

Terforations – complex structures made of paper, space, and time

by Margareta Sandhofer

Angela Glajcar certainly chooses an out-of-the-ordinary material, namely paper, to create her sculptures, some of which have truly monumental proportions. While the use of papier-mâché in sculpting is nothing new, Angela Glajcar's approach is, if not unusual or bizarre, then very particular and striking in terms of its radical purism: She exclusively uses sheets of white paper, out of which she tears parts. Relying only on mechanical fixtures, she then assembles these torn sheets one in front of another to form her sculptures and installations. This extreme minimalism in her working method is not the product of some programmatic concept, as it arose almost by coincidence, but it is definitely now a unique, characterizing feature of her output.

Angela Glajcar's oeuvre at a glance

After studying sculpture at the Nuremberg Academy of Fine Arts from 1991 to 1998, Angela Glajcar produced huge and solid sculptures made of steel and wood. She found collaging the technique best suited to what she wanted to achieve. She tore sheets of white paper or paper painted black into shapes and systematically combined them to form a surface that reflected the interaction of the three-dimensional parts of the figure she wished to create in wood or in metal (1999-007 thru 2000-0010, Noyane Skizze 2000-012, 2000-013). While the sculptural effect of these flat, black-white collages was in itself persuasive in visual terms, Glajcar intensified it by raising individual segments (2000-20, 2000-023, 2000-024, 2002-001, 2002-002). Increasingly, Angela Glajcar gave these highly contrasting reliefs a status of their own, something that culminated in the first large-format series *Contrarius* (2002-016 thru 2002-018). To display the pieces, she attached the collage of torn sections directly to the wall. Given their sizes of up to three meters, the works encapsulated architecture and cast theatrical shadows (2003-008 thru 2003-020, 2003-023, 2003-039 thru 2003-041, 2003-060). For Angela Glajcar, the *Contrarius* pieces marked her winning a battle in her constant aspiration to lift the massed volume of the sculpture upwards, as it were to transform our given knowledge of weight and gravity into a sense of lightness, to realize something "that no one will believe possible". It was this she had achieved with the *Contrarius* series. In the process, what had become clear to her were the properties of paper collaging, the infinite potential sheets of paper offered a sculptor.

After a brief phase (2002-3) in which Angela Glajcar produced collages alongside classical sculptures and as their equals, she resolved to fundamentally and rigorously concentrate on paper. In 2004, a competition hosted by Museum Wiesbaden offered her an opportunity to realize a large wall piece over 15 meters in length: A combination of gouache on paper and untreated paper with torn forms, *Contrarius* 2004-001 stretched along the wall and also out over the floor. One year later, Angela Glajcar realized another larger site-specific installation – *Contrarius Raum V* 2005-005 – at Kunstverein Ludwigshafen, which started from the wall and extended proudly and freely out into the higher reaches of the hall. After the end of the exhibition, Angela Glajcar archived the material in the form of a bound book, only to again discern sculptural potential – in the relief of the book as was: The notion of fanning such a relief out to form a large spatial installation marked the beginning of the work group she

called “Terforations”.¹ In 2006, Angela Glajcar started the major series with Terforation 2006-003 at the Nassauische Sparkasse Wiesbaden Art Collection, and has been continuing it ever since. Her site-specific intervention unfolded above the viewers’ heads in vertical layers across an impressive length of 18 meters. She had torn cavities into the interior of the overall volume which, depending on where you stood, offered you a view into the diaphanous structure.

It is precisely this purist use of her material that gives Angela Glajcar such liberty in realizing a broad raft of site-specific pieces. Unlike conventional sculptures that first and foremost concentrate solipsistically on themselves and stand in a particular place in casual oblivion to their surroundings, her Terforations afford an inexhaustible wealth of opportunities for addressing the specific space and, on the basis of her analysis of the setting, for creating an intervention that in each case possesses a character all of its own.

