

JOY STREET

A curtain divides the room into two areas, one lighter and one darker, and thus refers to day and night, waking and sleeping and the gray areas in between. This connection is suggested by the exhibition title *Joy Street*, which refers to the animated film of the same name by Suzan Pitt (1995). The film is about a porcelain figure that is brought to life in a dream and in turn helps the dreaming protagonist out of a death-like sleep and her deep depression.

While the front room presents itself as a classic white cube with bright LED light, the works themselves shine in the rear room: Mycelium-shaped structures made of transparent silicone tubes that lie on the floor and into which pigmented epoxy resin has been injected to fix them. The neon pigments continue to glow for some time after charging, only to fade again and then recharge. To do this, the curtain is opened or the light is switched on. A figure in the background accompanies the changes in somnambulistic states.

What just looked like a nocturnal cityscape seems to resemble a dysfunctional medical set of instruments. The arrangement is reminiscent of circulatory systems, e.g. pulse or traffic arteries, which, however, run to nothing in many places. It is hard to tell whether discarded ideas are still shining through here or whether they are already waiting for their next use. When Moholy Nagy turned to the then ultra-modern material Plexiglas more than 100 years ago, it was already about the dissolution of the closed form and the utopia of this moment, the euphoria of which could still be found as a last reflection in the fluorescent accessories of techno culture. Julia Znoj's adaptations, on the other hand, refer more to a wearying of concepts.

The setting behind the (theater-) curtain resembles a kind of matrix that supposedly produces and controls the other objects, but with which it also maintains interrelationships. Almost all of the sculptures are inspired by representations of the brain and have to do with the structure and sequence of thought processes. A form made of knotted foam as well as wire structures in which found or specially produced metallic objects are entangled - cyber-fantasies of thinking apparatuses whose steampunk aesthetic is based more on historical analogies between brain and machine than on high-tech visions of the future. The material treatment of these powder-coated wire sculptures also refers to the gradual slowing down of neuronal activity. It is not possible to look inside a container shaped like a walnut, but it confirms the assumption that the sculptures have a distinct inner life. Only through a gap does the inside spill out.

However, it is not really possible to approach the exhibition through pairs of concepts such as inside/outside, stillness/movement, positive and negative. Julia Znoj might use binary constructions as semantic building blocks, but only in order to transfer them into a completely different model of ambivalence and fragility, thus disrupting the homogeneity and coherence of the narrative and allowing it to run into a field of open networks instead.

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