

Gudrun Kampl
(Sigmund) Freud Dancing

Love on Terrace, M50 Shanghai
June 8, 2021, 4-7pm

As a second exhibition project, Love on Terrace will show works by the Austrian artist Gudrun Kampl. No one else could fulfil the current task of the mirrored room around "Love and Desire" better than the Vienna-based artist. In her works, she cultivates a refined, playful approach to themes of Sigmund Freud or Adolf Loos that are laden with a long tradition. Sensuality and ornament are transformed by Kampl into an ironic, feminine interpretation and literally turned into their opposite. In this way, she allows the viewer to immerse him/herself in her very own world.

Kampl's objects are based on a broad field of experimentation with materials, which she usually transforms into controversial objects, contrary to their conventional character and nature. She sews guns out of soft, dressy velvet or wraps fear-inducing kitchen knives in the soft fabric, which is often associated with eroticism. Plastic, on the other hand, she makes look like delicate thread or embroidered pictures. Although the forms of her works often radiate passion and sensuality, each of them harbours an explosive, opposite flip side. Even a cage dressed in crimson velvet ("Cage", 2004) or her installation "Blood Drops" (2009) take on an erotic character, although one normally associates violence, isolation and pain with them. The body is always the starting point of her work and is made the subject in two ways: firstly, in the form of its surface, the skin and its texture, and secondly, her focus is often on the organs and everything inside. The organs are responsible for maintaining the body's functions, but equally reflect its emotional state.

At first glance, the former graduate of Maria Lassnig's painting class did not retain many aspects of the profession she had learned. Even during her studies, she was more interested in canvases as a material that could be cut and deformed than as a picture support.

In her pictorial objects, drawn with plastic down to the finest detail, she basically achieves more painting (or drawing) than many others who stand in the studio every day with a paintbrush. However, one associates the delicate objects of her "Bondage Series" more with soft textiles than with dried plastic.

Love on Terrace is a young label founded in 2019 by entrepreneur and art collector Juliet Peng Wenjing. Their mission is to encourage and empower women to explore the theme of love and desire with confidence and style.

Located in the M50 gallery street, the show room lends itself to exhibitions and is the ideal place for an artistic intervention by Gudrun Kampl.

Juliet Peng Wenjing spanned her selection of works across a broad spectrum of Kampl's oeuvre over the past 10 years. Following the attributes of feminism and desire, the work "Passion" (2013) comes into its own just as perfectly as the "Bondage Series" (2020-21) recently created for this exhibition. The first presentation of the Austrian artist in Shanghai provides a coherent overview of her extraordinary work full of irony and baroque forms.

Alexandra Grimmer, May 2021