Space

Angela Glajcar’s sculptures and installations derive their corporeal presence from the distance between the sheets of paper: The latter evolve a sculptural dimension from their multifaceted interaction with the emptiness of space that functions here as a corporeal element. Intangible emptiness, the nothingness of the interstice, is framed by the individual sheets of paper, rendered visible, and imbued with spatial presence and power – impacting in a complex manner on surroundings and viewers alike. These expansive installations subordinate and distort space, lead to corrections in proportions, or foster tension within the particular space. That said, even a smaller sculpture on the wall intervenes in the given structure, generating a sense of height and depth in the particular gallery, shifting the architectural relationships.

Light

Light and its colors play an elementary role here. Depending on the lighting conditions, the angle of light can bring the gallery space and above all the work to life. Frontally, light collides with the piece and is reflected, while from the side it gets fragmented between the layers of sheets of paper. Reflection and the creation of shadows instill the almost incorporeal structures with power and plasticity, animating the entire space.

If the lighting varies, then the appearance of each piece changes. Modulations in the natural (or artificial) light allow them to develop their complex essence, their vibrancy, and their character – properties that may themselves be in a constant process of transformation. The dimension of time is reflected as a pictorial factor in the light and becomes a quintessential property of the work. These sculptures prove to be permanent metamorphoses, full of lyricism and yet ambivalent.

Materiality

Angela Glajcar’s pieces possess an enchanting translucence and lightness, something attributable to the use of plain white sheets of paper. With this flat and almost weightless material, she proceeds to unleash astonishingly monumental and sculptural effects. She consciously factors viewers’ unsettled, ambivalent responses to the work into the piece while

¹ Cf. Hanten-Schmidt, S.: Angela Glajcar Catalogue raisonné, (Cologne, 2013), p. 36. Angela Glajcar herself coined the term “Terforation”. It derives from the Latin foramen = hole and/or perforation, and terra/earth, and alludes to terra incognita (unknown, unexplored territories).

also considering their knowledge of the familiar material and the manifold ways in which it is used. Even after they have been assembled, the sheets of paper remain a vibrant material with the sense of waves they evoke. Paper has a good memory, which is why it is important to store it correctly; nevertheless, it has a certain resilience to oscillations in humidity levels. Each type of paper has its own specific properties, paper from a roll behaves differently to paper in loose sheets; each type of paper tears along an edge characteristic for it and depending on the torn opening it hangs and moves differently. If the paper is coated by a layer of black gouache then it is heavier, stiffer, and languid. It rolls up in a less idiosyncratic manner than does untreated white paper. In her “Contrarius” series, Angela Glajcar combines the two different types of paper and in this way achieves a striking contrast with a dynamic all of its own.

Approach

Angela Glajcar’s method derives from a form of materialism, as it were, as she starts by working with the properties of the material; she processes it so precisely that it assumes the intended shape. In exact preparatory works made on-screen using 3D simulations, she visualizes the look she seeks for the sculpture. The screen is the stage on which she digitally composes the choreography of the arrangement – an activity that she then finally accords to the light which, when encountering the white paper of the object, causes manifold shadows and at times dips it in numerous nuances of color such as essentially to transmute its appearance.²

During the actual production phase, Glajcar may deviate from the concluded concept in terms of details; indeed, this may spontaneously occur during the installation process as Angela does not feel that she is snared in a strict duty to follow the original plan. However, by and large she remains faithful to the plot.

The digital act of conceptualization runs contrary in a way to the “primitive” act of tearing. The distanced stance Glajcar takes when planning and creating the piece at the computer, relying on complex programs in the process, flips into its opposite as soon as she gets hands-on and tears into the sheets of paper – or tears them up. A more direct handling of the material is hardly conceivable; the processing here is direct and physical, and at times is an exertion. In the material realization of the piece, her artistic signature is reduced to the concentrated tactile act of tearing in line with the concept. In her considered restraint while working with the paper, Angela Glajcar toys masterfully with the controlled response of the material.

