

PE LANG &
MARIANTHI PAPALEXANDRI-ALEXANDRI

8 – 30 January 2022

An exhibition by artists Pe Lang and Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri opens Galerie Anhava's programme for the year 2022. With their sound and kinetic sculptures and installations the two artists intend to create an inviting, sense-appealing experience inside the gallery space. Their works combine controlled and uncontrollable, mechanical, and organic into a life-like organism, that forms and interacts in relation to its own components as well as the surrounding space. The movement of the motors steering the pieces is planned and controlled, but the door is left open for play and surprise to enter. Lang and Papalexandri-Alexandri talk about a form of organic programming.

The clockwork precision of Pe Lang's machineries directs the movement of the materials in such a way that draws attention to the essential qualities of the moving objects, to their materiality. With the help of a certain controlled randomness, the carefully planned choreographies conjure up subtle patterns that turn into an almost meditative flow. Using lights and movement of the colourful translucent films, Lang creates a wall size colour composition that constantly changes its form, like a fresco made of light and colour. On another wall, a projector object created by the artist highlights all the minuscule details, seams, or dust particles of the coloured film strip. Complex structures and concepts are crystalized in the art works into a polished, minimalistic visual form.

In the works of Marianthi Papalexandri-Alexandri surprising materials meet each other in a constant, rotating motion, creating unexpected sounds through the friction caused by their encounter. An installation spreading itself into the basement creates a fascinating and complex sound formation with the micro sounds of the frayed strands from rotating and twisting threads. The movement and sounds of crumbling crispbread or black tentacles wildly striking on vintage hatpins add an element of unpredictability to the pieces: sound composition changes according to their actions. One central premise of Papalexandri-Alexandri's work is in fact the interplay between the physical form, sound, and performative features of artworks.

Consisting of transparent cylinders, nylon strings and rotating movement, the motorized kinetic sculpture *Untitled n° 7* embodies aspects from the artistic practices of both artists. Its tubes, gathered like organ pipes, together with the membranes stretched over them, act as resonators to the movement-based sound transmitted by the strings. It is simultaneously an instrument, that during a performance bestows control of sound formation to the performer and the composition they create. The performer plays the instrument within its own framework and boundaries, but at the same time also affects its physical composition.

A unique balance of opposing elements is characteristic to the works in the exhibition: balance between control and surprise, between light and heavy, concrete and illusion. The twines, cables and strings threading through the art works not only shape form and transmit motion or sound, but also intertwine the separate artistic approaches of the two artists to a coherent combination of elegant simplicity, organic roughness, and humour.

– Aleksandra Oilinki

PE LANG (b. 1974, Sursee, Sveitsi) combines hand built mechanic machineries, sound, and movement to the traditions of constructivism. Based in Wald, Switzerland, Lang has been awarded twice with the prestigious Swiss Art Award and numerous other international grants and scholarships. His kinetic sculptures and installations have been exhibited in various galleries, museums, and festivals all over Europe, Northern America, and Asia, most recently at Galerie Denise René in Paris and Geneva, at Galerie Standing Pine in Taipei and Tokyo and in Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo in Venice.

MARIANTHI PAPALEXADRI-ALEXANDRI (b. 1974, Ptolemais, Greece) is a sound artist and composer and based in Switzerland and the US. She holds a Ph.D. in music composing and has been working as Assistant Professor of Composition and Sound Art at the Cornell University (NY). She has been awarded and recognized internationally with numerous awards, grants and scholarships and her art works and compositions have been presented in i.a. at the Basel Art Museum; Ashmolean Museum in Oxford; Musikinstrumenten-Museum in Berlin; at ISFA Hong Kong; San Francisco Art Institute; ZKM Karlsruhe and the Venice Biennale of Architecture.