

The Lightness of Stone – On the work and work process of Susanne Tunn



Susanne Tunn's Tisch des Denkens (Table of Thought) was produced in 1989: a block like table-shaped form created in the Weserauen in the Minden area, whereby the sculptor exposed parts of ellipsoids, seemingly archaic cuts and indentations in the upper surface. The artist herself recognized symbols in these traces pointing towards structures lying more deeply within. Symbols of thoughts – hewn in stone?

In 2004, Susanne Tunn developed the work Atem-Meta for the roof of Villa Schlicker in Osnabrück and the rooms of the Annette Röhr Gallery. In her most recent work, Susanne Tunn reflects on the double character of her action: as a sculptor she experiments with the conceptual conditions of her work from the beginning; as an artist Susanne Tunn takes the liberty of bringing "chance" in to play against the solidness and challenge of the hard stones and the lightness of the situational reaction.

In many of her sculptural works, Susanne Tunn reacts sensitively to circumstances surrounding their respective realization. In 1991-1992, she created Tisch der Wüste (Table of the Desert) and then took two months until, through an intuitive process, she found the location where she would work. It was only in the second year that she succeeded to come closer to the stone to lay bare its essence and to take on specific actions of "breaking it in". During her work on the stone, the artist met a shepherd who led her to a water stone through a historical ancestor. The stone used in earlier times by the farmers and Susanne's later created autonomous sculpture are split by worlds and joined in the reflection of her observations. Sculpture should come into being where history lay. Yet where the sculpture does come into being, people have to get together alongside space and time. The discovery of situations and congregations of people who apparently do not have anything to do with each other, the "chance" is a background, an "invisible" and yet symbolic element in her works. For Susanne Tunn, impulses of her work come into being especially in the process of discovery of inner analogies and parallel worlds.

In the exhibition project 3 Räume 3 Flüsse (3 Rooms 3 Rivers) an at first glance paradoxical parallel project is created: LOH a several dimensional sculpture which in its non functional "tilted" position, forms a blatant contradiction to living nature – COR an oppressive video-installation with sound and film takes of the human heart of her friend. The three-dimensional painting of a beating heart, the gravel and sand layer separating art and nature. The viewers search for links which they manage to find when they perceive that which is separated before and in themselves.

The four "Primary Stones" which were created in 1996 – 1997 near Salzburg reflect the relationship to the location and the occasion for their evolvment in a specific way to them. The round stones put across the feeling of an almost universal mobility – a sculptural principal has taken on a space, a spiritual stock. "You react like a sponge", comments Susanne Tunn, but this is not immediately perceivable in her work. In other words: the mode of her intuition is reflected and her form of sculptural reflection moves on intuitive intelligence. Slowness is a virtue – many of Susanne Tunn's works are created in a long process of fumbling around and searching insecurely. You have the impression here that the discovery is like finally reaching the revered land of art.

Sculpture is for the sculptor not more and not less a universal figure of existence made alive. Signs of sensual openness and traces in the sand of history which will once again elapse.

Many of Susanne Tunn's sculptures evoke an atmosphere of negative space – many shadows are caught and light becomes invisible in her sculpted cavities. It is only in the negative space where the artists and viewers evidently perceive themselves - the link between the inner exterior and the inside turned outside are one of the traces which can be repeatedly encountered in the works of Susanne Tunn. The background noise composed from the clay of old and new organ pipes for her work 166 Beds, created in 1998, made the stone audible in a sense. The silence from the space of history suddenly became a highly subjectively audible sound track in Hagen. A reversed world – a world in reverse: first listen then dream. First find, then formulate. In Susanne Tunn's studio, right next to the ton weight of processed granite, a white tablecloth is spread out on a tilted surface on which elderberry blossoms lie upside down, like delicate, miniature sculptures. Is there any image which the analogy between art and sculpture and nature and life could formulate in a more impelling and poetic way?

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