

THE UNIVERSAL MIGRANT

THE IDEA

The economic circumstances are very different from country to country. Unemployment and increasing poverty force many people to leave their countries and change their lives. They are not always successful in getting used to the new place, the new society; often they have to put up with major disadvantages – so the only job a dentist gets is one as an assistant in nursery, a jurist earns little as a cleaner, and so on.

People who had already been poor and poorly trained at home often are unwilling or even unable to study the local language and their so contacts to locals are rare.

The aim of my installation is to portray the rootlessness of these people.

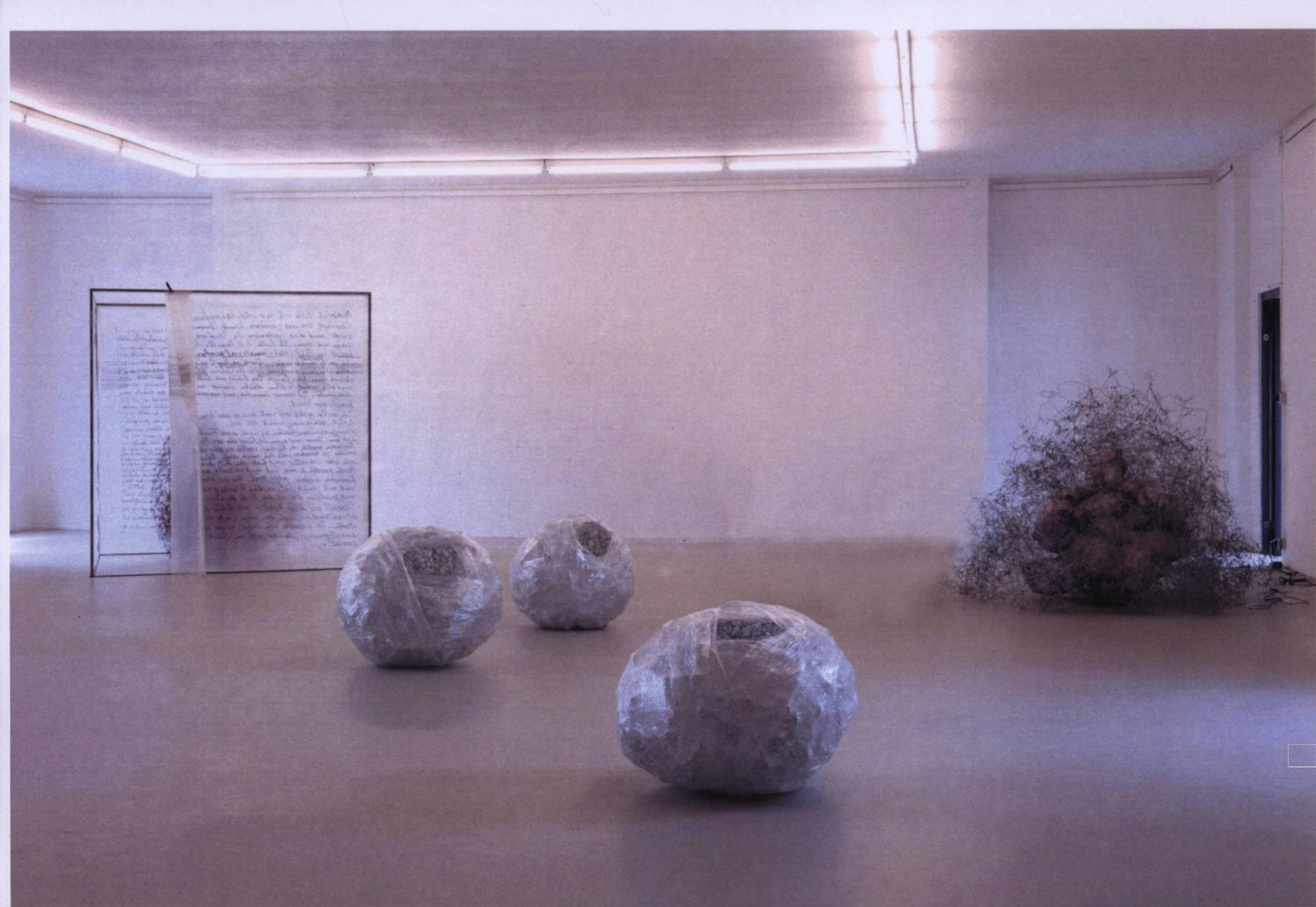
DESCRIPTION

Two meters above the floor hangs a black ring with a diameter of 1,3 meters. On it there is an opaque polyethylene foil hanging down. On this foil there is the story of a nameless migrant written by hand, a story that represents so many persons. The story of the universal migrant. It is cut in strips of two centimeters and seems like a curtain against insects – it allows changing sides but at the same time it separates. The visitor is invited to enter the installation and to perceive the world through the cut foil.

