

GALERIE TANJA WAGNER

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Paula Doepfner

Whatever gets you through the night, it's alright, it's alright

Opening: November 15, 6 – 9 pm

Exhibition: November 15, 2014 – January 17, 2015

Artist talk with Paula Doepfner and Durs Grünbein

January 14, 2015 at 7pm

Ah, that there can be the abstract phenomenom of being, The existence of consciousness and reality, Whatever these may be- How express the horror that all of this causes me? How tell what it's like to feel this?
Fernando Pessoa

Galerie Tanja Wagner is pleased to present new works by **Paula Doepfner**.

Her works continue to engage with the human consciousness. The artist increasingly stresses the subjective experiences of mental conditions and the relationship between emotions and neuronal processes.

Neurophilosophical writings taken from the *philosophy of mind* (edited by David Chalmers, 2002) and passages from *The first year* by Durs Grünbein as well as passages from *The Book of Disquiet* by Fernando Pessoa constitute the starting point of her work. While the theoretical writings explore the “hard problem of consciousness“ and investigate the question how subjective experiences operate, Grünbein and Pessoa describe internal processes and approach the complexity through poetry.

Doepfner doesn't only work with her references intellectually but also incorporates them as handwritten transcriptions into her objects and drawings. In her current exhibition a series of ice sculptures hangs from the ceiling. Various notes are layered inside the objects: neuroscientific reports, reflections by Durs Grünbein and Fernando Pessoa along with song lyrics by Bessie Smith, written with a red marker on paper.

Over the course of the exhibition the ice melts and exposes the frozen texts. The melting water drops into metal basins which start rusting over time. Further ice sculptures with additional texts will be installed after the previous ice sculptures have melted completely. Doepfner's installation is under constant transformation. It is in essence ephemeral and cannot be repeated.

Installed on the walls are large format works on paper with tiny drawn dots, finely equilibrated handwriting and pressed plants. These handwritings are based on the *philosophy of mind* and combine neurophilosophical positions from Descartes to the present.

The writings form a grid that grows into nerve-like structures which lead to the pressed plants. In addition to the drawings, large format works of dried flowers, earth and pigment on cracked bulletproof glass panels are presented. The glass was taken from a destroyed front of a luxury apartment building in Berlin. Mixed together with earth and pigment the flowers form organic objects that Doepfner relates to brain mapping, visualizing the functional organization of the human brain.

Paula Doepfner's work combines powerful and fragile materials, scientific rigour and poetic openness. She visualizes the inconsistency and complexity of inner conditions and addresses the difficulty to understand subjective experiences. Further questions that influence Doepfner's work engage with philosophical issues: Will neuroscientific analysis of the human consciousness help us to understand the finite nature of our existence? Is the investigation of our subjective experiences able to provide us with results that can serve as a foundation for a critical discussion about current trends of radicalisation with politics and religion?

Paula Doepfner born 1980, lives and works in Berlin.

She studied at the Universität der Künste Berlin with Rebecca Horn and Burkhard Held. Her works were on view at the following institutions: S2A, New York; Kunstverein östliches Sauerland, Brilon; Kunstverein Mainz; Ionion Center for the Arts, Kefalonia; Temporäre Kunsthalle, Berlin; A Foundation Liverpool; Bomann-Museum Celle and Shedhalle in Tübingen.

Upcoming exhibition:

Kapwani Kiwanga January 30 – March 6, 2015