

INSIDEOUT

#2 Veit Laurent Kurz

Duration: 01.03. –28.03.2021

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Veit Laurent Kurz, the second artist in the INSIDEOUT series, creates an apocalyptic scenario in the Kunsthalle Gießen's display window, curated by Gesine Borchardt.



Veit Laurent Kurz: *DREAM BABY DREAM*, installation view detail, Haus Mödrath, Kerpen, 2020
Photo: Haus Mödrath

How do we perceive invisible danger? Where is it and what are its consequences? Veit Laurent Kurz (born 1985 in Erbach, lives and works in Berlin) has been preoccupied with the subject of contamination since childhood: while playing in the forest and by the water, he sensed invisible *spirits* that triggered nausea and sore throats. Today, his *Dilldapps* are dwarf-like, deformed figures from which something toxic emanates. Nestled in apocalyptic scenarios made of plastic plants, furniture and building materials, often soaked in poison-green liquid, they look like the undead that at the same time radiate something fairytale-like – and that plunge entire rooms into the abyss.

One of these apocalyptic settings by Veit Laurent Kurz can be seen from March 1st in the Kunsthalle Gießen's display window as part of the series of exhibitions, INSIDEOUT. Following the inaugural exhibition featuring Raphaela Vogel, Kurz is thus the second artistic position of the three-part format of INSIDEOUT, which will run until 18th April 2021. Despite the lockdown, INSIDEOUT provides visitors with the opportunity to experience contemporary art that changes on a monthly basis via the display window.



Veit Laurent Kurz: *Kräutergasse*, installation view, Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst, Delmenhorst, 2017
Photo: Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst

For INSIDEOUT in the Kunsthalle Gießen's display window, the artist has erected an installation from his *Herba 4* series of works, which he repeatedly modifies: painted wall panels and tower-like structures made of Styrofoam that exhibit a strange, mossy-floral growth are connected to one another via hoses like a large distillation system. *Herba 4* – a fictitious elixir that is pumped through the system of pipes – functions for the artist interchangeably as a herbal extract, a poison, a hallucinogen or even a fictitious vaccine. Thus, it can have either a lethal or a vitalising

effect. When *Herba 4* covers the floor like a spilled radioactive liquid, the scene resembles that of a chemical laboratory in which an accident has occurred – fascination and fear converge.

Herba 4 presents a mystery: are magical or medical forces behind it? The paradoxical combination of technology and magic, of nature and machine, of the organic and the artificial appears again and again in the work of Veit Laurent Kurz – as does the Dilldapp, which is something akin to his alter ego. The creature, both folkloric and carnivalesque, has various origin stories. One comes from Hunsrück, the artist's hometown. The Dilldapp also appears in a story of the same name by Clemens Brentano, a leading figure of German Romanticism: it tells of a boy who was chased away from home for being stupid and from then on lived with a monster who taught him magic tricks. To the artist, he embodies the inexplicable, that which stands in opposition to science and statically established solutions.

(Text Gesine Borchardt)



Veit Laurent Kurz: *ENQUÊTE ARCANE*, installation view, Association DOC, Paris, 2019
Photo: Association DOC

Veit Laurent Kurz (*1985 in Erbach) lives and works in Berlin. He studied at the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach and at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. His most recent solo exhibitions were held, among others, at Kunstverein Nürnberg (2019) and Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst (2017). He has also participated in the group exhibitions *DREAM BABY DREAM* at Haus Mödrath, Kerpen (2020) and *Made in Germany Drei* at the Sprengel Museum and the Kestner Gesellschaft Hannover (2017), among others.

Gesine Borchardt is an art journalist and curator living in Berlin. She is a writer for *Welt am Sonntag*, *BLAU International* and *AD Germany* and was senior editor of the art magazine *BLAU*. She was the curator at the CAPRI art space in Düsseldorf from 2014-2019. In 2020, she curated the exhibition *DREAM BABY DREAM* at Haus Mödrath in Kerpen. She is currently working on an interview book with VALIE EXPORT.