RESUME

By entering the cylindrical installation of foil, the visitor changes the perspective. He does not read any more the story of someone strange from outside, but the story surrounds him. The visitor slips into the role of the migrant. Due to the cut foil the world is visible in parts, a lot of things is hidden by the opaque foil. The curtain at the same time protects and isolates; moving inside the ring is limited, it is a small place for a person.

The visitor is not able any more to read the writings, similar to the migrant who becomes estrange from his own biography, and does not understand his own former life any more.



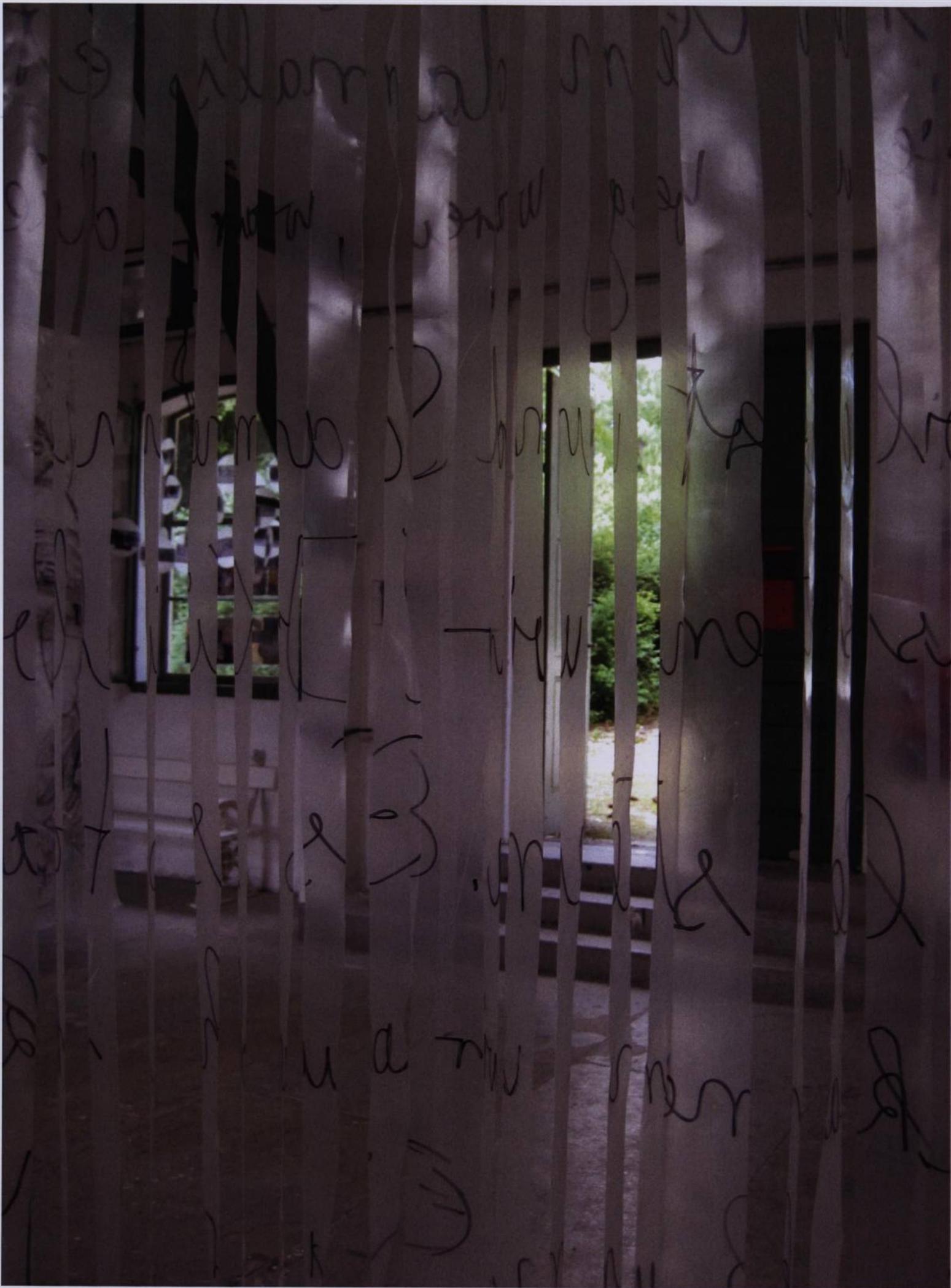
Through the Wind View into the exposition 2009 Künstlerhaus Sootbörn, Hamburg



