

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Berlin, 17th January 2022

Dear Colleagues,
We are pleased to invite you to the opening
of the following exhibitions:

JUNKO MARUYAMA

Alles Lebt

THEODOULOS POLYVIU & DAKIS PANAYIOTOU

Transmundane Economies

BIRGIT DIEKER

One for Sorrow, Two for Joy

KATRIN JAQUET

neg

Exhibitions: 14TH JANUARY – 6TH FEBRUARY 2022
Tuesday – Sunday, 14 – 19h
Showroom at Kottbusser Straße 10

ATELIERS UND BÜROS: Kohlfurter Straße 41-43 · 10999 Berlin · SCHAURAUM: Kottbusser Straße 10

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RECHTSFORM: Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH · SITZ: Berlin · AG Charlottenburg

GESCHÄFTSFÜHRUNG: Christoph Tannert · Andrea Boche · HANDELSREGISTER: HRG 8089

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

JUNKO MARUYAMA ALLES LEBT

"Manonamanamono", that's what Junko Maruyama calls her sculptures created from homemade soap, a large number of which occupy the interior of a tent, the fabric of which has also been thinly coated with soap.

"Manonamanamono" is a term of art, a word invented by the artist. It aims at something spiritually atmospheric, ephemeral, at a state that is not yet, but evolving between "raw" and "ephemeral".

You can write any Japanese word in different sign languages. The artist writes her artificial word Manonamanamono, clearly oriented towards sound and phonetic language, in Hirigana. Each Hirigana character stands for a mora, the basic unit of Japanese sound.

Junko Maruyama's life and art are characterized by universal thinking. The world, man and every creature, the weather, the environment, all materials and her own intuition determine the time and place of each work of art.

The overall installation of tent and soap objects is complemented by soap drawings on a wooden background and an animated film. The quiet murmur of the moving images, the fragility of the thin layer of soap on wooden panels and the arrangement of objects and nylon cloth to form a cave-like shelter give the impression of an interrelated spiritual cosmos. In accordance with the Japanese folk belief Tsukumogami, Maruyama invokes an animistic conception of object relations that assumes an ensoulment of things. With "Alles Lebt" (Everything is alive), an intimate space is created in which the exhibition visitor feels reminded of the value of things that seem so self-evident through the sensitivity and care Maruyama takes in handling the materials. Entering the tent construction evokes associations with the human body and the objects spread out on the floor there are reminiscent of embryos in form, materiality and colour. The uniqueness inherent in every creature and thing is just as palpable as the transience with which every existence moves towards an end. "Everything is alive" brings this ambivalences of our reality of life into consciousness.

JUNKO MARUYAMA (*1976 in Yamanashi, Japan) left Japan 1998 to study art with a focus on sculpture at City University New York, Hunter College. She had previously completed her studies in International Relations at Ritsumeikan University and had come to the realisation that art as a form of mediation and communication was of strong interest to her. Since 2004 Maruyama has been living and working as a visual artist in Kanagawa (Japan).

<http://maruyamajunko.com/>

Junko Maruyama is a grantee of Bunka-chō, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan.

The artist would like to thank the restaurant Goldies, Han West, TSUTSU, Langanos and Dakwahl for providing her with the used cooking oil.

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

THEODOULOS POLYVIU & DAKIS PANAYIOTOU

Transmundane Economies

Bellapais Abbey, the ruin of a 13th century monastery in northern Cyprus, is the subject of investigation for the site-specific, virtual installation "Transmundane Economies". Testament to many lives, following the different colonial periods over the centuries, the monastery went through changes, architectural but also cultural, organizational and operational.

Theo & Daki address the long-lasting, shape-shifting history of Bellapais Abbey to discuss the codes and hierarchies that have been established and inscribed into it over the years. Starting from the architectural structure as well as the ceremonial use of the place, while examining its narratives, liturgy and history, the artists speculate on the relationship between queerness, restoration and reinvention.

Visitors to the exhibition are immersed in the partial reconstruction – based on drawings by George Jeffrey from 1912 – of the monastery's Gothic refectory by means of VR technology. In this way, alternative paths and possible uses that deviate from colonial interventions of the past become visible, free and accessible. The virtual architecture, which in its digital translation appears to be sacred yet free of Christian intentions, in turn exposes the socio-political fabrication of the monastery. Besides this conceptual grounding, by virtually transposing the site into the gallery space, the artists turn the ruin into an event rather than an object, proposing an alternative to acquisition in this way.

The Cypriot Orthodox Church exerts a strong influence on the political affairs on Cypriot and participates in the instrumentalization of the national collectivity, often through the superintendence of gender and sexuality. In doing so, it claims to protect the Greek Cypriots from 'the ethnic other' as described by Nayia Kamenou in her text "Sexuality, Gender and Nationhood in Cyprus", and hence exploits the country's postcolonial milieu. The queer community on the whole island is therefore not only subjected to marginalisation based on their sexuality but on all the processes of identity formation that constitute their bodies; race, class and gender. "Transmundane Economies" is an offer to discuss mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, and to think of the potentiality of any place to transcend its own physicality and hence escape its embodied ideological charge and power.