Effect on the viewer

The purist, minimalist act of tearing gives rise to a complex effect as well as manifold interpretations depending on the context. Angela Glajcar feels the act of tearing gives her great scope and by the same token she leaves room for interpretations that can differ greatly. The finished piece eludes any unequivocal determination, with the individual interpretation often reflecting the respective viewer’s prior experiences. The structures harbor a great degree of subjectivity; they encourage the viewer to project an emotional narrative on to them, one that each person perceives differently.

² On the references in the oeuvre to dance and choreography, see Hanten-Schmidt, S.: Angela Glajcar, Catalogue raisonné, (Cologne, 2013), p. 28 f.

Just as the artist's handling of the material is so very direct, so too viewing Angela Glajcar's oeuvre is a direct encounter with paper as a material in all its originality. It is experienced directly, often in light of its mutability, as a constant metamorphosis.

We respond emotionally to paper, grasp it as an historical and archaic material, feel its lightness and fragility. In terms of its violability and tenderness, it is reminiscent of skin. The sheet of paper is an unwritten expanse, as white as nothingness, innocent and pure – and Angela Glajcar transforms this innocence into a striking sculpture with a being of its own, telling us its story, taking the stage with its resolute, impressive presence. In viewers it triggers unforeseeable sensations of which they can only to a slight extent have had any premonition, affecting them immediately, physically. At times, the viewer standing before these pieces is seized by the feeling of physical exposure they evoke – whereby this relationship between work and viewer can be the precise opposite.

Plastic, glass fabric

When Angela Glajcar felt the need to create art for outdoors, embracing it as a welcome challenge, she extended the spectrum of materials she uses to include thin plastic panels. The panels are about three millimeters thick and she saws them and heats them, and lastly she molds them. To lend the shape of the transparent material visibility and volume, she subsequently sands the surface somewhat. The resulting translucent, glowing body is so alien as to resemble some utopian flying object, and creates the impression that space is simply leaking out of it.

Given the need to use material that was non-flammable, Angela Glajcar developed her "Corum" series using glass fabric, from which she devises sculptural objects, installations and expansive site-specific pieces. The white glass fabric is as organic as textiles and reflects the light. Angela Glajcar spans the fabric in spacious strips that she then carefully hangs one over the other before cutting individual threads out of them. The fabric bulges in different ways depending on whether the weft or warp threads are reduced; some threads are left dangling and interlock the fragmented spatial compartments. The result is three-dimensional cross-hatching that is distorted when cast as a shadow, the image thus transformed in the reproduction. With its gossamer lightness, the structure floats before us like a fairy. With its multilayered translucence, it resembles some ethereal being, lucid and yet discontinuous, imbued with a power we cannot define.

The sculptures and installations made of plastic and glass fabric bring to mind wondrous, spiritual beings, unreal and seemingly from a different world. That said, plastic and glass fabric do not have as strong an emotional effect as paper. Paper possesses a far greater panoply of creative possibilities and a stronger atmospheric effect, not to mention the special significance of the tear in paper.

The tear

The act of tearing differs considerably from that of cutting; bereft of instrumentation, it is more immediate, closer, and more physical. The tear exhibits at its edges traces of a coarse, human dimension while seeming purist and archaic. The edge of the tear looks different, depending on the side of the sheet of paper you look at. Angela Glajcar works with both views of the tear; she controls the tear and its appearance with the utmost precision. On one side of the sheet, the surface remains intact up to the torn silhouette and there develops a

certain dynamism; on the other side, the tear edge runs like a rough strip from the silhouette to the surface of the sheet of paper. Light rubs up against the rough edge of the tear, space flows across it, almost tangibly dissipating in the process before coming up against limits. Here, the tear highlights the paper's intrinsic structure, exposing its insides. With its softness and vulnerability, the edge of the tear denotes the wound, and the torn opening seems painful, with a manifest vehemence that is quite touching.

In Angela Glajcar's sculptures, the tear functions as the hinge between positive and negative space. It opens up crevasses and gaps, the interstice that so characterizes the works.