...leben wir da gar nicht schlecht. Wir haben
 ... in Überfluss. In der Zeit
 ... in der Stadt einbauen. In der
 ... es hat auch kein Beispiel mehr
 ... Es wurde dann alles
 ... neue Ziegen geblieben
 ... Ziegen
 ... war der
 ... damals
 ... schied
 ... verarmte
 ... Krankheit
 ... dass
 ... Zeit
 ... dem
 ... funder
 ... wiese

View into the exposition
Rendezvous





The Universal Migrant 2012 (detail)

„SUDDENLY MY KNEES BECAME SO WEAK “

THE IDEA

Life is always changing, but there are also special situations in which everything must be changed radically. One of these radical changes is escape - because of the loss of a life partner, but also because of war, crime or persecution.

Since the Old Egyptians and the Old Greeks, boats have been the devices to arrive to paradise or the hereafter.

Nowadays, thousands of real people for different reasons try to reach another country by boat.

In these situations hope and despair are very close each other and lots of fears accompany the refugee.

The first focus of my installation is to work about the feelings of the refugee.

The second focus, however, is to remember for everybody that life is changing and nobody knows if it is possible to stay the whole life on a comfortable sofa. In every life events may require decisions, some of them are radical.

THE INSTALLATION

An iron skeleton of a boat covered with a polyethylene foil is sticking in a huge cloud of woven wire. Inside the boat there are lots of papers on which are written by hand the stories of refugees. These stories tell about the fears, the forebodings, the hopes, the doubts, but also about the refugees' so strong will to escape.

Nearby the visitor can find a sofa or chair as a place of security to read the stories.

RESUME

During my life I have met many different people with escape experience: Old women who were refugees during the Second World War, but also young black people from Africa. They all told me that while life is calm, nobody thinks that you have to take such decisions. But suddenly the circumstances change and you have to decide.



"Suddenly my knees became so weak" (detail)



Ludmilla

We were landowners. Until the end we couldn't believe that we should have to leave our country. That's why we waited so long to take the decision. We didn't want to face reality – and my little one was just six weeks old.

We didn't have to escape on feet, we owned a car. Sure, that was dangerous; a car was a target, but what wasn't dangerous at those times! Still we had some stockpiled petrol. We went by night and without light.

A couple of nights we had already been on tour. I had to pee so badly and asked the driver, our old Polish servant, to stop. In the back of the car, next to me, was my little baby sleeping. The car stopped; all of us, me too, jumped out and all of a sudden my baby cried so loud. "Let her in the car, my mother shouted at me, hurry up!" But I just grabbed my child and ran a few meters away from the car. So badly I had to pee.

The crumping hedgehopper was ear piercing. I heard the gunfire, a cry; a short moment our car was lighted by light beam. Then everything was calm. After a while I heard my name, I started to feel the cold and tried to find the street in the dark.

Tomaz ordered: "Get in!" He started the engine and went on. The car was still working. The windows were broken. I was sitting on the front seat now. I didn't hear any noise besides the car's engine. I pressed my baby on my breast. Only then in the morning I saw that everybody on the back seats was dead.

The back part of the car was perforate, the seats were ragged. My mother, my sisters just had got out to pee, too fast and had already come back into the car when the hedgehopper came. They hadn't wanted to wait outside and had taken place in the back. For the first time my mum was sitting there, in the back of the car. Until then, it had always been me and my little one.