THEODOULOS POLYVIU (*1989 in Nicosia, Cyprus) & DAKIS PANAYIOTOU (*1988 in Limassol, Cyprus) = Theo & Daki are an artist duo from Cyprus working together since 2018. The pair seek to find unity through their work. The amalgamation of their practices is politically motivated and removes the focus on individual creative oneness, to provide an opportunity for the artists to excogitate on a 'hybrid' mode of production. Theo & Daki have been developing research around virtual reality from a decolonial position and in doing so they resituate exhibition-making through virtual and experiential happenings, shifting away from the dominant, institutional narratives. In an era of virtual citizenship, where political decisions and laws transform physical space into a virtual territory, the artists revisit Cyprus as a colonised site within EU borders.

In 2021, Theo & Daki showed their work in the Cyprus Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale.

Writer Jazmina Figueroa has been commissioned to arrange a sound piece for the installation at Künstlerhaus Bethanien.

THEODOULOS POLYVIU is a grantee of UNDO Contemporary Arts and Cultural Services and the Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus.

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

BIRGIT DIEKER

One for Sorrow, Two for Joy

The relationship between Self as Skin and Self as in the Skin is particularly important for Birgit Dieker's artistic thinking. She is thinking of skin not only as the outer surface of the body, but also as the boundary between inside and outside, private and public, between the self and the world. For her, skin is a surface of encounters for intimacy and closeness.

Crises such as the current Covid-19 pandemic, as well as other problems of our high-performance consumer society, demand strong personalities on the one hand but promote insecurities and fears, longings and obsessions, dreams and traumas on the other. The resulting themes underlie Dieker's artistic work. She is concerned with questions about identity, about the integral togetherness of body and personality, about the composition that we call "I".

The artist conceives pictorial settings that trace the body's metamorphoses from an external form to an internal state of being (and vice versa).

Here, constructing and losing a form are not only artistic methods; they correspond to physical experiential values. Through the sensitive perception of different material stimuli, Birgit Dieker attempts to generate access to a network of relationships characterized by associations. The material not only determines her sculptures; it also stands for itself and takes on content-related tasks. In addition to textiles, leather, rubber, hair, truck tarpaulin or bitumen, it may also be real everyday objects such as a plumber's pipe, antlers, motorcycle gear, buoys, lifebelts, rope or mannequins.

Clothing plays a particular part in this. As the epitome of the second skin, as a boundary metaphor, but also as a synonym for the self, clothing constitutes a significant material for Dieker. Body and clothing relate very closely, so that this duality can also be discerned in their reciprocal proxy-connection. Clothing serves as protection as well as being used to stage the self. Discarded clothing contains characteristics of its wearer, being linked to one or more identities, to lived experiences and memories - the ideal material to represent the manifold layers of selfhood.

BIRGIT DIEKER (*1969 in Gescher, lives in Berlin) studied German philology at the Technical University Berlin, and art education at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin (now UdK, Berlin University of the Arts). She completed her studies in sculpture as a master pupil of Michael Schoenholtz. The artist, who has been awarded several prizes and scholarships, has presented her work in national and international solo and group exhibitions. In 2022, she will be participating in the exhibition "Das Gehirn. In Kunst und Wissenschaft" at the Bundeskunsthalle Bonn. She is planning a solo exhibition for 2023 entitled "Housewarming", to be shown at the Mönchehaus Museum Goslar.

www.birgit-dieker.de

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

KATRIN JAQUET

neg

In her work, Katrin Jaquet considers the medium of photography and its modes of operation. She is particularly interested in how the technical, aesthetic and psychological aspects of photography are intertwined.

The series "neg" deals with family photos. Starting from a very personal angle, Jaquet approaches issues that go beyond the individual.

After the death of her mother several years ago, she inherited all the family albums from a period of more than a hundred years. Most of these photos convey the image of a happy family – a positive image. And just as the pictures show no quarrels, the negatives are missing from the archive.

Jaquet is interested in the concept of the negative as potential, and so she produces the missing negatives digitally and overlays them with positives by combining similar motifs from different generations. In doing so, she searches for the point where both images merge to create something new corresponding to her inner, ambivalent image: family is not only security, family is also unease, family is also traces of German history.

KATRIN JAQUET (born in Rendsburg in 1971) studied fine arts at Muthesius University Kiel with Renate Anger and Hubertus von Amelunxen, as well as Romance studies, art history and philosophy at Christian Albrecht University of Kiel and art theory at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Paris with Alain Bonfand and Jean-François Chevrier. She has lived and worked in Berlin since 2000.

www.katrinjaquet.de

Instagram: [katrinjaquet](https://www.instagram.com/katrinjaquet)