We are offered bottomless insights, impenetrable abysses – and what lies between them as the difficult form of existence of a heterogeneous structure. Each overall piece is framed in fragmentation, bundled, and folded open as a being, indeed a spectacular apparition with a monumental presence, yet the tear reveals a precarious sensitivity that stimulates the eye.

Terforations

In 2006, Angela Glajcar produced her first "Terforation", and has since then consistently advanced this specific type of sculpture. The overall body of a Terforation resembles a compact block, the volume of which has been dissolved into spatial fragments. The layers of the individual sheets function as spatial dividers, and into their outer limits Angela Glajcar has torn openings and formed cavities. The composition derives from the constancy of the sequence and arrangement of the sheets and how they are torn. If she gives a "Terforation" a torn outer edge, then the piece seems more open and corresponds more strongly with its surroundings. If she retains the cut outer edges of the sheets, the statement the piece makes changes and the work no longer seems so introspective.

In the interstices between the sheets, space becomes rhythmically divided and sub-divided. Space is then no longer homogeneous but experienced in its fragmentation, as a harmonious discontinuity and in this regard heterogeneous.

The sculptural oeuvre, the space it occupies, is also visible here in its negative form as the empty spaces. Above all, this negative form reveals the volume that radiates activity. The outer shape references the inner form, as the torn cavities, defined by the outer limits that frame them, the envelope of the paper, harbor the sculptural potential.

At the digital stage of creation, Angela Glajcar already factors in how the 'Terforation' can be viewed from all sides and visualizes the multiple interactions with the surrounding space by using 3D software. Her focus has always been on movement and its overlap with the particular space, evidencing the influence of her early contact with dancers: Angela Glajcar acts as a choreographer, space is her stage, the sculpture the dancer. Her works are fragile and acute; in terms of their constitution, their highlighted rhythm, a sensibility generates a specific space for itself.

There is a wide range of different 'Terforations', with the size, shape and key characteristics varying immensely. This diversity can best be outlined by describing a few specimen works.

Object-based 'Terforations'

Alongside the large installations, Glajcar's oeuvre also features object-like 'Terforations' or ones created like reliefs.

For the Contrarius Terforation 2019-001 (fig.) she painted sheets of paper with black ink and assembled them in a series alternating with untreated sheets. This especially brings the torn edges of the openings, which taper inwards, to the fore. Despite not being overly large (87 x

52 x 42 cm), the piece possesses a strong spatial presence, as the sharp contrast between smooth black surface and soft, coarse, white torn edges gives rise to a dynamic forward thrust. The diaphanous structure has an architectural feel and eschews any closed volume: With its many aspects, it is neither fragile nor compact but resembles a large set of sub-segments that, while being bundled to form an animated edifice, refuse or quite simply are unable to form a homogeneous whole. The individual sheets roll up in too idiosyncratic a way for that to happen – and strive zestfully outwards in the process. The piece seems to be living but stuck to the wall, like a sea anemone on a reef in the depths of the ocean, an enigmatic being, solipsistically concentrating on itself.

Compared to this dramatic appearance of the subjectivized Contrarius Terforation 2019-001, Terforation Sasa 2019-005 (fig.) seems withdrawn qua hermetic object. The white paper resembles injured skin, the process of tearing remains tangible as a painful experience. Something had happened to this object. Unlike Contrarius Terforation 2019-001 or other installations that usually exude an active potential, it seems like an artefact, on which something, a being or a force, has left its mark. Its 'has a soft, sentimental and vulnerable air to it. When the rose light of evening falls on its surfaces and edges, the piece becomes almost organic and its sensitive opening erotic, the fine, roughened structure kindling a desire that is unsettling

One 'Terforation' that Angela Glajcar made using thicker paper seems as massive as a cliff that juts out from the wall. With its emphatic materiality, Terforation 2020-001 (fig.) seems robust, the sheets leathery and strong. On the surface, but also at the edges on the sides, cavities have burrowed into the depths, creating the impression that we are witnessing a section of something larger, as if we were viewing one geological segment. The piece resembles the remaining shell of a force long since extinguished, a force that caused the interventions. The edges of the tears draw the eye inwards, bringing about a kind of melancholy, the search for that fleeting moment of which we are seeing traces.

