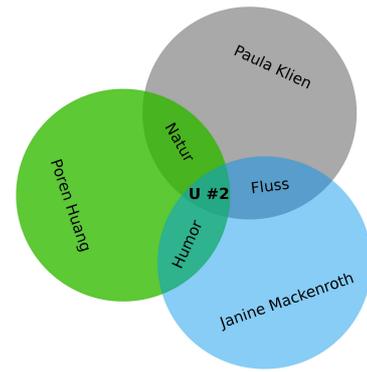


Künstler/Artists: **Poren Huang, Paula Klien, Janine Mackenroth**
Kuratorin/Curator: Irina Ilieva
Text: Sarah Maske
Ausstellung/Exhibition: OFFLINE+ONLINE 7. May - 29. May 2021
Ort/Venue: aquabitArt Galerie
Auguststrasse 35, 10119 Berlin-Mitte
www.art.aquabit.com



UNMASKED #2, The title of the exhibition, curated by Irina Ilieva in the aquabitArt Gallery, seems like a provocation. In 2021, we will be unmasked in private life, with people we know well, who are part of our household, even in intimate situations, but not when shopping, in public institutions or in the gallery. **UNMASKED** also describes the state of uncovering what is hidden, of already existing but concealed states.

UNMASKED #2 is a series of courageous exhibitions that bring together the works of gallery artists, in order to initiate a dialogue between the artistic approaches, which will be shown for the first time as a trio. Ilieva evokes a certain familiarity of the works of **Paula Klien, Janine Mackenroth and Poren Huang**, although they were not conceived together. This results in interesting readings and concentration points in a circle of concentrations.

Abstraction and Flow

The works of **Paula Klien and Janine Mackenroth** are characterised by energetic abstractions.

Paula Klien's abstraction feeds on the organic, monochrome forms that move across the paper without any apparent system. From circular, flower-like structures (*Fluvius*) to images of seemingly microscopic views (*Fluxo*) to macro-perspective bird`s-eye views of landscapes (*Pranto e Baba*), numerous possibilities of interpretation are open.

Janine Mackenroth's abstraction results from the choice of her material of nail polish and the way she applies it to the canvas. Through her Nail Polish Painting Machine, she lets the nail polish onto the canvas (*Silber, Grau, Orange*). The abstraction reflects an interplay between the nail polish, the canvas, the machine and **Mackenroth's** movements. In the work *Chips*, **Mackenroth** applied the nail polish by hand in the style of the work in beauty salons. She thus creates a conceptually and socially critical level typical for **Mackenroth**, which points to the extremes of the working conditions for the nail salon employees. As is often the case in her oeuvre she transfers this to the artworld.

Both the properties of the materials and the use of the artist`s body are decisive for the flow. In **Mackenroth's** video **NAIL POLISH PAINTING MACHINE**, one can observe how the artist initiates and controls the flow of the nail polish.

Mackenroth's time window is short due to the properties of the thick fluid and quick drying of nail polish. This gives rise to the large waves that spread sedately over the canvas.

In **Paula Klien's** video **BATISMO** the process of dissolving can also be observed. Klien stands knee-deep in the mountain river near a waterfall and dabs thick, black ink onto the floating sheet of paper with a brush. The water absorbed in the paper allows the ink to flow in various directions, as if on a highway, before it dries.

Convionment

The interconnectedness of humans and non-human actors is a prerequisite for understanding the works of **Poren Huang and Paula Klien**.

Poren Huang takes "man's best friend" as an inspiration for his trendy sculptures (*Relax* and *Swag*). Many thousands of years ago, humans began to domesticate the wild dog and thus integrate a new form of dog into the social system, the domestic dog. This should be useful to man and become part of his human society. The hypersociality hypothesis states that domestication has intensified the sociability of dogs. But also vice versa the dogs have a strong influence on the humans, they let him settle, for example. **Huang's** sculptures push the process of mutual adaptation to the extreme and let the dogs wear human-like facial expressions and gestures. These include standing on two legs, laughing faces and crossed arms – and they seem to tell us a little: take an example from us, of our loyalty, fidelity and joy in the simple things of life! **Paula Klien's** works are the result of the cooperation between the artist and a creative elemental force. **Klien** cedes part of her authorship to the element water, which determines the running directions of the ink and thus brings an unexpected dynamic to the paper. Thus, following the Taoist teachings that place the five elements, wood, fire, metal, water and earth at the centre to describe the so-called nature, **Klien** embarks on the path of this spiritual worldview. She uses the active power of the water on the paper and the ink. It creates a portal into a transcendent visual world created by human and non-human actors together.

Humour

Poren Huang and Janine Mackenroth's approach to the subjects of their art is full of humour and tongue-in-cheek. In her paintings, **Mackenroth** addresses the stony path for female artists, which is characterised by male-favouring systems. The SIGNET RING FOR WOMEN IN ART No.1 in silver or gold, a noble piece of jewellery, wants to connect women more visibly in the art world, in a system in which this is not yet sufficiently the case. **Mackenroth** takes up the theme of the male signet rings and spins it until it gets an all-female following. The colourful work *Chips*, created in New York, refers with material and title to "chipped nails" and the obligatory trip to the weekly manicure. At the same time, it picks up the chips used in the casino and gambling. The connection of the two associative paths underlines the fact that in today's world it is purely a game of chance which social class one belongs to and also what income goes with it.

Poren Huang's sculptures are full of comic-like dog depictions.

His typical dog sculptures have the characteristics typical of his depictions, big head, big eyes and always a mischievous smile, even if the dog should not smile. Looking at them puts you in a good mood and you can't help but smile. *Chew Bone* is designed according to a commercially available chewing bone. This banal object is enhanced by the presentation in the art space. At the same time, we can see it as an ironic commentary on our art world, in which hardly any distinction is made between the everyday and the artistically created.

Huang's, Kliens and Mackenroth's basic artistic ideas are very diverse, yet they combine essential thematic and technical approaches, which are made visible in UNMASKED #2.

Sarah Maske (Mai 2021)