

Annebarbe Kau

Jürgen Kisters: Quiet is asked for – Annebarbe Kau defends herself against shrill effect.

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Hanging down from the ceiling to the floor like fine hairs are thin nets in which Annebarbe Kau has placed small loudspeakers. Quiet sounds are heard, and a "shh" tone admonishes the visitor to be still. Only then will one hear what it is possible to hear. And only then does the space found inside the observer and the outer room become a single, floating field. In this way associations of nature and childhood memories combine as one is brought to stillness and receptivity and the senses develop their complete attention. Because such experience is so easily, and so often completely, forgotten in our loud, hectic day-to-day life, the artist

Annebarbe Kau has set out to find the road back, which is, however, a path forward. With the unadorned material of modern artificiality (cables, nylon nets, lucite, wire) she builds an unexpected bridge to the experience of nature, which in its total inconspicuousness is still more breathtaking than any shrill cultural effect. Is this the new Romanticism of high-tech culture when two small loudspeakers in an orange lucite box produce the sounds of a meadow? And will the fairy tale of "Angelhair" and the question whether "fish can hear" no longer be told by grandmother, but rather by nameless loudspeakers which transport random as well as strange/familiar sounds from a garden to our ears?

Colorful wire pillars

The "garden" is the motive of an installation which seizes the entire space in the cellar of the Gallery Rivet. Colorful wire pillars of different heights (wrapped in different artificial foils and cords) form an ensemble together with light bulbs and loudspeakers in which color, light and sound softly touch each other. Occasionally a tiny fluctuation in the light causes the red light bulbs to shudder. From the loudspeakers come laughter and knocking. And the longer one looks, the more the wads of cotton in the wrapping of blue cords seem to move. Like the backdrop at the theater in which the sculptures are the actors, one can observe the scenery from without or one can make oneself a participant by entering.

Who is laughing? Who is moving, why, and in which direction? In what theater are we anyway? The questions that emanate from the work are the questions of life itself. And the central problem doubtless consists in whether or not one sees the simple objects as nothing more than banal, commonplace materials, or if one has the sensitivity to go beyond that into dreamlike reverie. In further works Annebarbe Kau has created clever drawings made of smaller pieces of cord which concern themselves with the empty space between things and the meaning of knots. And in a video of touching hands projected onto a "real" stone she directs attention to the seam between immaterial fascination of new worlds of representation and sensual desire, which is inseparably joined to all understanding.