

## CORNUCOPIA – APRICOT GIRLS & MOUTH\* HARPIES

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In her text "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading", Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick attempts to understand paranoia as an epistemological practice alongside others - in particular alongside a reparative practice - with recourse to Melanie Klein's theses: "In Klein, I find particularly congenial her use of the concept of positions - the schizoid/paranoid position, the depressive position - as opposed to, for example, normatively ordered stages, stable structures, or diagnostic personality types." Sedgwick reads Klein as a theory of positions that analyses the psychological constitution not in terms of progression or regression, but as a back and forth, as performative positions that take the place of "stages" (in psychoanalysis: phase, but also theatrical stage), normative structures and types, thus making Sedgwick's paranoid and reparative practices, which give the book its title, conceivable as "changing and heterogeneous relational stances". The trauma, the early childhood aggression are not overcome, but rather inscribed in the form of life, which does not appear as the preservation (or formation) of (strong) identity, but rather as its deconstruction and queering. Reparation here is not a unifying bringing together of multiple parts, broken pieces, into a whole, not a healing by restoring the lost unity, but a multiplication of identities that can constellate into a common position, but can (must) also interrupt it again, voluntarily, involuntarily, attentively, aggressively...

The room installation *Cornucopia - Apricot Girls & Mouth\* Harpies* consists of multiple parts: a script, a choir, eight people, individual objects such as spoons, glasses, breadcrumbs, lemons, a salt shaker, all lying or standing around carelessly, large-format tiles lying on the floor in the room or on a stair-like platform, in a chessboard pattern, magenta and white or dark green and white. The script includes multiple textual images: (9/11), (*The relationship between the two*), (*Men at work*), (*Orfeo & Euridice*), (*Wishlist*), (*Breadcrumbs*), (*Wood*), (*Pygmalion & Galatea*), (*Edge of the sink*), (*Ulysses*), (*Wasteland*), (*Gentrification*), (*Crisps*), (*Ass chair*), (*Brecht piece*), (*Cut Piece*), (*Fliese-Kante-Liste*), (8), (*Tapestry*), (*Wer*), (*Leave Küche*), which are rendered and repeated in multiple styles - rhymed, in staccato, as listing, narrative, dialogical, antagonistic, interrogative, propositional - and in multiple languages - Italian, German, English, French. The choir (of harpies) in this restaging of the work comprises six people, who also speak individual roles before merging back into the choir. The spoken, shouted, whispered historical and mythological references are interchangeable, stand-ins, mouthpieces, pop-cultural references (Ulysses!) of an aesthetic elite; the glasses and spoons are remnants of their social interactions; the tiles are fired and glazed notations of their positions, which stabilise into stages and then break again. The viewers wander through this visual, textual, auditory excess and yet at the same time find themselves in the long duration of the empty exhibition space that extends between the activated performances and which itself becomes a performative position.

*Cornucopia - Apricot Girls & Mouth\* Harpies* was initially designed for the so-called garden house of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, which was built in 2007 as a residential unit for visiting professors as part of the renovation of the Academy's historical building, replacing the old animal painting school and stables from 1895. However, for various reasons, spanning from the Academy's notorious lack of space to the questionable rental policy of the State of Bavaria, it was only used as accommodation in exceptional cases, but mostly as an office, 3D workshop, seminar room and - despite the convoluted architecture over three floors - as an exhibition space. From this uninhabited living space, "Cornucopia" moves to the "Kunstpavillon" (art pavilion) in the Old Botanical Garden of the city, which was built in 1936 on the site of the burnt-down "Glaspalast" as a place of Munich's Nazi cultural policy; until it was destroyed in the war and rebuilt in the 1950s, becoming one of the city's first ever artist-run spaces. However, it is not so much the artistic installation that "fills" these spaces, even "inhabits" them, but rather the ambivalence of these spaces seems to migrate into the performative positions of "Cornucopia", to graft itself onto them.

For performance is not understood here in the sense of activity, performance, the development of living or aesthetic orders, but on the contrary as de-personalization and generalization: thus the famous "interaction" with the famous "audience" in a "situation" is also consistently zero, regardless of what is happening in the space. The work is not completed in the spectator, the spectator does not complement the critical claim, the spectator rather becomes part of the arrangement in which they remain outside, "quite general", as Brecht says, un-identified, not emphatic, smooth like the surface of the dark red and white tiles... The excessive polyphony of the choir, of the recipient, of the artist does not coalesce into a whole, into a "work of art" in which the individual parts merge; rather, it forms itself as an aesthetic milieu in which the individual positions drape themselves as precisely those "changing and heterogeneous relational stances", assemble themselves in changing constellations - or else elude this constellation and thus also address the basic incompatibility of different voices, positions and attitudes.

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(translated from German by Giulia Zabarella)