



**DO IT
YOUR
SELF**

MERLE MARIE ECKERT

practical part of the B.A. thesis 2020



Photo by Linda Troeller

„The role of orgasm in the future - which is now - is: it makes men and women more equal. There are still too many fathers who think that their pristine 14-year-old daughters aren't taking the shower-head sprayer and wanking themselves. And I hope they are. In fact, I always say, if I have a daughter, when she is 14 - maybe 13 now, because there is porn on the Internet all over the place - you're going to nip them in the bud, you've got to catch them at the pass, seriously! I want my daughter to be sexually empowered. She has just as much right to her orgasms as her older or younger brother - if she has one - or as much right as the geek sitting next to her in her science class, or whatever. And, hopefully, if she realizes that she has that power, then it will prevent her from having sex before she is ready. She won't let herself be pressured into doing something to please somebody else, because she already knows how to please herself. And if she is assertive enough to please herself, then she'll be more discerning in picking a partner. I feel this is one of the most important roles that orgasm can play in a woman's life.“

— Dragonfly in *Orgasm; Photographs & Interviews* by Linda Troeller & Marion Schneider

CONTENT _____

STOP THE SHAME	01
CALLING ALL CLIT OWNERS	03
FOUR STAGES OF SEXUAL RESPONSE	05
FOUR CONTAINERS FOR FOUR STAGES	07
INTERSPACES	09
EXTERNAL VISIBILITY	10
SURVEY EVALUATION 01 / EXCITEMENT	11
ROOM01 / EXCITEMENT	13
ROOM01 / ERIKA LUST	15
SURVEY EVALUATION 02 / PLATEAU	19
ROOM02 / PLATEAU	21
SURVEY EVALUATION 03 / CLIMAX	25
ROOM03 / CLIMAX	27
ROOM03 / VON MUSIC	31
SURVEY EVALUATION 04 / INTOXICATION	33

ROOM04 / INTOXICATION	35
CONTEXT	37
INPUT	39
EXAMPLES FOR LITERATURE EXCERPTS	41
LITERARY AND CINEMATIC INSPIRATION	45

Photo by Linda Troeller



STOP THE SHAME!

Female masturbation and especially the associated orgasm is still taboo in our society. Let's stop that! Let's talk about what we feel. Let us appreciate the miracle, which can trigger cosmic, ecstatic, intoxication-like and indescribable feelings, can put us in extraterrestrial space, can let us feel our own body as intensely as never before. Let's get rid of our shame. We can all help to slowly but surely get the topic deserved in society by simply talking about it.

By trying to depict these feelings in space, I hope to exchange about the perception shifts that orgasm and sexual arousal can trigger in us. And the best thing about it: **you can do it yourself!**

CALLING ALL CLIT OWNERS _____

Every person experiences and feels their orgasm in a different way. A survey was used to collect many different perspectives on the individual orgasmic sensations during masturbation to then apply them to the space installation.

It was necessary to find out how other clitoris owners feel shortly before, during and after orgasm, how they sense and perceive their bodies and their surroundings.

HEY CLITORIS OWNER!

As part of my bachelors thesis at the Muthesius Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Kiel in the department of Spatial Strategies, I need support from many clitoris owners, like e.g. you, for inspiration for my spatial installation.

I want to know, what your orgasm feels like and how the perception of your own body and your surroundings shifts during intoxication through masturbation. Your answers are obviously save with me and will of course be treated anonymously. Allow yourself time with answering and try to keep a close eye on yourself and your perception. I'm looking forward to your orgasm!

Merle Marie Eckert // merle.marie.eckert@me.com // @merlemarie // deadline 1.12.2019

WHAT IMAGES, FANTASIES AND THOUGHTS DO YOU USE DURING MASTURBATION?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF AT THE BEGINNING? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF CLOSE TO CLIMAX?

WHAT DOES YOUR BODY FEEL WHEN YOU'RE CLOSE TO THE CLIMAX? WHAT DO YOU ASSOCIATE THE FEELING WITH? SERVERAL ANSWERS POSSIBLE.

- FLOAT RESOLUTION DIZZINESS
 TENSION MAELSTROM OVERBOIL
 THROBBING ECSTASY OTHER:
 RELAXATION WAVES
-

DESCRIBE YOUR ORGASMIC INTOXICATION / ECSTASY IN 3 WORDS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1

THE PERCEPTION OF THE AMBIENCE CHANGING FROM THE BEGINNING TO
THE END? DO YOU STILL SENSE YOUR SURROUNDINGS?

