
Constanze Schweiger

To make objects, to write, and to work with typography are coexisting activities to me that interact with each other. There are no habits for how to start or what comes first but usually all finds into one artwork. The writings related to the works are available on the blog: *constanzeschweiger.blogspot.com*

A kind A round

1 Schweiger equally engages with the transformative power of water, its capacity to connect past and present with the ephemeral and the eternal. She turns basic organic material into symbolic elements of formal arrangements. *A kind A round* is a continuation of previously finished and presented works, corresponding to the artists understanding of her practice as an ongoing narrative that is continuously enriched and expanded upon with each exhibition. After a process of folding and modifying red wine dyes with iron in a so-called post-mordant treatment, Schweiger rinses the textiles in natural running water. Using a centuries-old technique, the immediate contact of iron salts and water subsequently oxidizes the tannins in the fibers – until the once red color is altered to a muted grey. Acting almost as self-contained bodies that connect material and environment, the textile takes on various shades as it slowly dries in the sun. Schweiger’s artistic practice resonates with the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, particularly in its emphasis on embodied experience, materiality, and the interplay between perception and creation, as her materials act not just as passive objects, but also as active participants in the creation of meaning. **Cara Lerchl**

Related Writing

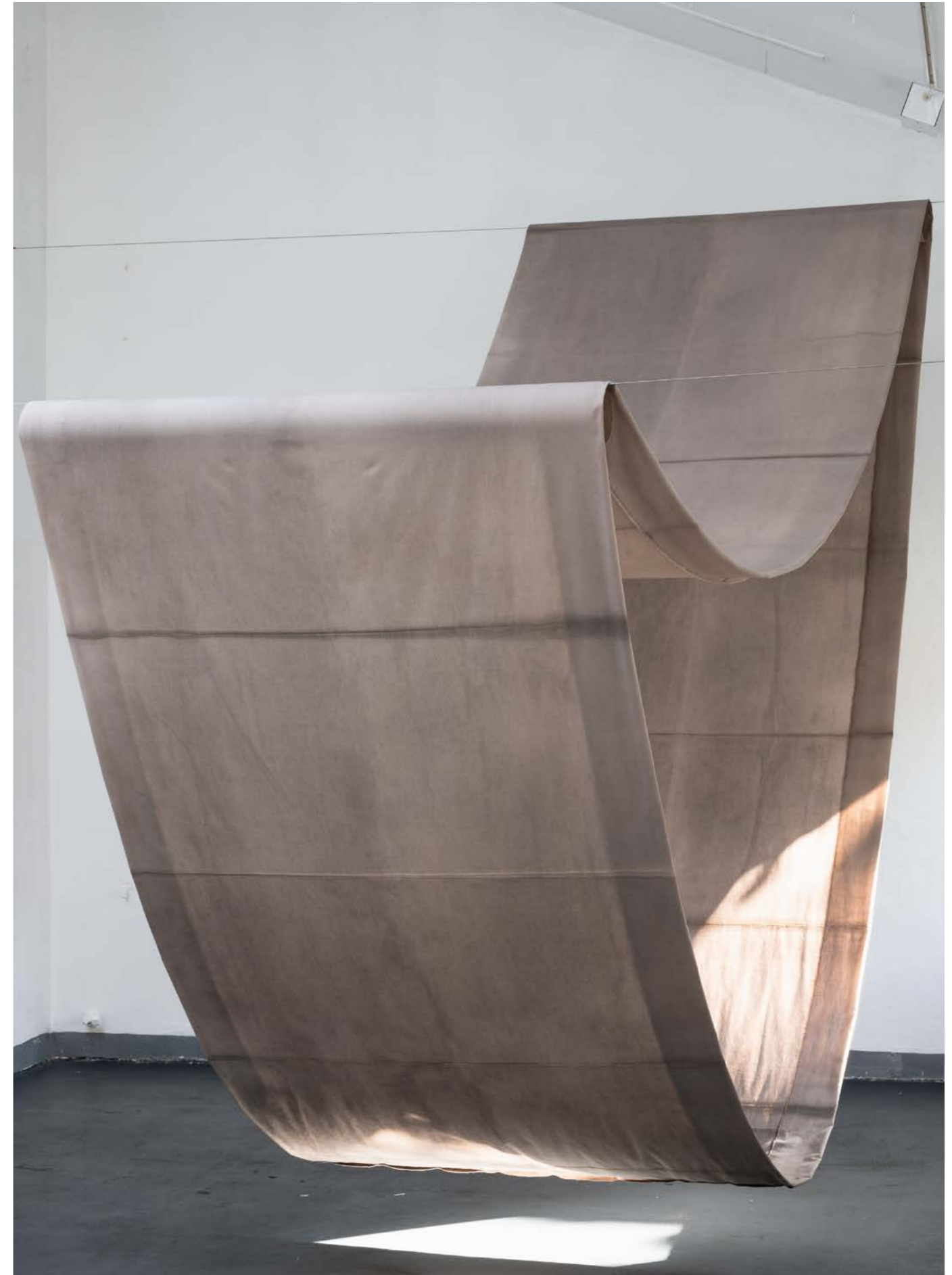
Gertrude Stein, «A CARAFE, THAT IS A BLIND GLASS», 1914

Walt Whitman, «Eidólons», 1876

Exhibitions

Fragments proposé,
Kunstverein Baden, 2024

Cité internationale des arts
Paris, 2022



Exhibition view at Kunstverein Baden, October 2024

A kind A round (Rotweinfärbung), 2022/24
Iron, red wine, bleached cotton, cardboard, steel wire
340 (h) × 120 × 260 cm

And Afterwards All Are

2 Reusing past works corresponds to Constanze Schweiger's understanding that artistic practice means continuously writing a story. In 2019, she dyed thirteen large pieces of cotton crepe with plants that she had collected during the summer and placed these dyeings in showcases at one of Vienna's city gardens.