Sometimes Angela Glajcar frames such an object, Terbloc 2019-046 (fig.) being a case in point. Captured behind glass, it is reminiscent of an archaeological find from some ancient time, shifted by human hand and presented as a remote object on a wall. It seems tamed, yet the closer one gets to it, the more that impression wobbles. The object withdraws into the loneliness of its shape, drawing our eyes into its depths in the process, without revealing them, however. It is on the retreat, wants to keep us at a distance; yet we want to fathom it, and in this way it triggers nebulous thoughts in the pondering viewer. The deeper one delves into this mysterious opposite, the more convoluted the notions the imagination comes up with. A diffuse sense of yearning arises, and the subversive feeling of a pending loss sharpens our senses as we stand before the piece.

'Terforations' as installations

While these object-like 'Terforations' exert an astonishingly immersive power, this is immensely amplified in the large installations. They intervene in the respective space, disturb the venue in its totality, and tug the viewer directly into their world. At Museum Wiesbaden there is a permanent site-specific work to be seen: Terforation 2007-062, made by Angela Glajcar in 2007 as a large walk-through installation. The blocklike volume functions as a closed shape with an open structure offering four different views or countless ones if you wander past, because the sheets of paper act like louvers and you can only in part see

through them. This 'Terforation' is open to the outside world on its longitudinal sides with its soft indentations, and with the gap in it encourages you to enter. On the narrow ends the gaze is repelled and entry denied. Contrary to the original way the sheets were hung – in regular intervals – the material's inherent properties have won out and it has rolled up slightly, setting the stringent system into soft motion. From the outside it seems innocent, from the inside seductive, the visitor entering it is engrossed by the structure but embraced by a soft, dreamy atmosphere. Owing to its associative pull, however, the cavity torn into the sculpture has an engulfing effect, as if one were being engorged by the stomach of an uncanny creature. In Terforation 2007-062 we discern an ambivalence that was to become all the stronger in later works.

With her 'Terforation' installations, Angela Glajcar consciously intervenes in the existing architectural constellations and influences the prevalent atmospheric impact the space has.

In 2008, she was commissioned by the City of Frankfurt Dept. for Culture to fit out its main meeting room with an installation that would absorb the strongly echoing acoustics of the unusually high interior. Terforation X/I 2008-182 roots organically in the wall and thrusts outward from there, a powerful structure that floats above the heads of those convening, watching over the meeting. It seems to have grown out of the wall or have climbed out of the architecture like a genie out of a bottle, visionary and somehow reminiscent of a sci-fi scene.

For all its multiple layers, the monumental installation is homogeneous in appearance. Angela Glajcar then added her openings with strikingly broad tear edges so that the coarse insides are exposed – in several layers. They refract the light in countless fine nuances of white, all of which, however, seem to radiate a sensuous warmth compared to the cold white of the walls, and even the individual sheets of paper convey a corporeality so that the large sculpture exudes softness and physical closeness. As a vibrant, organic structure, it stretches up into the heights, an animated benevolent cloud that some may find brings a Chinese dragon to mind.

The unpleasant acoustics were a real problem and now Angela Glajcar's intervention absorbs the sound. However, it not only masters the acoustics; it has subjugated the previously strange proportions of the meeting room, has pushed itself in from of the ugly platform, and lessened the unseemly height of the room. The sculpture changes and dominates the entire room and its mood. It is constantly renewing itself with the incidence of natural light and likewise through the respective view of it. It prompts those present to constantly change their position round the meeting table, to change their angle, and indirectly possibly to be more flexible in their minds. In other words, it clearly steers behavior in the hall.

Terforation X/I 2008-182 has appropriated the entire room, filled the emptiness with its volume and with meaning. Since it has transformed the architectural constellations into a harmonious whole, and its white reflects the colors of the surroundings, it enters into a real bond with the room. It leads you into its depths like a *tromp d'oeuil* on the ceiling, oscillating between intellectual exaggeration and seductive sensuousness.