THE PERCEPTION OF YOUR BODY CHANGING FROM THE BEGINNING TO
THE END? ARE YOU STILL AWARE OF YOUR BODY?

I SEE OR HEAR, WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES DURING ORGASM?

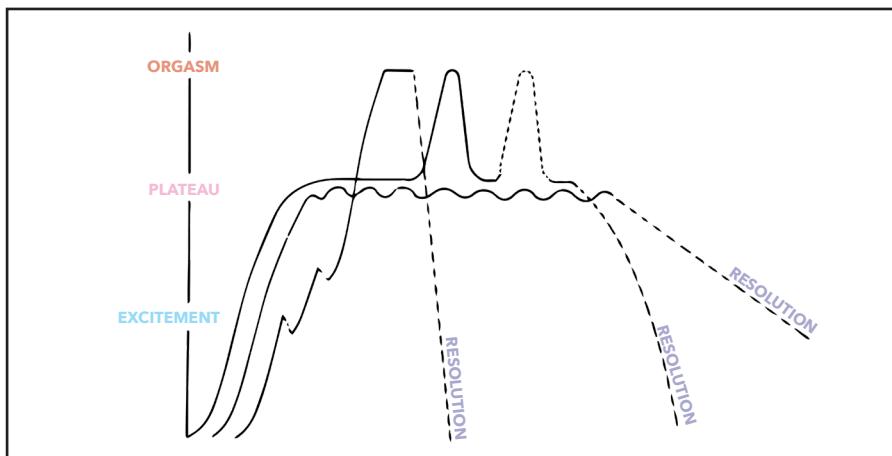
COLORS/MOVEMENTS DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH THE ORGASM?

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME, YOUR CANDOR AND THE SHORT GLIMPSE IN YOUR
ORGASM.

2

FOUR STAGES OF SEXUAL RESPONSE

After intensive study of the physiological four stages of sexual response of Masters & Johnson and the corresponding phenomenological stages of Hermann Schmitz in the theoretical part of the bachelor thesis, I sorted the survey results based on the stages mentioned on the right.



Female Sexual Response, Die sexuelle Reaktion (1967), Masters & Johnson

- 01 EXCITEMENT
- 02 PLATEAU
- 03 ORGASM / CLIMAX
- 04 RESOLUTION / INTOXICATION

FOUR CONTAINERS FOR FOUR STAGES

The translation into space accordingly also consists of four areas arranged one behind the other, each in a container, which visualize the course of the four phases of sexual arousal. Each container is assigned to a stage - visitors have the opportunity to walk from the excitement through the plateau stage to orgasm and into the subsequent intoxication.



ROOM01
EXCITEMENT



ROOM02
PLATEAU



ROOM03
CLIMAX

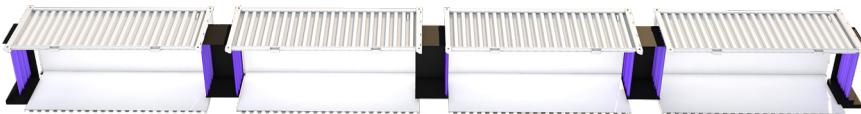
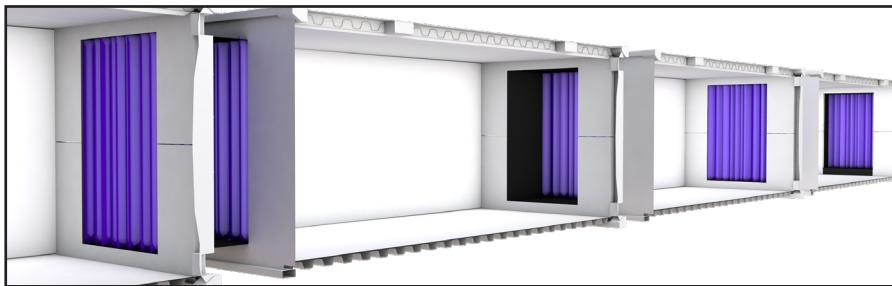


ROOM04
INTOXICATION



INTERSPACES

There are dark spaces between the individual phases and containers, which are separated from the openings of the containers by curtains (colored purple here). They serve both as sound and lighting insulation.



EXTERNAL VISIBILITY

The lettering **DO IT YOUR SELF** and the *fff* also used in the logo are attached to the outer walls of the container. An immediate eye-catcher that allows initial speculations on the content.



