

Zyrland Zoiropa, Pankstrasse 26, 13357 Berlin

Lisa Goetze
Horse Girl
12.10.2023 - 28.10.2023



Sometimes, it only takes a minor shift within the existing circumstances, and suddenly, we find ourselves questioning our own worldview. This is precisely the kind of shift that artist Lisa Götze aims to trigger with her exhibition *Horsegirl*.

At its core are the delicate ballpoint pen drawings created by the artist. She spent a total of three years meticulously working on these, almost mechanically, to produce pieces that exude the intricacy reminiscent of early copperplate engravings. She captures two depictions of an Amazonian sculpture located on Berlin's Museum Island. It's not immediately evident that these are images of the same sculpture; instead, viewers might initially assume that the Amazon is in conflict with her steed. From this interpretation arise central questions that form the focus of the artist's exhibition, questions that are repeatedly revisited in individual works, drawing relevance from contemporary feminist debates.

Amazons, mythological female warriors and symbols of female strength, have often been problematically sexualized and idealized in art history. Lisa Götze challenges viewers with these gender stereotypes, which have largely emerged from a male, binary perspective. The clichéd representation of individual Amazons, akin to the myth-laden "Femme fatale" of the turn of the century, is explored by Götze, overlaid with material changes, and placed within the context of the present through these shifts.

Throughout the entire *Horsegirl* exhibition, material and stereotype changes are utilized—starting with the title. Viewers are prompted to consider the stereotypes that surround those identified as female, how society deals with them, and how many centuries humanity has been socialized by them. The six curb bits shown in graphite also engage with the artist's questions, approaching them associatively. These mouthpieces, through which riders exert control over their horses, subtly allude to these themes.

The challenge for visitors to classify, question, and behave is a recurring theme in Götze's

works. A braided whip made from horsehair with a handle of concrete and stone also extends this theme. The clichéd objects made from unattributed materials are provocatively chosen by Götze. The materiality of the horsehair, which propels and disciplines its intended user in the form of the whip, aligns with the themes inherent in the curb bits. In doing so, Götze consistently creates moments that provoke contemplation.

This holds true for the work *Big Boy*, on display in the hallway. It is an impressive collage that represents a radical departure from the expectations set by the title “Horsegirl.” This deliberate rift between title and work embraces the concept of friction that Götze skillfully incorporates into her pieces, almost provoking irritation and compelling viewers to reconsider their seemingly established beliefs.

Lisa Götze describes the genesis of her works as an exploration of her experiences with the outside world. The personal emotional connection to her work is also clearly evident, which is manifested in the meticulous, almost neurotic dedication over the course of years. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident how Lisa Götze integrates political dimensions within her work. This second perspective on the works is also clearly apparent in the use of various layers of meaning and materials that Lisa Götze employs in her works. In addition to drawings, she also showcases sculptural works and photographs.

The interplay of historical attributions, overlays, and material combinations elicits various associations from visitors. Lisa Götze opens space for profound reflection on the power of art to deconstruct gender stereotypes and create new, liberating perspectives. It becomes clear how closely the representation of the body in art and society is intertwined. The question that remains is: how does our society deal with historically ingrained (gender) stereotypes, and how can they be dismantled through minor shifts, such as those employed by Götze?

Pola van den Hövel

Lisa Götze (*1987) lives and works in Berlin. Her paintings, drawings, sculptures, and light installations are marked by craftsmanship and keen observation. Her fascination with corporeality is a recurring theme in her works, where she does not limit herself to a single artistic medium and consistently incorporates politically charged questions of our time. Götze studied at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart and at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Tel Aviv, Israel. She has exhibited at the Göppingen Art Hall, the Friedrichshafen Art Association, and the Villa Merkel in Stuttgart.