

SPACED OUT

SPACED OUT | Gut Kerkow

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Open daily 10am – 6pm

Claudia Mann

GOING AND COMING

When asked what sculpture is, Claudia Mann (b. 1982 in Wuppertal) confidently states: “Sculpture is ground.” The ground forms the starting point of her sculptural concept, which she continuously develops.

Claudia Mann extends her thoughts about the ground to the consideration that as humans, we stand upright in constant balance and contact with it. Since an object needs three points of support to stand firmly, whereas humans have only two legs, Mann concludes that the balance organ in our heads serves as our ‘third leg.’ By constantly balancing ourselves, we create the necessary internal and outer stability to maintain a strong foothold on the ground. The principle of balance and movement thus represents a basic principle of artistic creation in Mann’s works, despite the rigidity of the materials she uses. Her works reflect the results of prior actions.

For her exhibition *GOING AND COMING* at the project space SPACED OUT on the Gut Kerkow estate, Claudia Mann produced the work *HAL* (head, arm, leg) on-site over several months. For *HAL*, the artist herself dug three holes in the Uckermark soil on the Kerkow estate, molded them with wax, and had them cast as aluminum sculptures. The three earth holes follow the idea that visitors could insert their own three body parts head, arm and leg (HAL = Head, Arm, Leg) into them - the three body parts that are largely responsible for our balance and our stability on the ground.

Viewers of the work can most clearly comprehend the concept inherent in the work by reading the words of the artist herself. Claudia Mann writes:

,First, it's the head's turn.

The size depends on how my head feels in the hole. Am I already in, or not? How much should actually go in? The ears are decisive. Eventually, a sense of calm and comfort settles in, and I know that it's enough. It smells fantastic. A protection. Like a earplugs.

I apply wax directly onto the earth material in the hole. The first coat very carefully. Usually splattering at first until a skin forms that I can touch with the brush. When I reach a vesting thickness of 6-8mm, I take out the mold.

Following the removal of the first mold, a measurement is taken inside, with just as much sensitivity, for the arm. How deep? How does the rest of the body behave? I place my hand on the bottom. Support myself. And decide if my arm really has room in it and observe my shoulder in relation to the edge of the hole. Corrections and enlargements follow. This is molded again...and then a leg...

I bring the three hole excavations to the foundry, which I retrieved from the earth in Kerkow, molded directly from wax. Unique pieces. With the organic materials from there. I clean these carefully just with water and decide what stays on, and the foundry creates the channels and pours fireclay around the molds.

The whole thing goes into the furnace and wax is melted out until the negative is formed. Even wood and other organic materials burns away. Stones, however, do not, if they were to be found in the hole. Then the aluminium can be cast.’