SURVEY EVALUATION 01 / EXCITEMENT

„I'M HORNY, LET'S START“

„THOUGHTS OF REMINDED FLIRTS & FOREPLAYS“

„OUTPUT OF A DATE OR DIRECTLY THE BEGINNING OF SEX“

„PICTURAL PHANTASIES OF EXCITING SITUATIONS“

„IN THE BEGINNING THERE IS A NEED, THOUGHTS, FANTASIES THAT DISAPPEAR DURING THE MASTURBATION“

„JUNGLE PICTURES, OF DRIPPING FLOWERS AND GORGEOUS PLANTS, MEMORIES NOT ONLY ON PEOPLE, BUT ALSO ON BEAUTIFUL, MAGICAL MOMENTS, STARRY SKY, CANDLES AND MUSIC.“

„VISUALIZATION OF TOUCH, ACCURATE CONCENTRATION ON SENSITIVE BODY PARTS, REMINDER OF SEX, SOMETIMES PORNOS“

„I IMAGINE MY BOYFRIEND. I HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT PORNOS LATEST.“

„I LIKE TO THINK OF FANTASIES THAT START WITH SEXUAL TENSION AND THE MOVE ON, IT ALLOWS ME TO TURN ON SLOWLY WITH IT AND ENJOY THE PROCESS CALMLY.“

„I JUST CLOSE MY EYES AND TOUCH MYSELF. THEN MY MIND STARTS GOING THROUGH ALL KINDS OF SEXY THOUGHTS.“

„I THINK OF SEX WITH MY BOYFRIEND, SEX WITH COMPLETELY STRANGERS, SEX WITH WOMEN, SEX WITH SEVERAL MEN AND I AS THE ONLY WOMAN, OTHER WOMEN MASTURBATING“

„RATHER ABSTRACT, FAIRYTALE-LIKE, THE FURTHER I GET TO THE CLIMAX, THE MORE ABSTRACT IT BECOMES.“

„I FIRST TRY TO STAY IN MY PERSPECTIVE BECAUSE I DON'T FEEL LIKE REPRODUCING THE MALE-DOMINATED (ESPECIALLY MALE-SATISFYING) SEX, BUT I USUALLY DON'T SUCCEED TOWARDS THE END.“

