sheets on the floor and the publication aim to transcend this theatrical realm. They address the contemporary political situation by commenting on the highly precarious situations of transgender people throughout the world. The publication is especially dedicated to the Greek human rights activist and drag queen Zak Kostopoulos, who was tragically murdered in 2018.² Thus the work shifts away from a single autobiographical perspective, towards a shared one.

- 1 Paul B. Preciado, *documenta 14 Daybook*
- 2 Zak Kostopoulos died as a consequence of brutal beatings in Athens, 2018. Zak was a queer human rights activist, who also raised awareness by performing as the drag queen Zackie Oh. After the incident, mainstream media constructed the narrative of a junkie trying to rob a jewelry store. After it became known that it was Kostopoulos who died, civil society agents, the LGBTQ community, and their lawyers began openly questioning the version provided by the media and denounced the lack of a police investigation.



Anna Daučíková, *On Allomorphing*, 2017, video still, Courtesy the artist, photo: Anny Daučíkovej

Public program

Artist talk with Anna Daučíková, moderated by curator Cathrin Mayer
8 June 19, 5 pm
Venue: KW Studio

Screening and talk with Sharon Hayes
Ricerche: three (2013), *In My Little Corner of the World, Anyone Would Love You* (2016)
Followed by a talk with Sharon Hayes, Mason Leaver-Yap and Cathrin Mayer
26 June 19, 7 pm
Venue: Pogo Bar
5 € / 3 € reduced

Curator's tour with Cathrin Mayer
27 June 19, 6 pm

Reading and talk with Quinn Latimer and Anna Daučíková
4 July 19, 7 pm
Venue: KW Studio

... *Because you appear in it, and so does she, and she.*
Performance by Katharina Aigner
9 July 19, 7 pm
Venue: KW Studio
5 € / 3 € reduced

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Opening hours

Wednesday–Monday 11 am–7 pm
Thursday 11 am–9 pm
Closed on Tuesday

Admission

8 € / 6 € reduced
Combined Day Ticket KW / me Collectors Room Berlin
10 € / 8 € reduced
berlinpass holder 4 €
Free admission to people up to the age of 18, KW Lover*, and on Thursday evenings from 6 to 9 pm

Guided Tours

KW offers free guided tours through the exhibition during regular opening hours. For further information on tours for large groups (over 10 people), please contact Duygu Örs at do@kw-berlin.de or +49 30 243459-132.

Schering Stiftung Art Award

The Schering Stiftung Art Award is awarded by the Schering Stiftung in cooperation with KW Institute for Contemporary Art. It honors international artists who can be considered as the most important positions in the last couple of years and who pursue an outstanding original artistic approach. The award is endowed with a prize money of 10,000 Euro and a solo exhibition at KW, for which a new artwork is created. Coinciding with the exhibition, a monographic catalogue will be produced. Since 2005, the Schering Stiftung Art Award has been awarded biannually. Previous prize winners include Cornelia Renz, Nairy Baghramian, Renata Lucas, Wael Shawky, Kate Cooper, and Hiwa K. This is the seventh time that the prize has been awarded, and the fifth time in cooperation with KW.



Colophon

Curators: Anna Gritz, Cathrin Mayer
Head of Production: Claire Spilker
Technical Management: Wilken Schade
Head of Installation and Media Technology: Markus Krieger
Installation Team: KW Installation Team
Registrar: Monika Grzymislawska
Public Program and Outreach: Sabrina Herrmann
Head of Press and Communication: Karoline Köber
Text and Editing: Anna Gritz, Friederike Klapp, Karoline Köber, Cathrin Mayer
Interns: Lutz Breiting, Daniela Nadwornicek, Sarah Wessel

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