

DISSASSEMBLY

Art is the combined effort and tension of differences, as since its beginnings the Same and the Other were not known as separate conditions.

Édouard Glissant

From the beginning, art was not an exorcism, but (in each of these works which are not self-consciously works) the combined effort and tension of the differences, in so far as they all hold to the same, and yet they are all linked to the other, where the same and the other were not seen as given separately.

Susanne Rottenbacher's latest extensive light installation is a fascinating visualisation of the phenomena of dissolution and the removal of boundaries. In their complexly choreographed positioning, the forms of the organically arched and expressively conducted LED light objects appear as if frozen in a moment of explosion, about to move dynamically. The free-floating installation with its elements affixed between ceiling and floor via wire ropes transforms the entire room into a walkable sculpture. Any definite corporeality is dissolved by the fragmentation of sculptural elements, and what emerges is a spatial occurrence of light and colour.

Susanne Rottenbacher creates a spatial drawing in the third dimension that incorporates the viewers in a fascinating way without imposing the need to participate or to force a certain interpretation. At this point in her oeuvre, her writings with light in space undergo a further progression and in their consistent realisation develop a captivating holistic effect. The polyphony of light, its spectrum oscillating from white to intensively coloured, results in infinite combinations of perspectives. No light fixture is placed randomly, every part finds itself in a delicate relationship with the other; and so a complex dynamic equilibrium is created. Every view of the work is unique and thus carries huge potential for personal reflection. The time necessary for an in-depth viewing contributes to the deceleration of the gaze. So, in addition to the unbridled energy there is a meditative component in the aesthetics of perception that allows a response between work and viewer.

Upon closer inspection, Susanne Rottenbacher's installation seems to be a visualization of those spaces and times that intersect with the current ones – thus dissolving and questioning set boundaries and ascriptions.

The single elements of the sculpture appear to have emancipated themselves from the primary matter through an inherent springiness, despite having been part of the same entity before. The synthesis of their manifold and reciprocal relationships releases a peculiar beauty.

In this way not only an association to singularity – a visual analogy of the Big Bang and the origin of the world – is created, but also to a fragmentation of worlds and complex politics of multiplicity, such as Édouard Glissant outlined for our contemporary globality. Today's aimless and incalculable politics as well as the boundless overproduction of information by a restless society suggest that only a politics of multiplicity – a fabric conceived from the multiplicity of languages – represents an adequate concept for the global world. Glissant understands art as the combined effort and tension of differences, as since its beginnings the Same and the Other were not known as separate conditions. He understands beauty as the common vessel of all differences, and relation as an open passage: "[...] and these generated differences together produce, beyond their diversities, the unpredictable continuity of the world. Relation recognises no frontier, in either space or time, and yet we need frontiers. But Relation is the fundamental frontier, which is open passage."¹

If the chain of association should lead us further back into cultural history, the extensive sculpture appears as an analogy to the materialism of Democritus, who considered the world to be a subjectively interpretable composition of particles: "a thing only appears to have a colour, it only seems to be sweet or bitter; in reality there are only atoms in empty space"². According to Democritus therefore not only the material world surrounding us is made of atoms, but also our souls, which after death fragment into millions of atoms. Ascriptions and the setting of boundaries are just as subjective as sensory perception – all just particles, which can be combined as desired. A simple and yet interesting thought, not only for self-understanding and the reception of visual art, but also for the omnipresent and continuous territorial battles of human history.

Numerous culture theoretical associations are implicitly present in the extensive sculpture. Whether it is understood as a multifaceted image of the above-mentioned discourses, or as a physical enigma of magical attraction, the spatial artist Susanne Rottenbacher opens the formal-aesthetic and topical 'arc of suspense' of her work for everyone who wishes to enter.

The liberation of art from its spatial limits and simultaneously an intuitive recognition of this space – these seemingly paradoxical actions are inherent in the work of Susanne Rottenbacher.

¹ Édouard Glissant, *Eloge des différents et de la différence*, Opening Speech of the 6th Berlin International Literature Festival, 05.09.2006, Haus der Berliner Festspiele, in: <http://www.literaturfestival.com/intern/reden/edouard-glissant-dt>

² Democritus, Fragment 125