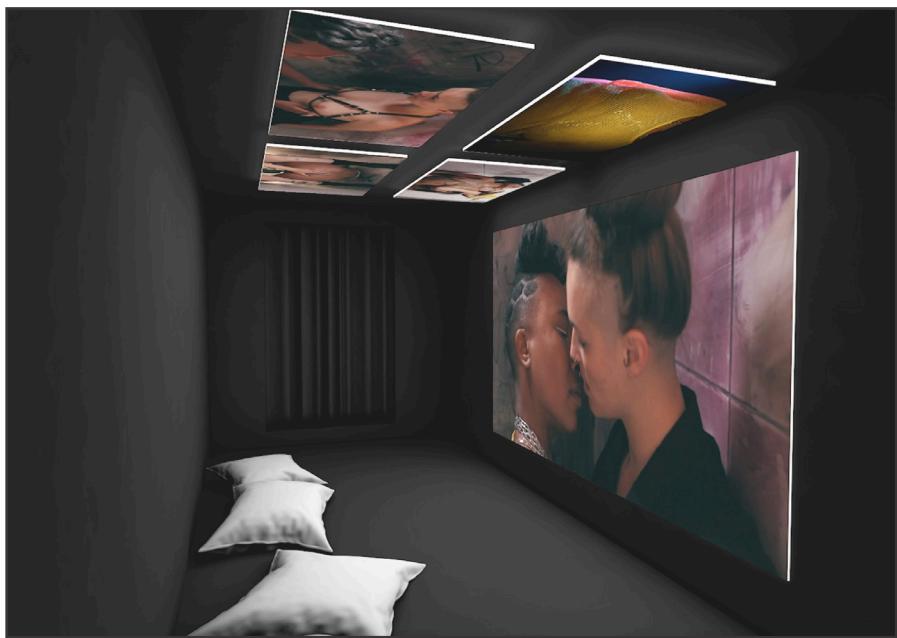
„I THINK ABOUT MY PARTNER AND SOMETIMES WATCH AMATEUR/HOMEMADE PORNOGRAPHY.“

ROOM01 / EXCITEMENT _____

PHANTASIES, THOUGHTS, PORNOGRAPHY

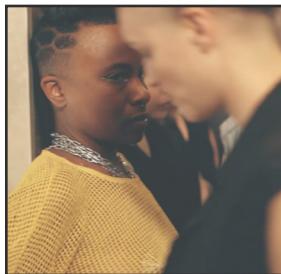
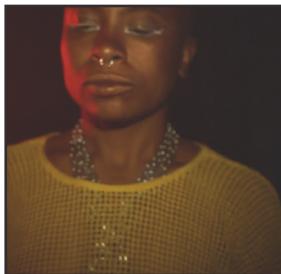
An Erika Lust film is shown on a large screen on a long side of the container. Four smaller screens on the ceiling show individual sections from the film in slow motion loop, reflecting the individual focus on details during masturbation. The original sound of the video is played continuously without any changes and an additional dramaturgy is built up, in that the sound of a deeply breathing woman is superimposed on the original sound like a filter and becomes louder and louder from the beginning to the end. Pillows on the floor give you the opportunity to stay a bit in this room and lie down, if necessary, so that you can better view the focused video excerpts on the ceiling. This also creates intimacy.

ROOM01
EXCITEMENT



ROOM01/ ERIKA LUST

The Erika Lust erotic film *The Toilet Line*, which was directed by Goodyn Green, is shown in Room01. Erika Lust is a Swedish pioneer of feminist pornography.



„I want to show all of the passion, intimacy, love and lust in sex, where the feminine viewpoint is vital, the aesthetic is a pleasure to all of the senses, and those seeking an alternative to mainstream porn can find a home.“

Erika Lust, erikalust.com



Photo by Linda Troeller

„If we understand the political potential of pornography, we not only change our own intimate life, we also create social images of lust and sexuality.“

Reygers, Verena: *Porno ist politisch* (2020), pinkstinks.de
(translated from the german version)

SURVEY EVALUATION 02 / PLATEAU _____

„OUEH YES! A VOLCANO IS ABOUT TO ERUPT.“

„MY MIND IS FREE RIGHT BEFORE CLIMAX“

„I THINK ABOUT THE FEELINGS OF ORGASM AND THE SATISFACTION THAT I WILL FIND AFTER“

„I THINK OF THE FEELINGS AND SENSATIONS... NOTHING MUCH.“

„SHORTLY BEFORE I DON'T THINK OF ANYTHING. I AM JUST JUST THERE.“

„I JUST FEEL VERY COMFORTABLE AND HAPPY WITH MY BODY, I START SMILING BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN“

