

Cornelia Hellstern, 10/5/2022
Exhibition Opening

Reduction through Compression **Judith P. Fischer**
Veronika Rodenberg
Tonneke Sengers

Reduction through compression. Something that at first sounds like a contradiction - something compresses itself, something becomes more through reduction - reveals itself on closer inspection to be a comprehensible process. The gallery owners of zs art galerie, Andrea Zehetbauer and Guido Zehetbauer-Salzer, invite us viewers to become involved in this other way of looking - and with their thoughts on the exhibition they give us a not insignificant hint: the "individuality".

Reduction means clarity. And clarity in turn emerges from a compression of the actual, the essential. Focusing on and grasping a core. The clearer a thought, a condition, a character, the more intensively it can be grasped, felt and perceived from this density. Inherent.

Reduction means decisions. If these are made out of a density, out of an essence, the diversity that develops out of this has an effect that is all the more clear and comprehensible - after all, in its expression it always returns to the actual core of its being. The respective decisions are made individually, following one's own logic, one's own questions, forming from one's own world of experience. Individuality reveals itself in the reduction.

The three artists Judith P. Fischer, Veronika Rodenberg and Tonneke Sengers allow us viewers to trace their strategies here in this exhibition, to get involved in their mental and creative processes and to follow their search for the essential.

Circle segments, curves, curved lines. Starting from the idea of the essential, the essence, **Judith P. Fischer** reduces everything in her work to the circular elements that develop from the line. Again and again, always in a different way, she tracks down the modular variety of unlimited possibilities. The line is by no means to be understood in its proper two-dimensional sense. Judith P. Fischer's lines have materiality, are material, have mass. They are compressed space. Or they trace compressed space. Spatial lines. Reduction here means concentration on this one element. The line that has become space. Circumscribing, describing, tracing, enclosing bodies. "*Skull XS*" and "*Evola*" clearly show how the compression becomes perceptible in the objects - solely through the lines describing them.

Sometimes their lines follow strictly drawn radii, seemingly dissolving the densely laid path of the floor labyrinth of the Cathedral of Chartres into a graspable pattern – "*Pattern*" - and legible movement. At times, their spatial lines themselves form labyrinthine thickets. "*Brainstorming*", the supposed black-and-white negative that, on closer inspection, explains itself as a pencil drawing. This apparent photographic image of "*O.T. (Meterware)*" (N.T., Bulk Goods), silicone tubes in an acrylic glass cube, was just as much the path to the work as the wall curves "*Jump*" or "*Loop*", which are shaped like a freehand line. In their interplay, these objects address the question of the process of creating a work. And they find their answer in condensation. With "*ER+SIE*" (HE+SHE), the household rubber rings compressed into acrylic glass boxes - all the same size - Judith P. Fischer shows how reduction in its most compressed form is created by a single element: Through the compression of multiplicity into a unity.

In **Veronika Rodenberg's** work, the processual displays itself as a reduced result. It is philosophical questions that lead her to her works - and us as viewers from the work back to her thoughts. Spiritual compression. The "more" expression she achieves through reduction means freedom - it opens up new spaces for thought. Spaces of freedom.

In the works "*Verdichtete Transparenz*" (Compressed Transparency), Veronika Rodenberg alternately layers cardboard and glass panes. In size and position, these follow the Fibonacci series, the inner relationship of the elements to each other becomes perceptible, far beyond the familiar aesthetic balance. By layering, the glass compresses itself, in its transparency also its colourfulness. Sometimes more, sometimes less. How transparent do we appear to the outside world? What should remain perceptible, and what is allowed to become visible? It is the underlying questions that pull us into the depths of her works. Into the non-foundational. The infinite that manifests itself in the finite.

This is also the case in the "*blaue objekte*" (blue objects). Their deep dark blue awakens a sense of the unimaginable. It literally leads the viewer to this spiritual level: one's own image is revealed in the high-gloss surface. The living. The matt surface, on the other hand, is a reference to that which we cannot really describe. Becoming and passing away. The compression of one's own being in the context of the inexplicable. Reduced colourfulness, textures, minimal distances and gaps between surfaces in all dimensions - width, height and depth - compress themselves through the energy that builds up.

Every cut, every line has a meaning, a reason, can be placed in the whole. The few and almost flying lines in her drawings "*Aus Alles ist Zahl*" (From Everything is Number) - three graphite lines, two coloured pencil lines - refer to a layering of numbers as geometric signs. The reduction is enough to sense the whole. For nothing stands alone. Everything is in relation to each other.

Clarity, logic, geometric signs. Are these codes that **Tonneke Sengers** compresses her wall sculptures into? And which we, as viewers, are allowed to decipher in our own way of reading? Is there a foreground, is there a background? How is the peculiar density of her spaces, described in reduced colourfulness, formed, which show themselves to us here?

Searching for the space, a change of viewpoint reveals: everything is illusion. Nothing is three-dimensional. Tilting images, optical illusions. With the reduction to a clear geometric language - triangles, squares, rectangles, parallelograms - it remains on a surface reduced in materiality. It is this clarity of reduction that challenges our perception. As do the titles reduced to a few signs - letters and numbers. "*UTW101LV1*", "*UTW102SV3*", "*UTW101XLV1*". Size indications. Systematic numbering, distinctions in versions, following the chronological process of creation. And last but not least, the key to understanding their spaces: UTW - Up the Wall. It is the distance with which she compresses the space into depth. And at the same time, by omitting individual geometric surfaces, she brings the space into the surface. Shadow becomes a creative element. Constructed space. Which only comes into being through our perception. Milled out of aluminium and applied over layers of paint.

The four works shown here made of oak veneer - four versions of "*UTWOV*", "*Up The Wall Oak Veneer*" - are denser in their materiality, but remain more strongly in the surface. Not without playing with our perception again: Triangles and squares that question proportions and sizes with their arrangement. Are they interfaces or overlaps? What is here in front, what is behind? What is superimposition, what is inscribed?

Compression through systems, recurring rhythms, reversals, repetitions. Illusions as reduction.

In a wonderfully harmonious interplay, Andrea Zehetbauer and Guido Zehetbauer-Salzer have created relationships between the works, created cross-references and brought the different positions into a rhythmic, tense balance. The resulting "pleasant emptiness", as the gallery owners describe it, offers precisely the space that the works need in order to grasp their essence. And that we as viewers need in order to sense the individuality of the artists in them.

"Almost everyone seems to have misjudged the soul in its essence and its power, both as far as everything else is concerned and its development: namely, that it is one of the most original things, since it came into being before everything physical - and that it is the principle that is more effective than anything else in all changes of the latter and in general in all rearrangements". With this quotation from Plato, which Veronika Rodenberg sent me in preparation for the exhibition, I would like to invite you to experience the originality of the individual positions in their unfolding.