

Paul Niedermayer

Entspannungstropfen im Servicespülbecken

[Relax drops in the service sink]

DROP-OUT a text by Leonie Nagel

In the online queue for the *Corona-Soforthilfe II* [Corona Financial Emergency Aid], applicants were pictured as a running green figure. It walked slowly and steadily, though the money flowed straight into your account (we didn't work for it). It dripped out of the ATM or contactless into the large basin, then disappeared into another heap.

We talked to Matze from *Ungeheuer* [monster (but also *immense*)] about the *Corona-Soforthilfe II*. For Paul and me, so-called *Solo-selbstständige* [single-self-employed] people, €5000 was a chunk of money. Matze said in the gastro that's really just a drop in the bucket. He listed his running costs.

Paul's pictures show a sink from the perspective of the wage-workers. Hopefully they pocket a lot of tips¹ at the end of the day. Then they spend it either in another bar or the following day, without the money ever reaching their accounts.

My midwife said that people say "every drop is precious". Paul's drop is a break, an almost-interruption from the flow. A drop out. It slipped through just as the valve was closing. Or maybe the valve no longer closes properly, it's broken or calcified, which is a waste. *Ein Tropfen Zeit* [A Drop of Time] is the German translation of a sci-fi novel by Daphne du Maurier.² A drug, taken in drops, allows the protagonist to travel back in time while his body remains in the present. He experiences the past but his actions affect the here and now.

The images in the show picture movement though time seems to stand still. The (shutter or pause) button is pressed down indefinitely even though we know the drop has "in reality" long since fallen into the water. The images are composed and constructed. They have a near-scientific quality, in that they use an experiment-like setup making something visible which would not be seen by the naked eye (not working with a microscope but after all with a macro lens), such as:

- e.g. TIME (speed)
- e.g. MONEY
- e.g. WORK (SWEAT)
- e.g. DRUG
- e.g. IMAGE
- e.g. NO MONEY
- e.g. NO TIME (efficiency)
- e.g. (gentle) REFUSAL
- e.g. DISAPPEARANCE

When it shows, the water surface breaks. The mass of water briefly sets in motion and increases, if only by a drop. *Das Schiff (Alkohol) mit dem du, mit dem du untergehst* [The ship you go, you go down with (alcohol)] is pulled into the water by the pull of the wave.³

¹ The German word for tips is *Trinkgeld*, which literally translates into *drinking-money*.

² Dame Daphne du Maurier, Lady Browning, DBE (13 May 1907 – 19 April 1989), was an English novelist, biographer and playwright. Although she is classed as a romantic novelist, her stories have been described as "moody and resonant" with overtones of the paranormal. Her bestselling works were not at first taken seriously by critics, but have since earned an enduring reputation for narrative craft. Many have been successfully adapted into films, including the novels *Rebecca*, *Frenchman's Creek*, *My Cousin Rachel*, and *Jamaica Inn*, and the short stories "The Birds" and "Don't Look Now". (wikipedia)

³ From *Alkohol* by Herbert Grönemeyer.

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2022

archival pigment prints

21 cm x 30,5 cm

jeweils 3 + 2 AP