„EMPTYNESS AND RELAXATION IN THE HEAD AND BODY“

„I THINK OF NOTHING, I RATHER FEEL ... THAT IT IS INFINITELY BEAUTIFUL“

„I IMAGINE MYSELF CLIMAXING OVER AND OVER UNTIL IT HAPPENS.“

„I THINK ABOUT WHAT I CAN DO TO FEEL THE ORGASM MORE INTENSIVE.“

„I JUST THINK OF CLIMAXING“

„I THINK OF NOTHING CONCRETE, I AM PERFECTLY IN THE MOMENT AND FEEL MY BODY, MY AROUS.“

„SHORT BEFORE THE CLIMAX I ONLY SEE DARKNESS, WHICH THEN TURNS INTO A WARM RED-ORANGE LIGHT.“

„DON'T STOP!“

„SHORT BEFORE THE CLIMAX I PRACTICALLY DO NOT THINK. AT LEAST NOT CONSCIOUS.“

„I ONLY THINK ABOUT THE CLITORIAL TOUCH.“

„I DON'T THINK A LOT, BUT I ENJOY THE FEELING OF COMING TO ORGASM.“

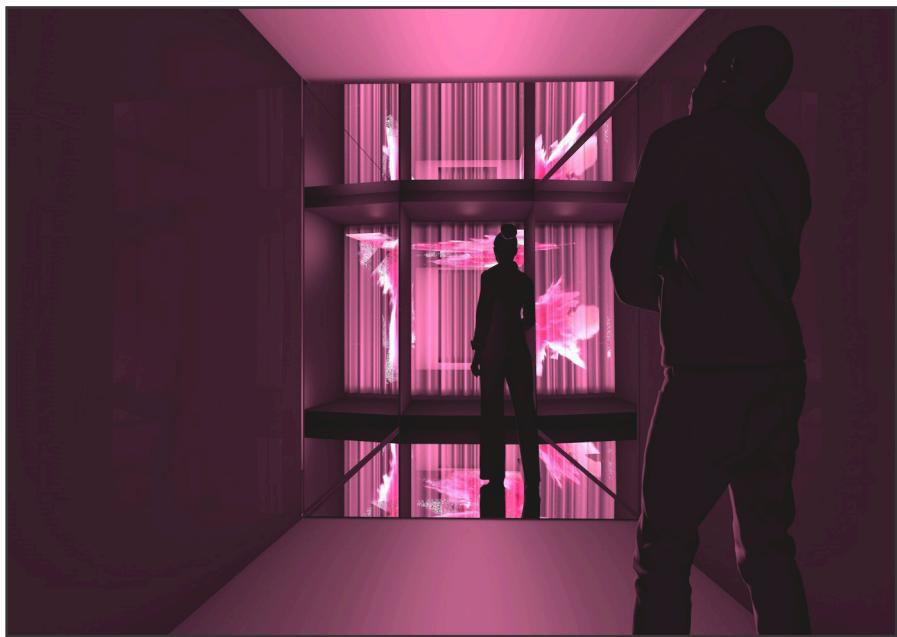
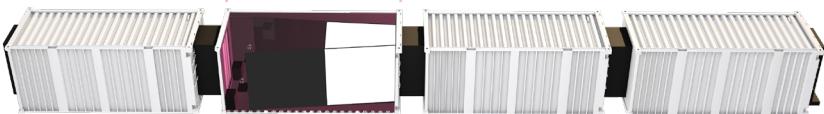
„OFTEN THAT IT FEELS SO GOOD, THAT I DON'T WANT TO CLIMAX YET AND PROLONG THIS FEELING.“

ROOM02 / PLATEAU

EMPTY THOUGHTS, LOOKING FORWARD TO CLIMAX, INTENSE BODY PERCEPTION

In Room02, tapered walls are planned, which illustrate the feeling of increasing tightness and tension before the climax. From half of the room, the walls, ceiling and floor are fully mirrored. This enables an illusionistic spatial experience, which allows a first view to the orgasm in Room03, which is delimited by a transparent curtain. The rest of the room remains empty - a quotation of emptiness and thoughtlessness in the mind. This part of the installation is not illuminated by itself, but only attains its brightness through the Room03.

ROOM02
PLATEAU



ROOM02 / PLATEAU

EMPTY THOUGHTS, LOOKING FORWARD TO CLIMAX, INTENSE BODY PERCEPTION

Your own reflection, which is reflected infinitely often by the mirrors facing each other, focuses on the intense concentration on your own body. The expanse that spreads at the climax is hinted at for the first time.

The sound of a deeply breathing female voice from Room01 is continued in Room02 to remind people of their own intense body awareness during that stage of sexual response.

ROOM02
PLATEAU



SURVEY EVALUATION 03 / CLIMAX

„RED, FIERY, EXPLOSIVE, BANG“

„NOISE EXPLOSION“

„I HEAR MOORING AND DO NOT SEE ANYTHING“

„ECSTASY“

„FOR ME, EVERYTHING DISSOLVES IN DIFFERENT COLORS DURING ORGASM. THESE CAN BE DIFFERENT, ACCORDING TO THE INTENSITY. FROM PINK TO GOLDEN GREEN, BUT PARTLY ALSO DARK / BLACK. SOMETIMES I ONLY SEE COLORS, SOMETIMES SHAPES OR MOVEMENTS IN THESE COLORS. FOR EXAMPLE, CIRCULATING RINGS ETC.“

„NOTHING, DARK, WAITING OUT, SHORT CIRCUIT“

„RED/ORANGE LIKE FLAMES. OR SPOTS LIKE STARS. “

„FIREWORKS“

„I AM JUST FEELING, NONE OF MY OTHER SENSES REALLY WORK AT THAT POINT“

„BRIGHT COLORS, SHAPES SHATTER, FLOW INTO EACH OTHER, FLYING SPARKS, COLOR EXPLOSIONS SWALLOW EACH OTHER, FLOW, FLY, FIREWORKS.“

„DON'T HAVE ANY CLEAR IMAGES.“

„I NEVER PAID ATTENTION TO THAT, BUT I THINK I HEAR MY OWN MOANS AND I SEE BRIGHT COLORS.“

„I SEE A KIND OF STARRY SKY WITH A BLACK BACKGROUND THAT CAN ALMOST BE COMPARED TO WHAT IT IS LIKE IF YOU RUB YOUR EYES TOO LONG AND SEE THESE INDEFINABLE SPOTS.“

