

JAKOB LENA KNEBL

La Primavera

28.3.–24.5. 2025

A „ready-made fountain“, entwined with artificial flowers, celebrates the artificiality of a new beginning. A bronze and ceramic boots, placed in a display setting, invite you to window-shop, while fragmented body parts on steel sculptures merge with design objects.

Jakob Lena Knebl is known for her interdisciplinary/transmedia practice, which combines sculpture, installation, design and performative elements.

A central element in Knebl's work is the reference to art-historical and design-historical positions. She draws on modern classics - from Bauhaus, Art Nouveau or mid-century design, for example - and places them in new, often queer contexts. In doing so, she questions the traditional narratives of art and design history and proposes alternative readings in which sensuality, materiality, physicality and humour play a central role.

In her exploration of space, Knebl goes beyond classical sculpture. Her installations are often immersive environments that function as walk-in narratives. The way she composes space reminds of Penelope Curtis' concept in *Patio and Pavilion* (2008), where Curtis explores the relationship between sculpture, architecture and design. Curtis describes how sculpture has historically been conceived either in open, landscaped contexts (*Patio*) or as part of architectural structures (*Pavilion*). This dichotomy – between the open, public space and the closed, staged interior – is also reflected in Knebl's works.

In her book, Curtis also describes how modern sculpture often oscillates between object and environment:

"Modern sculpture has constantly negotiated its place between autonomy and integration, between being an object in space and shaping the space itself." (Curtis, *Patio and Pavilion*, 2008)

This definition could be applied directly to Knebl's expansive installations. Her walk-in sculptures function not only as objects in space, but also as framings, that direct the viewer's gaze and involve them in a conscious experience of the space.

Jakob Lena Knebl expands the definition of sculpture by transforming it into an immersive, playful and often humorous experience. In doing so, she addresses central art-historical questions - such as the dissolution of the separation between sculpture and space and the significance of material and physicality in modern art. Knebl's works are not rigid objects, but lively, changeable scenarios that challenge traditional viewing habits and actively involve the viewer in the art event.

Jakob Lena Knebl developed a series of new soft sculptures for her exhibition "La Primavera". Based on "wallsculptures / wall reliefs", these were transferred back into three-dimensional space, individual forms were isolated and further developed as independent objects.

Production: Markus Pires Mata

Jakob Lena Knebl (b. 1970 in Baden). Exhibitions include Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt (2024) with Markus Pires Mata; Deichtorhallen – Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg (2024) with Ashley Hans Scheirl; Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2023) with Ashley Hans Scheirl; Austrian Pavilion, 59th Venice Biennale, Venice (2022) with Ashley Hans Scheirl; MAH – Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva (2021); Lentos – Kunstmuseum, Linz (2020); Kunsthaus Bregenz (2020) with Ashley Hans Scheirl; mumok – Museum of Modern Art, Vienna (2017).