

Geschnitten und Gerieben / Cut and Grated

with works by Renate Hampke, Susanne Pomrehn, Ursula Sax, Stefan Thiel and the installation *Bibliothek/Library* by Li Silberberg

March/April 2020

All five artists selected for this exhibition have developed a unique artistic practice when creating their artworks.

This exhibition can well be described as a further differentiation of the well-received group show *Penetrating Paper – Drilled, Cut, Folded...* from 2017. But then there are the wood works by Renate Hampke, who has created her series *Gefingert/Digitate* by rubbing graphite powder not only onto paper but also plain birch panels. She creates minimal pattern works on the one hand, and on the other she also gives way to bundled energy and gesture.

Susanne Pomrehn has been well-known for her photo cuts for almost 2 decades now. For this exhibition she has used the private photo archive by Semjon H. N. Semjon to create her stunning cuts, which abduct us into a world that cannot be deciphered and leave a strong impression of the abstract narrative she develops through her technique of cutting, inverting, pulling apart the photographs, and creating layers of realities. And thus, her new series is called *Multi-Layered*. The private world, the private history, which has been materialized and preserved *inter alea* through these album photographs has become the foundation for Susanne Pomrehn's unique interpretation and has therewith developed a new and independent life.

The German master of sculpture, Ursula Sax, is also interested in paper beyond its classical use for drawing. Her paper reliefs from the 1990ies demonstrate this approach. Paper becomes a sculptural material as being cut, drilled, grated, torn and thus expanded into the space, exposing its fragile and sensitive nature – its wound – and a strong demonstration of confidence at the same time.

Li Silberberg introduces us to her long-term project *Bibliothek/Library*, which she has been continuously developing for 22 years in more than 40.000 hours of work. One could say that she is inscribing her life into these artist books, which are becoming

sculptural works through the factor of time and the technique of treating the single pages in meditative daily sessions with her plain hands and ink. The result is an overwhelming library installation with a powerful and soulful voice, which involves and touches us instantaneously. The impressive volume consists of 181 artist books and 40 sketch and diary books. The public library, which will happen to own this installation within its public space, will be fortunate to exhibit this metaphor of the self-conception of a library as a location in which knowledge is acquired, communicated and shared as well as preserved.

Stefan Thiel, the reknown master of paper cuts, transfers his photographs into the vibrant and virtuoso world of voids and sensitive silhouettes of branches and vortices from the banks of the Stechlin lake (north-east of Berlin) and other waters. Even the mirroring effect of water is translated through his masterly technique and you can even feel the breeze in the landscape and experience the delicate tree branches becoming three-dimensional.

Semjon H. N. Semjon
March 2020