Tomaz, well he also had to shit.

Mahito

The desert was behind us. Exhausting, horrible days. Now we had arrived the coast and we were waiting for the command for the crossing by boat. We should hide and be unsuspecting not to be found by anyone.

In the night a truck came and we had to get on very quickly. A few moments later we arrived the beach. A big zodiac was waiting there. The strange men made us hurry. The zodiac was already quite full. And suddenly, I didn't trust my plan anymore, I wanted to be back in my village. The sea had a strong smell, the death's smell. It was blood, everywhere was blood.

My mum was lying on the floor of our cabin, her intestines swelled out of her stomach and were lying next to her. An unborn child within it. I was completely silent, the cries just didn't come out of my mouth. One of the militias shouts "We kill them all, no witnesses, no witnesses!" A car, and another one shouting "Let's go, let's go, away!"

Then I was alone in my hideout behind the stocks of corn. Flies surrounded my mum's intestines and I was surprised how small the unborn was.

Someone pushed me from behind and I was on the boat. Once more I saw my mum and all the blood, then I thought of all the money everybody had paid for me. There was no way back, the sea was calm.

„MY BODY IS OF MY OWN“

THE IDEA

Auto aggression is a phenomenon particularly frequent among women within different societies all over the world. Lonely in their houses, separated from society, often without civil rights they are caught in the jungle of their own thoughts. They are not able to see another possibility to express and to show their desperate situation as to harm themselves. They feel like in a cage of despair.

Pain is an experience everybody has to realize during life. We fear pain but we have to learn to listen to it, because it is our warning system to avoid corporal damage. Pain is the strongest human feeling.

To torture the own body frightens us and we get an idea on how huge loneliness must be for a person when auto aggression seems to be the only way. They burn themselves with cigarettes, cut themselves with knives etc..

Auto aggression transforms mental suffering into corporal pain as the last attempt to resolve existential problems.

THE INSTALLATION

A woven mesh of iron wire surrounds the smooth body of rose painted cloth. They are strongly connected, in some cases the wire harms the body. It is important that the iron mesh of wire and the body are one and it is impossible to disconnect them.

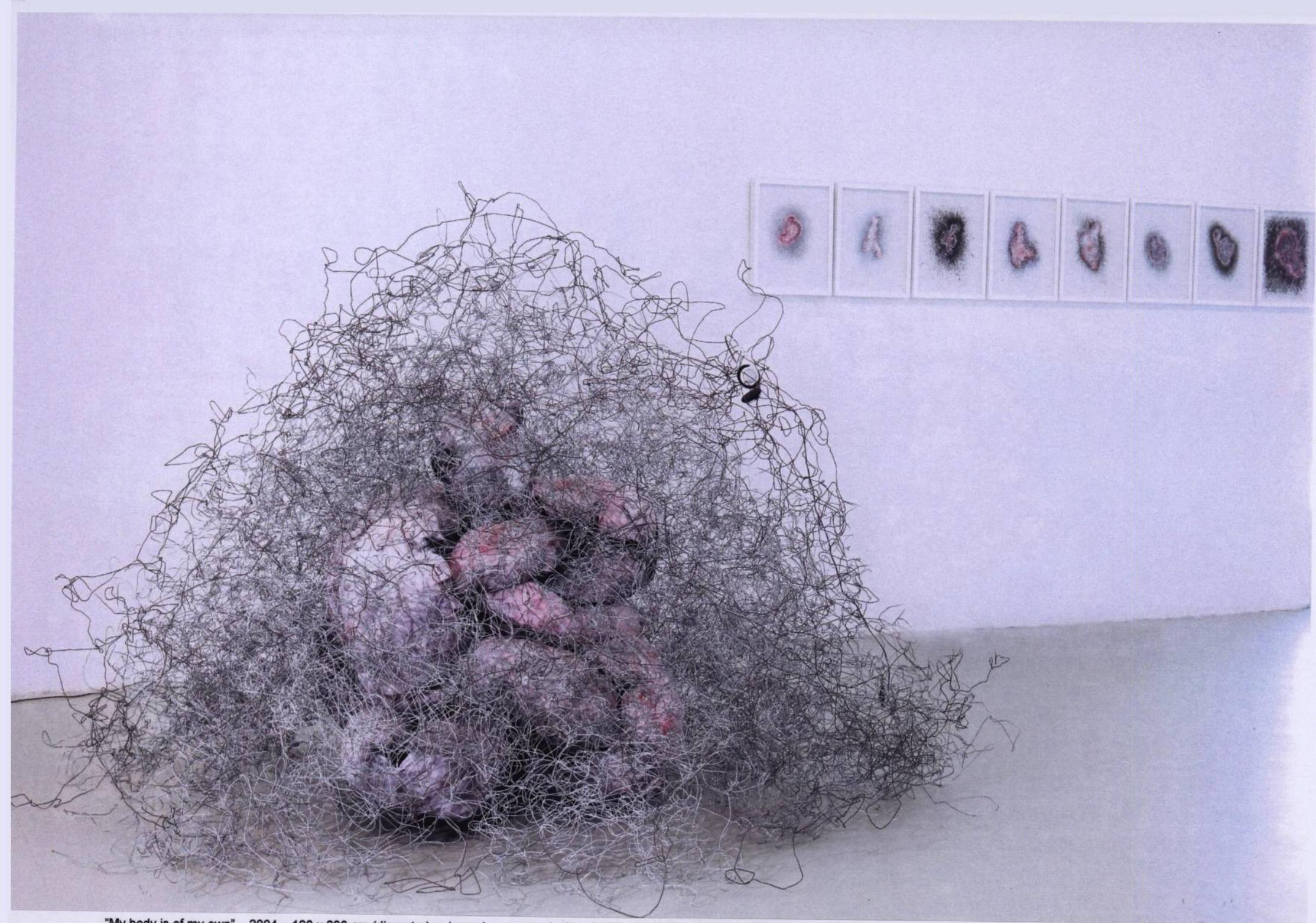
The visitors can walk around the sculpture and listen to recorded stories of auto aggressors. Within the iron mesh of wire there are CD-Players and the headphones come out of it. So the visitors get very near to what happens and become part of it. Probably they will feel empathy and affinity