Sometimes, the character of the sculptural intervention is more clearly subjective and emanates persuasive activity: One example is Terforation 2015-021 (fig.), a site-specific intervention that makes its way like a large beast from one visually distinct spatial compartment to the next, thus forging an elementary, dynamic link between the two. It gazes back at us, peering round the corner like Terforation 2015-021 or lurking with

subcutaneous aggression and restrained force like Terforation 2019-005 (fig.). In the uppermost zone of a narrow corridor, torn paper sheets are lined up across its entire breadth, floating above us like so many teeth that could fall upon us. If one switches on the artificial lighting above the installation, things change. It becomes a light-giving apparition and transforms the passageway into a cave structured by light and shadow, its flattering sheets kindling a sense of comfortable safety as you walk beneath them.

Angela Glajcar is increasingly breaking with the strictly closed outer shape of her interventions and opening them up to the surrounding space, which entails greater effort as regards the at times quite complicated assembly of the series. In Terforation 2019-040 (fig. Cheongju, South Korea, July 2019) she has two strands drawing closer together then converging in a conically tapered block. What is still a homogeneous shape she then tears apart to create a veritable vortex in the later site-specific installation Infinity – Terforation 2019-043 (fig. Sharjah, UAE, December 2019); it fans out freely and quite vigorously, occupying the surrounding space as it goes beyond its own set shape. The piece is in flux, or rather in a vortex of origination; with its idiosyncratic rhythm, it drags or draws the material along with it. With each step, the impenetrable piece appears different to us, and new aspects of this multi-layered structure emerge. We find ourselves following our curiosity and walking round the sculpture, immersed in its thus intensifying complexity.

In Infinity – Terforation 2019-043 Angela Glajcar devises a rush of choreography, intensifying the interwoven nature of the mutual interplay of space, object, and viewer, helping the sculpture for all its restrained materiality to take the stage most dramatically. The intervention seems to be in the midst of an ecstatic dance – it looks back, subjectivizes, manifests challenging potential. Infinity – Terforation 2019-043 is the first piece with the vortex effect and to date the last realized on a large scale.

paperwalls (Kringelbilder)

The artist developed her 'paperwalls' series from the material extracted by the tears in the 'Terforations'. She tears the pieces of paper into strips, bundles them, and mounts them on a background or directly on the wall. The results spill like plants out of a cliff wall. Each structure distinguishes itself as a flow of organic waves, bulging and rolling towards us in cheeky curls.

The arbitrary power of the material's own properties is astonishing, seemingly defying gravity; the exact reaction of the torn strips of paper is again something the artist's hand can control to a limited extent only, and the dimensions are not unlimited given that the paper can only roll up to a certain extent. Angela Glajcar explores precisely this reach. The insides torn from the larger pieces in the process of making them now unravel outside in excessive sets of curls, the piece is inside-out as it were. It almost seems to be something created in the rocaille style, romantic with its snugly waves, almost figurative or representational, coquettish in an extroverted idiom.

The 'Terforations' and their essence

We fundamentally perceive Angela Glajcar's 'Terforations' as large shapes that appear in either of two different guises. We can view these large shapes from the outside (as with Terforation X/I 2008-182 or Terforation 2019-040 and Infinity – Terforation 2019-043) or our gaze leads us into their insides (as with Terforation 2007-062 or Terforation 2019-005).

