

The first UK exhibition outside London by one of the most radically inventive and influential artists of our time, featuring recent works displayed in the naturally-lit rooms of Inverleith House.

Inverleith House is delighted to present the first UK exhibition outside London by one of the great living artists of our time, Isa Genzken. The exhibition comprises of fourteen works made in the last ten years and includes several new sculptures completed this year which are being exhibited for the first time in the ground and first-floor rooms. The exhibition is accompanied by a continuous screening of *Die Kleine Bushaltstelle (Gerüstbau)* 'The Little Bus stop (Scaffolding)', 2007 – 09, made with fellow artist Kai Althoff, which has never before been screened in the UK.

Genzken's practice has evolved from beginnings in Minimalist sculpture to a frenetic, maximalist aesthetic that resists both comparison and definition.

A contemporary of Joseph Beuys, Carl Andre and Gerhard Richter, Genzken first came to prominence in 1970s post-war Dusseldorf with distinctive conceptual sculptures she named *Hyperbolos* and *Ellipsoids*, lacquered wood forms made possible with nascent computer technologies. As a constant polymath, Genzken's work has advanced through a range of media and material including concrete sculpture, photography, the photographic readymade, painting, experimental film and, since the mid-1990s, large-scale sculptural assemblages and complex collage.

Although seemingly defined only by difference, Genzken's work consistently returns to a number of foundational concerns apparent in most of her works. These include urban landscapes and metropolitan architectural forms, the sculptural potential of photography, and identity, the human form and an interest in natural beauty.

*Botanical Garden* focuses on later work made by Genzken within the last ten years including found-object sculptural assemblages and wall and floor-based photographic collage. These multi-layered, deliberately overloaded works frequently incorporate cheap, mass produced and universally recognisable items from toys to garments, shop mannequins, cartoon characters or photographs of landmark monuments, famous celebrities, disembodied limbs, and portraits of the artist herself all graffitied with spray-paint or else embellished with tape.

Sculptures like *Halleluja (Werkstatt)* / *Halleluja (New Museum)* 2012, reflect the towering structural mass of a New York skyscraper whilst the upright, translucent Perspex boxes of *Untitled*, 2012 and *Untitled* 2014 echo the glass high-rises of modern Berlin. This mini metropolis is populated by

Genzken's '*schauspieler*' or actors; life-size mannequins who are humorous and uncanny representations of familiar cultural types such as savvy child consumers, urban hipsters and psychedelic fashionistas lifted out of the urban commercial world. Each work in *Botanical Garden* is a narrative microcosm, chattering of contemporary culture, global issues, conflict and irreverence in a manner that both critiques and celebrates the carnivalesque, contradictory nature of the Western world.

The unique context of the Royal Botanic Garden lends itself to new readings and juxtapositions of Genzken's recent work, who through her own processes, brings together materials and objects from diverse sources in the same way the Garden's Botanists gather together species of plants from all over the world; both artist and botanist enable a rich reflection on the extraordinary nature of the everyday.

She represented Germany at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007 and was most recently the subject of a major retrospective at MoMA, New York (2013/4). The exhibition is kindly supported by The Henry Moore Foundation and the Isa Genzken Exhibitions Circle. This is its only showing.

*Inverleith House is supported by Creative Scotland. Isa Genzken, Botanical Garden is supported by The Henry Moore Foundation, the Isa Genzken supporters circle and the Goethe Institut. The preview is supported by Boë Gin.*

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