The stories are interviews with my patients in the psychiatric hospital.

The mesh of iron wire is supposed to attract the visitors to discover the half-hidden body inside. Nevertheless, to discover its secrets the visitors have to listen.

RESUME

The auto aggressive women's despair touched me so deeply that I wanted to try to overcome their speechlessness. With my installation I want to set something against that speechlessness and show how lonely persons can be within a society.



"My body is of my own" 2004 190 x 230 cm (diameter) iron wire, canvas (painted), CD player, headset

„ IT IS JUST A VERY SMALL STEP“

THE IDEA

There are every year lots of violent crimes executed by knives, bottles and other objects of daily life. During a few moments the perspectives of life are destroyed for both, the victim and the aggressor.

On the long way through life everyone may have experienced black outs that change life dramatically.

What kind of events prepare such personal catastrophes, what kind of frustrations or disappointments...?

The first focus of this installation is to demonstrate the tension between one person's character and explosive situations of life. Furthermore, I pose the question, how life will go on.

The second focus is to show both sides of perception: one the one side short neutral media articles about the crimes and on the other side reports written by the aggressors.

THE INSTALLATION

An open iron framework of a cube (210x210x210cm) covered with a polyethylene foil invites the visitors to enter, come inside. The foil as a membrane is printed outside with newspaper reports of crimes. Inside, however, there are interviews with the aggressors written by hand.

In the middle of the cube there is ball of woven iron wire (110 cm diameter). Inside this ball there is a knife entangled with the wire.

RESUME - DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW

By this way the visitors can read and reflect about the cases in very different ways. Outside, they take the public perspective and inside, they take the aggressors' perspectives.

Reading outside you are in a position of distance, inside you will never find distance, you are on the side of the aggressor, you take the position of the delinquents.

„I was shaking in my boots and couldn't say a word”

THE IDEA

Sexual violence against women is sadly spread all over the world. Mentally and corporally injured by it, a woman's life changes radically after a rape. Fear becomes a permanent companion.

Being pregnant after a rape is the worst case. What are the possible options for action? Can one accept that child against the own will? How to deal with a child that embodies the rape? Having an abortion, committing suicide or having the baby? Is there a way for the victim to be an active person again?

