

MEME

An exhibition of the jewellery and hollowware class
Academy of Fine Arts Munich
Prof. Karen Pontoppidan



8 March – 25 April 2020
Opening: Saturday, 7 March, 4 p.m.

Sunday 8 March, 2 p.m., artists talk with Jasmin Matzakow
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Jewellery can be complex. It should be common knowledge that it functions as a medium for projection, meanings, and for cultural, provocative and sentimental content. However, we can say that establishing itself as a critical and informative tool is rather a contemporary phenomenon.

A selection of artists from the class for jewellery and hollowware, Academy of Fine Arts Munich, take up their positions within a particular show. The works, gathered in an expansive installation, create an unusual tableau and invite us to swing between various continents. Faulty, mutually confronting and overlapping sections of geographical maps of the world, photographed or drawn from the internet, complement each other to form an elaborate environment that runs through the entire gallery, becoming a background for the jewellery, its “home”. The result is an ensemble of fragmented impressions and references in which the jewellery is embedded. It takes part in changing views and insights, in the play of orientation and disorientation, in apparent information and certainty regarding questioning, change or falsification; in short the unstoppable play of images, impressions, statements and messages from our communication media.

This brings us to “MEME”, the gene within our chats, our podcasts, our video news, computer and cyber technology. Meme is understood to be a socio-cultural concept that spreads and undergoes corresponding changes. Its essence is spread, connects here and there, new connotations being made and is in a constant process of renewal. Messages, statements, declarations and insights mix interactively with the respective situations, where they appear and link to new contexts, thus being exposed to interventions that can lead to variations, mistakes and errors. Therefore “the exhibition concept should not be seen as evaluation, but rather understood as an illumination of the dynamic relationships between information and memes” (from the concept description of the class).

If we look at jewellery as a medium, as a carrier of information and meanings, then it acts like a meme. Every work starts from an artist, their personal background, way of thinking, their standpoint. Then the jewellery migrates to the next context and gains another layer. Layer after layer and signal on top of signal, meanings are accumulated.

Jewellery is enriched by exhibiting, through contemplation, through acquisition, through transference, by travelling, through the shift of looking at and being seen. It holds these individual experiences and qualities in condensed form.

This is what the project MEME of the Class for Jewellery and Hollowware under the leadership of Prof. Karen Pontoppidan relates to – with the purpose to make the evoked potency of jewellery materially comprehensible through selection and presentation. Furthermore, the class makes this claim to help jewellery regain the forces it has lost through commercialisation and trivialisation.

Jewellery is entitled to artistic and symbolic values which have vanished within a thicket of superficiality, actually inherent in the “fabric” of jewellery in order to guarantee its permanent, intelligent and artistically relevant presence. Together with the historically grown aesthetic dimension of their subject matter, these young artists work towards saving the added value of their artistic position for the future.