„SOMETIMES I SEE BLACK WITH STARS LIKE WHEN YOU GET DIZZY OR I SEE BRIGHT LIGHT LIKE ON CLOUDS.“

„NO PICTURES, NO FANTASIES - NOW.“

„EVERYTHING IS BRIGHT, ILLUMINATED - MAYBE IT IS ONLY LIGHT?“

ROOM03 / CLIMAX

EXPLOSION, FIREWORKS, ELECTRICIZED SHORT CIRCUIT

In order to portray a feeling as intense and individual as the orgasm, one point of view is definitely not enough. In Room03 both the walls and the ceiling are recorded with videos made by different artists to interpret their own orgasm. I would like to give various clitoris owners the opportunity to present their individual perception during orgasm. As examples, I list a video by the australian multimedia artist Jessie Hughes and two different interpretations that I've created from the survey results.



Example01 shows the audio visualization *Closer* by Jessie Hughes, which she created in 2013 for her installative exhibition *Orgasm - the interactive experience*. The aim was to raise awareness of the female orgasm and to offer a solution for the "orgasm gap". The video is accompanied by the song *Girl* by Jamie xx.

(<https://jessiehughes.com.au>)

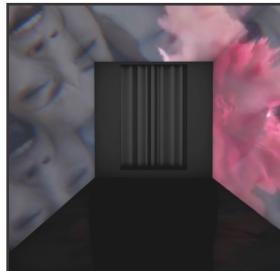
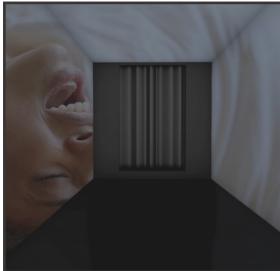


ROOM03 / CLIMAX

Example02 shows flickering electrified color explosions at alternating speeds. Sometimes the explosions are in slow motion, move back and forth, sometimes with original speed and thus address the physical contractions during orgasm. The whole thing is musically supported by the classic composition *Isoldes Liebestod* by Richard Wagner from Act 3 of the opera *Tristan und Isolde*, in which the female orgasm was allegedly set to music for the first time. A slightly ironic way of dealing with sexual climax.



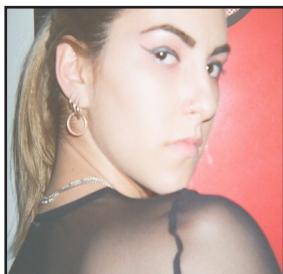
In **Example03** the flickering color explosions are combined with an orgasm representation by Erika Lust from the erotic film *Multiorgasmic Brunch*. In this example, the auditory level in particular gives the visitors a completely different, more provocative and more contemporary spatial experience, which is supported by the song *Action* by the artist Von. The sound of the erotic film can also be heard.



ROOM03 / VON MUSIC

Von is an artist who makes music with a vibrator and her own orgasm wave patterns. The bass sound, which you can hear in her single action, she created from her own orgasm by analyzing her vaginal contractions in the form of a wavy diagram during the peak and then treating them like sound waves.

With lyrics like ,don't need you to make it happen / one-woman show with the action', Von hopes that her music will help women see masturbation as a means of promoting physical and mental health and healthy relationships.



„If you want your children to grow up empowered, self-assured, and self-sufficient members of society, then you should teach them or allow them to be taught the importance of knowing their bodies.“

Von in *This Pop Star Turned Her Orgasm Into a Song* by Suzannah Weiss, vice.com

SURVEY EVALUATION 04 / INTOXICATION

„EVERYTHING BECOMES LIGHT AND HAZY. LIKE MY SENSES ARE HEIGHTENED, BUT THE IMAGE NEVER COMES IN FOCUS. EVERYTHING I TOUCH FEELS EXTRA SOFT AND I WANT WHOEVER IS THERE, CLOSER TO ME.“

„ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE IS DAMPENED, I CONCENTRATE ON ME AND MY BREATH“

„THE PERCEPTION OF MY BODY IS INCREASING. UNTIL I'M COMPLETELY WITH ME AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD IS FULLY HIDDEN.“