THE INSTALLATION

Three balls of mesh of iron wire, wrapped with polyethylene foil, are lying on the ground. Every ball's wrapping has got a hole where the visitor can have a look inside. There is a piece of broken opaque glass with hand written text on it. On every one of these broken fragments the visitor will find a different story of a rape. The brilliantly gleaming foil envelopes the broken glass fragments sticking in the woven iron wire. Like in a cocoon, the women's stories are hidden.

RESUME

Lots of women told me about sexual violence, about extreme situations. To save their lives, they shut their horrible memories away, very deeply inside themselves. So they were living without attracting attention, but each of these women has to tolerate the traces of their personal catastrophe.



"I shook in my boots and could n `t speak any word" 2007 70 cm (diameter) iron wire, opaque glass, stretch foil

AND LIBYA, SYRIA, ETC...?

THE IDEA

While I was preparing my exhibition "ALLES KLAR? ALLES KLAR!" 2003 in Munich, the Bush administration was preparing the war against Iraq.

While I was designing the invitation card or reflecting about the composition of my artworks, many thousands of people were demonstrating against that upcoming war. On the newspapers there were no other headlines.

Suffering of the feeling of powerlessness and helplessness, I decided to create an installation parallel to my preparations of the exhibition, to catch exactly that topic.

THE INSTALLATION

Every day I was going on grounding a 85cm piece of canvas with acrylic paint. On that grounding I integrated the headlines of the daily newspaper.

Then I applied a thick coat of oil pastel on the canvas which afterwards I scratched away with a carpet knife. I removed most of the oil pastel to get as a result a scratched surface under which the headlines are still legible.

By this way I created a long panel which is to be fixed on the ceiling and then hangs down into the exhibition hall. It seems to be a long rug as many of us have in their living rooms.

RESUME

Although the US army is still remaining in Iraq, there are no more protests. We are all accustomed to it... We know that the reasons for the war named by the Bush government were not true and we know that the war has made the Iraqi society instable and has turned it completely upside down. There will be so hard social and political difficulties for the people for many years.

In 2011 we must recognize that we are taking part in a very similar event: A few months ago the war in Libya was started without so much public attention. There were no similar protests, there are not many notions in the media, it seems as if nothing was happening. It seems to me that there is a big sleep...

And what is going to happen in Syria?

I will continue this work, because I don't sleep. I don't want to sleep.



And Libya, Syria...? 2003/ 2011 ? x 85 cm oil pastel (scratched) on canvas

FIXING THE PLACE OF LOCATION

2001 – 2011

A short time after 9.11. I began with this serial work.
In the situation of confusion and fear I tried to get a clear view and orientation.

With the oil pencils it was possible to research every day my place of location. Mostly of the drawings are worked on red primed paper. Red as the colour of energy was during this time the right decision to be strong, to rebel against the shock which spread a certain kind of rigour.

To fix the place of location never ends and so this serial continues until now.



Fixing the place of location 84 2011 64 x 50cm oil pastel on primed paper



Fixing the place of location 81 2010 64 x 50cm oil pastel on primed paper

TEACHING EXPERIENCES

- 1986 lectures in experimental drawing at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
- 1991 lectures at the International Youth Library, Munich
- since 2000 lectures at the University of Applied Sciences at Nuremberg (Georg-Simon-Ohm Fachhochschule)
- since 2002 lectures at the University of Applied Sciences, Munich
- 2001/02/04 lectures during the program "Children meet Artists", Munich
- 2010 workshop at the National Academy of Fine Arts, Veliko Tarnuvo (B)
- 2012 lectures during the program "Children meet Artists", Munich

REINHILD GERUM

BIOGRAFIC DATES

1955	born in Munich
1974-77	studies of philosophy and political science
1975	practical training of sculpture
1977-83	studies of painting with K.F.Dahmen at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
1979-80	studies in Rome
1982-83	research studies of architecture with Erich Schneider-Wessling at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich
1983	practical training with the architect Karl-Josef Schattner, Eichstätt
1985	M.A. for painting since then work as an artist
since 1989	art therapist for emotionally or psychologically disturbed persons