Using but a little material, Angela Glajcar creates monumental phenomena. Their effect depends on their scale and height. The actual later effect of the work when realized is something Angela Glajcar plots in advance with the digital draft, although the poetry derives from the materialization and not least the presence of the tears. Angela Glajcar does not seek some mimetic form; the piece is not representational in the sense of it depicting something. It does not represent anything, does not repeat some other presence, as its own real presence is achieved by embracing and delimiting interstices, empty spaces, nothing. The shape assumed derives solely from the associations of the person perceiving it. 'Terforations' are not hermetically sealed structures – neither to the outside world, nor intrinsically; the individual spatial segments inter-penetrate and lose themselves in one another. They interact with architectural elements, intervene in the surrounding space to change it, are quite able to counteract the motion of a staircase with their own rhythm, superimpose themselves on an ugly, misshapen platform, reflect the colors of a room or hall in terms of the given lighting, and breathe life into a dead space. The space becomes a stage as a consequence, one on which the intervention unleashes its powers and kindles emotions in the beholder. Angela Glajcar's interventions can lead us into poetic contemplation or draw the gaze into vertiginous depths and heights. Often, the 'Terforations' reach upwards, for the stars, rising up like towers of ice or cumulus cloud. As a result, the architecture is visually expanded or broken open. The effect is similar to that of cloud formations in the illusionistic Baroque or Late Baroque ceiling frescoes. The 'Terforations' open out into space, while also interfacing with it, jutting out into it. The sculpture emerges from this paradoxical complexity of materiality, the space's emptiness as well as its volume, a surreal and unsettling interweaving into which we find ourselves thrust. In their desire for a balanced state in which they are one with the surrounding space, the 'Terforations' seize hold of its gaze and also ours, suggestively entwining us in their immersive cosmos. Initially, the installations seem to be autonomous, but the more expansive they seek to be, the more strongly we can discern the interaction with and dependence on their surroundings and its conditions, and the more complexly they become woven up in paradox. The unique yet masterful dialectic derives from this paradox, and that dialectic then also includes the viewers as a factor that changes this relationship once again and lays the basis for the sculpture's real presence. It is the latter that evokes that specific concentrated context, by virtue of which Angela Glajcar's installations so astonish us.

Narration and ambivalence

Angela Glajcar's 'Terforations' exhibit a visual and processual complexity. The latter trait derives initially from the fact that the work evolves from a sequence of individual sheets – it unfolds its essence under our explorative eye when we immerse our gaze in the space. The processuality continues in the object's ability to communicate. The object never presents itself in isolation, and even behind a pane of glass it communicates. It suggestively reveals itself and its narration as a field or screen onto which we can project our associations. In its multi-layered difference it narrates its particular state. That difference derives first from the distance between one sheet of paper and the next, and second from the difference to a pristine sheet, third in the difference to the regularity of architecture and any regular system of ordering, and then in the difference to the customary, hermetically sealed sculpture as a structure that evades any unequivocal categorization and yet asserts its own status. Yet again, there is the difference between its own appearances depending on the light that falls on it.

The works oscillate between presence and representation. They present themselves as activated, subjectified essences that exude an idiosyncratic status of their own and possess discernible potential in a discernible process. On the other hand, each work shows itself to be an object on which something that was present there before or an external energy has left its traces or marks – it represents the past exercise of energy and stands for a concluded process.

The work's narration unravels in its silent discourse with the space and the viewer; it is based not only in the work's actual spatial presence, but above all in the injuries that the object exposes when it opens out to the viewer. It reveals its inner life when viewed directly, a moment that stimulates the mind and is touching. It tells a story about touch and distancing. These opposites collide in the very process of its origination, from the digital draft to the act of tearing, in the hanging and its exhibited display. The often monumental shape the work assumes in its elevated position speaks of a changed sensibility, it receives us both masterfully and powerfully, can affect us and embrace us, not to say devour us. Alternatively, it may withdraw into itself and from an injured distance tells us of its new existence as the history of violation.³

The objects always present the process of tearing; painfulness is always innate in their narration and thus also an ambiguity of the dimension of time. The torn openings point like wounds to the past and make the latter present. Past and present collide, in the moment of pain the now jars against the then. Sometimes this can only be felt superficially and clearly, at other times it is concealed behind the structure's monumental character, but never erased.