„WARM, ENVELOPING, UNLOADING, ALL COMPREHENSIVE, RED, ORANGE“

„I'M ONLY WITH ME, OR VERY DEEP IN ME AND VERY DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO MY BODY.“

„LOSS OF CONTROL, RELEASE, OUT OF ORDER, RESOLUTION, ALL-INCLUSIVE, SOFT, BEING IN THE MOMENT, MELTING, WARM, GLOWING, LIBERATING, RELAXATION, EXPANSION, DEEP, INTIMATE“

„100% WITH ME.“

„AFTER THE CLIMAX, I DON'T NOTICE MY SURROUNDINGS FOR A SHORT TIME, JUST MY BODY.“

„IT SEEMS AS IF I AM MERGING WITH THE SURROUNDINGS AND AT THE SAME TIME DISAPPEARING FROM REALITY, FROM MY BED, FROM THIS EARTH INTO AN INDEFINABLE SPACE THAT YOU CAN JUST FEEL.“

„AFTER THE CLIMAX I FEEL LIKE COMING OUT OF A CAROUSEL. LIFE IS AT THE SAME TIME LIGHTER AND HEAVIER THAN BEFORE. MY HEART IS POUNDING“

„FUZZY AND WEIGHTLESS, BUT CONSCIOUS.“

„SWOON“

„THE ENVIRONMENT DISINTEGRATES INTO ITS NONEXISTENCE.“

ROOM04 / INTOXICATION

DISSOLUTION, LOST ORIENTATION, INTENSE BODY AWARENESS

Room04 is characterized by the dissolution of tectonics and spatial perception. This is the only room that was turned into reality in the context of my bachelor thesis. Fog and colored light create an intoxicating experience that lets visitors lose their spatial orientation and allows them to concentrate more intensely on their own bodies. A floating feeling spreads, your own body seems to merge with the environment. The wavering sound accompanying the installation, which was created by the communication designer and djane MARLOT for this room, supports this feeling.

ROOM04
INTOXICATION



The intense bass, which is sometimes reminiscent of the heartbeat, makes the whole body vibrate and contributes to the fact that the voices and all other sounds are no longer perceived from outside.



CONTEXT

The installation is conceivable in many areas and contexts. For example as an exhibition in a cultural center, such as the Kampnagel in Hamburg.





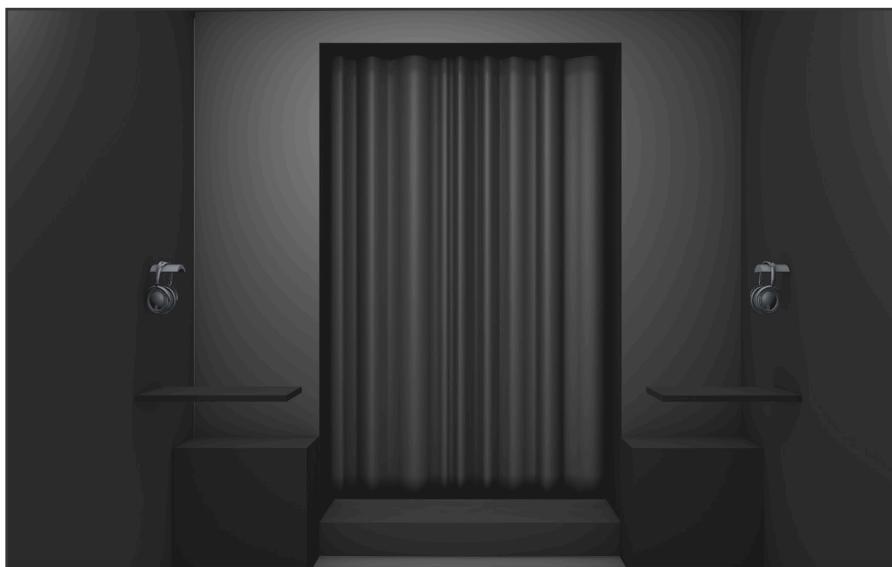
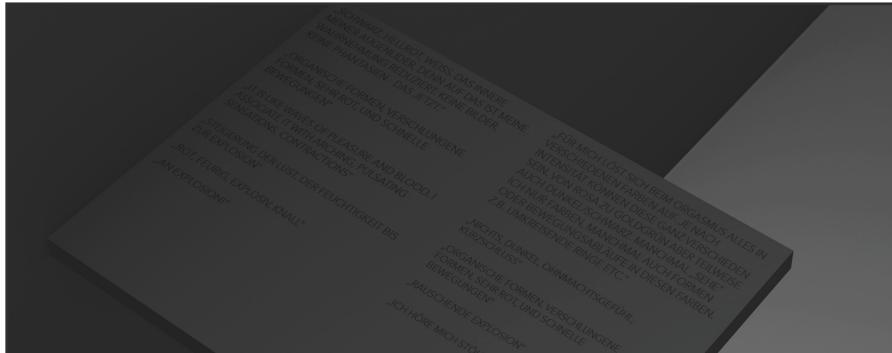
Or in public spaces, e.g. a festival or the promenade in Kiel.