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

1989	scholarship for cultural activities with senior citizens at the Institute of Education and Culture, Remscheid
1994	scholarship of Kunstfonds e.V., Bonn
2001	short scholarship at Haus Rissen, Hamburg
2005	grant of the Kunstverein Bad Wörishofen
2010	artist-in-residence of GEDOK Munich in Bulgaria symposium (work and exposition) in Cuba



REINHILD GERUM

Exhibitions (bolds are soloexhibitions)

- 2012** **I was shaking in my boots and couldn't say a word Weytterturm Straubing**
Presse: Landshuter Nachrichten, Schreckliches hinter dem schönen Schein, 23.2. 2012 Ines Kohl
Sehenswürdigkeiten, Sparkassengalerie Nördlingen
Seidlvilla München (mit Marijanca Ambo), München
Installations, Arosita gallery, Sofia (Bulgaria)
Rendezvous Bulgaria – Munich, a project between the cultural administration of the City of Munich and the Artist Union of Bulgaria worked together with the GEDOK München
- 2011** muc-hav-muc, galerieGEDOKmuc, München
15. Kunstwochenende im Zehentstadel, Altstadtförderer Moosburg e.V.
Blickweisen, Kunstforum Ostdeutsche Galerie Regensburg
- 2010** **schwarz rot gold (mit Michael Golf), Goetheinstitut München**
Presse: Und-Das Münchner Kunstjournal, Heft Nr.42, 6.4.2010 Johanna Kerschner zur Ausstellung schwarz rot gold
Stadtmuseum Weilheim (mit Teresa Dietrich) Presse: Münchner Merkur 13.7.2010, Sara Meissner: Im künstlerischen Dialog zur Freiheit
Sofia-press-gallery, Sofia (Bulgaria)
Galerie v. Fircks-Huth, Fuchstal-Leeder
Genius Loci., KV Die Spirale, Pappenheim (Kat)
Arbeiten auf Papier, Galerie Fetzer, Sontheim-Brenz
Kleinplastik II, galerieGEDOKmuc, München
Los Desastres de la Guerra, galeria Luz y Oficios, Havanna (Kuba) (Kat)
Akademie für Politische Bildung, Tutzing
Galerie Hinterhaus, Dannenberg / Elbe
3. Kunstauktion des Rotary Club München-International (Kat)
- 2009** Papier I, galerieGEDOKmuc, München
AnSichten, Galerie artThiess, München (Presse: in münchen Heft Nr.11, 27.5.2009, Dörthe Bäumer zur Ausstellung Ansichten)
Künstlerhaus Sootbörn, Hamburg
Museum Zirndorf, Zirndorf
Beziehungen, Vonderaumuseum, Fulda
Akademie für Politische Bildung, Tutzing (Presse: Süddeutsche Zeitung 26.6.2009, Uschi Fuchs: Gegensätzliche Ansichten; Abbildung)
WIR IV, Stadtmuseum Zwittau (Tschechien) (Kat)
Galerie Cervino, Augsburg
On-the-Firth-Floor, Tacheles Berlin
Transparenz, KV Erding, Erding (Kat)
Presse: Münchner ärztl. Anzeigen, Heft Nr.13, 20. 6. 09, Dr. Caroline Mayer: Logos und Chaos)
Im Zeichen der Wende, Städtisches Kulturzentrum Pasinger Fabrik, München
- 2008** Brücken zwischen Kunst und Orten des Gebets in Pasing/Obermenzing
ein Projekt zur 850. Stadtgeburtstag München, München
Große Ausstellung Kleinplastik, Kloster Raitenhaslach, KV Burghausen (Kat)
Kunst im Karree, München (Kat)
Akademie für Politische Bildung, Tutzing
Presse:Und- Das Münchner Kunstjournal, Heft nr.36, Oktoberber 2008, Johanna Kerschner zum Buchobjekt BRIEFE AUS NOWOSIBIRSK
Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Gauting
Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Bad Wörishofen (Kat)
- 2007** **Galerie Freiraum, Köln**
Kunst aus dem Koffer, Kulturzentrum Rotes Haus, Goetheinstitut Sofia (Bulgarien), Zentrum für Moderne Kunst, Plovdiv (Bulgarien) (Kat)
Briefe aus Nowosibirsk, Kulturverein Willich (Kat)
„zitiert“, Rathausgalerie Landshut (K)
ZEITSTÖRUNG, Museum für ostdeutsche Kunst, Regensburg (Kat)
Perspektivenwechsel - A Change of Perspective. Amerikahaus München;
DAAP Galleries, University of Cincinnati (USA) (Kat)
Presse: Chefsache Herbst 2007, Galerie: Reinhild Gerum
- 2006** Briefe aus Nowosibirsk, Kunststation Kleinsassen (Kat) (Presse: Fuldaer Zeitung, 29.11.2006, Klaus H. Orth, Bilderbriefe schlagen Brücken)
Serienweise, Kunstverein Burghausen (Kat)
Perspektivenwechsel- A Change of Perspective, Amerikahaus Freiburg; Stadtparkasse Tübingen
Muzeum Lubuskie, Gorzow Wik, Landsberg an der Warthe (Polen)
Das Kleine Format, Köglturm, Kunstverein Aichach

