

“Can a thought be shown and peeled off like a skin?”[1]

Maria Lassnig

Capitain Petzel in cooperation with the Maria Lassnig Foundation is pleased to announce the second solo exhibition at the Berlin gallery by Maria Lassnig entitled *Augensprache. Works on Paper 1974–2013*.

While Lassnig’s first solo exhibition at Capitain Petzel in 2013 focused on large-scale paintings, this posthumous exhibition is dedicated to her graphic oeuvre spanning the period from 1974 until shortly before her death. *Augensprache* features a selection of fifty-two works curated in close collaboration with the Maria Lassnig Foundation. Displayed throughout the main exhibition space, some of Lassnig’s most poignant and affecting works on paper offer new insights into her concept of “body awareness” and bear special witness to her inexhaustible urge toward renewal and self-research.

Drawing allowed Maria Lassnig the highest degree of immediacy vis-à-vis an idea: “The drawing is closest to the idea. The drawing is closest to the moment. Each moment has only one possibility.”[2] However the ideas of this pioneering artist originated in the body and derived their inspiration from physical sensations and sensory impressions that, in turn, informed her “body awareness pictures.” Her approach to the medium of drawing, far from being homogenous, engages a wide-ranging repertoire of topics and approaches to materials. Organized into thematic groups such as “Sensitivity,” “Couples,” “Self-depiction,” “Animal Relations,” “Outlines,” Capitain Petzel presents a range of works that encompasses, among others, pencil drawings; pencil drawings on colored acrylic, watercolor, or tempera backgrounds; and gouaches.

In the lower exhibition space, a film program featuring Lassnig’s experimental animation films from the early 1970s highlight her satirical and deeply emotional self-awareness in an even more acute way than her still drawings.

Several of the exhibited works were on public display for the first time in 2017 and earlier this year as part of a major retrospective organized by the Kunstmuseum Basel in collaboration with the Albertina in Vienna. In 2009, Museum Ludwig in Cologne drew attention to Lassnig’s graphic oeuvre with a survey exhibition that brought together drawings and watercolors that originated from

1974 to 2009, the year of Lassnig's ninetieth birthday.

Maria Lassnig (Carinthia, Austria, 1919–Vienna, Austria, 2014) is regarded as one of the most important artists of the present day. Over the course of her remarkable career, she created a substantial body of work in the fields of painting and graphic arts alongside her forays into (animated) film and sculpture. Lassnig led a lifelong and deeply focused dialogue with her work, which constituted the pivotal element throughout her life. Her artistic practice can be regarded as a means of self-empowerment that is also directed against social conventions. Sometimes she reveals herself as a suffering, misunderstood and lonely human being. Even though Lassnig's work gained its well deserved public recognition only at a relatively late stage of her life, today her works feature in the collections of major public institutions. Overall, her oeuvre continues to resonate with a broad public and serves as a source of inspiration for artists across generations.[3]

[1] Maria Lassnig in Wolfgang Drechsler (ed.), *Maria Lassnig*, exh. cat. Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien/Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, (Vienna/Nantes, 1999), S. 86.

[2] Maria Lassnig in *Maria Lassnig. Zeichnungen und Aquarelle*, exh. cat. Galerie Ulysses (Vienna, 1992), n.p.

[3] Based on "Kurzbiografie" by Maria Lassnig Foundation.

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