INPUT

As a common thread that runs through the installation, there is a seating area at the entrance of each container, where various text excerpts on the respective topic can be heard via headphones. It is also the place where the survey results are made visible. The quotes are engraved on the surface of the table so that they only catch your eye at a second glance. A place of literary inspiration for the spatial design.





EXAMPLES FOR LITERATURE EXCERPTS

„In trying to recommend this book to friends and female acquaintances, I encountered reactions like this: Orgasm - this is something my husband is more interested in. Orgasm through masturbation - that's not an issue for me. Orgasm is no longer an issue for me - I've been without a relationship for a long time. And I heard that not only from heterosexual women, but also from lesbians, who generally have a different approach to the female body. These answers confirm the observations of Linda Troeller and Marion Schneider: 'Women rarely talk about their most intimate feelings - not even with their girlfriends, spouses or friends, let alone with anybody else'. This contradicts how the term is used in the media. We are enlightened people, free and not uptight, we need and enjoy orgasms, preferably multiple. Orgasm is the fulfillment, the ultimate climax of sex life. Everyone wants it, everyone needs it, everyone strives for it.“

Solveig Feldmeier in *Orgasmus. Interviews und Fotografien*, S. 11

(translated from the german version)

„Every man knows him. - Nearly. Every woman knows him. - Unfortunately not really. And those who don't know him want to get to know him. Those who know him want to repeat it. Those who do not know him may suspect that he or she has missed something. A whole industry, an excessive discourse, has formed around him. He is present in film and television, in newspapers and journals, on the book market and on internet platforms. Its biological function has long given way to a great cultural practice. We are talking about the sexual climax. It is so present in our living environment, in our thinking, feeling, dreaming, in our longings and desires, that it amazes why the philosophy, which reflects pretty much everything between heaven and earth, avoids it. Is it shame that holds back the thinkers?”

Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf: *Philosophie des Orgasmus*, S.7
(translated from the german version)



Photo by Linda Troeller

„It puts you in a kind of echoing space that overcomes and leaves you so quickly, but it also reminds you of this access you have to something so much larger than yourself. It can be so extraordinary, almost like the vast ocean, and in another instant you come back to where you are.“

Linda Troeller, *Orgasm; Photographs & Interviews*

LITERARY AND CINEMATIC INSPIRATION

Die sexuelle Reaktion (1967) - Prof. Dr. W.H. Masters, V.E. Johnson

Die Potenz der Frau. *Wesen und Evolution der weiblichen Sexualität* (1974) - Mary Jane Sherfey

Weiblicher Orgasmus. *Die sexuelle Entwicklung der Frau - psychoanalytisch gesehen* - (1977) - Lili Fleck

Auf den Leib geschrieben. *Die Inszenierung der Geschlechter von der Antike bis Freud* (1996) - Thomas Laqueur

X-Porno für Frauen (2009) - Erika Lust

Der Ursprung der Welt (2014) - Liv Strömquist

Venus - Nackte Wahrheiten (2016) - Mette Carla Albrechtsen, Lea Glob

Orgasmus. *Interviews und Fotografien* (2016) - Marion Schneider, Linda Troeller

La petite mort (2018) - Annie Gisler

Explained: Der Orgasmus der Frau (2018) - Ezra Klein

Female Pleasure Circle (2019) - Erika Lust

Philosophie des Orgasmus (2019) - Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf

Coming Soon (2019) - Diana Schiftan

Porno ist politisch (2020) - Verena Reygers, pinkstinks.de



Photo by Linda Troeller

„The future of orgasm for me, for society, for the world is that we need more orgasms. We need everybody to be able to have them, no matter what's going on in their lifes.“

Sofia in *Orgasm; Photographs & Interviews* by Linda Troeller & Marion Schneider

MERLE MARIE ECKERT

B.A. Thesis
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