Even a powerful 'Terforation' like Terforation X/I 2008-182 (in the assembly hall in Frankfurt) can resemble an injured dragon who relies on his ever-present powers. This is not to deny the possibility of sentimentally yearning for the inviolate ordinary past state. The piece describes a new configuration that subjugates or disturbs the existing order of its surroundings, and also shifts our perspective and orientation. Yet the past converges with the present in a constellation – the two are bound up in an erratic dialectic and cannot be kept separate. An anachronism that confuses and captivates at once.

Glass fabric

In paper form, the sculpture possesses a theatrical immanence that through the evident visibility of its innerworldly being represents only itself and therefore offers us the openness to read it differently. This element is formalized and exaggerated in the translucent veils of glass fabric. In the superimposed layers and their transparency, an ambiguity arises, an ambivalence in their substantive thrust. For the distance created through exaggeration, this state of not belonging to the tangible world intimates a sense of communicated loneliness. The moment of being painfully reminded of injured skin of the 'Terforations' is transformed in the glass fabric structures into an aura-infused appearance. The veils seem both close and remote, caught between ephemeral presence and dream-like memory, desire or yearning, interwoven to jell in a tender, mythical skein of time and space, a veiled fate, poetry lent objective form by its nostalgic robes.

The fairy-like installations evoke nebulous memories, albeit of something that is intangible, that can at best be intuited. In this regard, Glajcar's oeuvre symbolizes the loss of memory.

³ The iconoclastic element discussed in the secondary literature can be reduced to that of injury, of violation. Cf. Hanten-Schmidt, S. in op. cit., p. 48 and Beitin, A. ibid., pp. 64-5.

An unquenchable thirst for memory remains, causing agitation and capturing our gaze. The distance remains present and unsurmountable. The possibility of transcendence seizes an atmospheric space. What has been and the promise of what could be embrace to constitute a strange form of presence. Time assumes a spatial dimension. A discourse between oeuvre and perception ensues, a critical dialog that swings back and forth between the questioning eye of the viewer and the unsatisfactory answer of the subjectified work; it is a game that cannot engender clarity. A dialectical process unfolds, and it is one that itself constantly changes. Any exhaustive interpretation would mark standstill – and that is not the objective.

Biografie der Autorin in progress

(zu tagesaktuell, Ausdruck Katalog ist mir etwas zu kommerziell, Anmerkung sasa)

Margareta Sandhofer ist Kuratorin, Autorin und Kunstkritikerin, wohnhaft in Wien. Sie studierte Kunstgeschichte an der Universität in Wien (Diplom 2003) und ist seither freiberuflich mit der Konzentration auf das gegenwärtige Kunstgeschehen in Österreich tätig. Zahlreiche Publikationen erscheinen in Fachmagazinen und Katalogen. Zuletzt verantwortete sie die Ausstellung „Discrete Austrian Secrets“ in The Galaxy Museum of Contemporary Art, Chongqing, China, die von November 2019 bis März 2020 lief. 32 Positionen zeitgenössischer österreichischer Kunst unterschiedlichster Medien wurden dem chinesischen Publikum vorgestellt, begleitet von einem ausführlichen Katalog.

zwei Monografien habe ich zu verantworten, Wolfgang Ernst (2014) und Gottfried Bechtold (2016/17). Ich habe diese Ausstellungen kuratiert. Aber zwei Monografien sind noch nicht „zahlreich“.... Ein Büchlein mit einem Essay zu Herbert Brandl ist auch erschienen (2016), aber das kann man kaum als Monographie bezeichnen. Und sonst gibt es eben Beiträge in Katalogen.

Übersetzung ins Englische von Jeremy Gaines

Jeremy Gaines is a translator and writer who is based in Frankfurt/M. He holds a Ph.D. in German aesthetic theory. He translates primarily in the fields of art, architecture, and design. He has authored various books focusing either on issues of sustainability and urban planning or on Africa and in particular Nigeria. As a result of the latter interest, he has since 2019 been Co-Director of the Abuja-based thinktank The Africa Politeia Institute.

TEXTENDE



Terforation (Large Work) 2020-001, Galerie Köln



Terbloc (wall-mounted object) 2019-046, Galerie Köln