- 2005** WIR III, Pasinger Fabrik, München (Kat)
 Kabinettausstellung im Deutschen Konsulat in Nowosibirsk (Russland)
 Galerie CHERNOFF, Nowosibirsk
 8. Kunstfrühling Bad Wörishofen (Kat)
Galerie Obersteiner, München
Galerie Liebau, Burghaun/ Fulda
Kunstpavillon im Alten Botanischen Garten, München
- 2004** WIR II, Spolekna II, Galerie Mesta Trutnowa (Tschechien) (Kat)
 körper? Der andere blick auf ein altes Thema, Städtische Galerie Rosenheim (Kat)
 Kunstverein Ebersberg, Ebersberg (Kat)
 LIVE? Kunstverein Bad Wörishofen
Kunstverein Bayreuth, Bayreuth
Künstlerwerkstatt Haus 10, Fürstenfeldbruck
- 2003** **Galerie v. Fircks-Huth, Fuchstal-Leeder**
Karl Friedrich v. Siemens Stiftung, München (Kat)
Galerie Freiraum, Köln
Städtische Kulturzentrum Pasinger Fabrik, München (Kat)
 9 Künstlerinnen aus München, BOHUS Galleriet, Uddevalla, Schweden
 9. Aichacher Kunstpreis, Kunstverein Aichach
 Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Bayreuth (Kat)
- 2002** **Galerie Z, München**
 GEDOK griffig, Schwarzes Kloster, Freiburg
 Arsenal des Alltäglichen, Zeughaus Toskanische Säulenhalle, Augsburg (Kat)
 Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Bayreuth (Kat)
- 2001** SCALA, Regierung von Oberbayern, München (Kat)
 Liberty-freiheit-Libertè, Künstlerhaus München (Kat)
 Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Bayreuth (Kat)
- 2000** **BIS – Kulturzentrum im Alten Museum, Mönchengladbach**
 Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Bayreuth
- 1999** **Logics Software, München**
 RAUMNÄHERUNGEN, Linden Keller Freising (Kat)
 ANNA, Kunstverein Passau
SURSUM CORDA, Residenz München
- 1997** **Carl Baasel Lasertechnik, Starnberg**
- 1996** **Produzentengalerie, München**
Städtische Künstlerwerkstatt Lothringerstraße, München
Markt und Technik, Haar bei München
 RAUMKONZEPT KUBUS, Pasinger Fabrik, München (Kat)
- 1995** **Galerie Schreiter, Nürnberg**
Galerie Vallentin, Freiburg
- 1994** **Hartgalerie, Germering**
Produzentengalerie, München
 OBERFLÄCHE, Städtische Galerie Unterm Turm, Stuttgart (Kat)
- 1991** **Galerie Harthan, Stuttgart**
Produzentengalerie, München
- 1989** **Galerie am Maxwehr, Landshut (Kat)**
- 1988** **Galerie Harthan, Stuttgart (Kat)**
 Große Kunstaussstellung, Wasserburg (Kat)
 Biennale der Zeichnung, Augsburg (Kat)
- 1987** **Galerie Anais, München**
- 1986** 1. Allgäuer Künstlersymposion, Kempten (Kat)
- 1985** **Galerie Hennemann, Bonn**
 Galerie Margelik, München
- 1983** **Galerie Anais, München**
 Jahresausstellung Kunstverein Ebersberg
- 1978** Engelhornstiftung München