For *And Afterwards All Are* in 2024, Schweiger returns to the old dyes to create new works.

The exhibition title is formed from two text excerpts: «And Afterwards» from Gertrude Stein's lecture «Composition as Explanation» (1926) and «All Are» from Walt Whitman's cycle of poems *Leaves of Grass* (1855). Literature is an eminent starting point for Schweiger's artistic work. In the case of Stein and Whitman, it is the understanding of the human subject as part of a dynamic system of relationships with the natural and social environment in space and time that constitutes a strong point of reference for Schweiger's works.

Related Writing

Gertrude Stein, «Composition as Explanation», 1926

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1855

Exhibitions

And Afterwards All Are, Kunstfabrik Groß-Siegharts, 2024

Per Albin 4: I Like / Ich mag, commissioned by KÖR for Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung, 2019



Photos: Flavio Palasciano

Färbung 12 (Kreuzdorn) und *Färbung 11 (Kreuzdorn)*, 2019/24
Pflanzenfarbstoffe auf Baumwollkrepp, Baumwolle rückseitig, Karton
170 × 102,5 × 12 cm jeweils



Exhibition view at Kunstfabrik Groß-Siegharts, August 2024

Färbung 2 (Brennnessel mit Eisen), *Färbung 5 (Birke mit Eisen)*, 2019/24
Pflanzenfarbstoffe auf Baumwollkrepp, Baumwolle rückseitig, Karton
170 × 102,5 × 12 cm jeweils

Finished and begun in the next one

3 A studio near the water, surrounded by nature and numerous civil society initiatives. She took the curcuma yellow textile there and designated the content of the previous exhibition *Kurkuma, convey* (2017) as the material for the upcoming one.

The proximity to the river and the adjacent grasslands made it possible to bleach the fabric in preparation for a new dyeing process: Schweiger used a centuries-old method to spread the cotton on the grass, soaking it in the river water once a day. The peroxides formed under the influence of light and oxygen, together with substances produced during the photosynthesis of the grass, caused the gradual fading of the yellow color. Following a traditional recipe for cyanotype, she dipped the now bleached fabric into a solution of iron salts, which together react sensitively to light. The subsequent exposure resulted in a dye called iron blue, Prussian blue or Berlin blue, depending on the emphasis of the chemical structure or the historical background. *Michael Wonnerth-Magnusson*

Related Writing

«Our limbs leave invisible pollen on the pages», 2017

Exhibitions

Finished and begun in the next one, Wonnerth Dejaco, 2023–24

A blue coat is guided, Kunstverein Salettl, 2023

Kurkuma, convey. Our limbs leave invisible pollen on the pages, New Jörg, 2017 (see p. 28–31)



Finished and begun in the next one 3, 2023
Cyanotype on grassed cotton crêpe, artist frame, 76 × 108 × 5 cm



Exhibition view at Wonnerth Dejaco, December 2023

Finished and begun in the next one 1 and 2, 2023
Cyanotype on grassed cotton crêpe, artist frame, 76 × 108 × 5 cm



Photos: Peter Mochi

Eisenblaufärbung für Ballgasse 6, 2017/23
Cyanotype on grassed cotton crêpe, 400 × 300 cm



Eisenblaufärbung für Naufahrtweg 14, 2017/23
Cyanotype on grassed cotton crêpe, 400 × 300 cm

Doodle Hands

4 Is a series of 12 objects produced in collaboration with the designer duo WIENER TIMES, Susanne Schneider and Johannes Schweiger.

Just as in the cyanotype dyes, the textile material for this series of soft sculptures also originates from the *Kurkuma*, convey exhibition of 2017. Another defining component of that exhibition was the textile installation *Schreiben in convey*: a 12-meter-long panel of white cotton poplin, digitally printed with texts that Schweiger had written for *constanzeschweiger.blogspot.com*. The poplin displays writings about her own impressions while reading six publications on the topics of reading, writing and publishing.

In the bygone installation the writings could still be read. Now cut and reassembled for the *Doodle Hands*, they figure as fragments, supplemented by ornamental markings, which Schweiger understands as an act of appropriation in a chain of appropriations.

Related Writing

⟨1966 Alison Knowles,⟩ 2017

⟨1984 Friederike Mayröcker,⟩ 2017

⟨1935 Gertrude Stein,⟩ 2016

⟨1964 Yoko Ono,⟩ 2016

⟨2014 Tavi Gevinson,⟩ 2016

⟨2015 Hannah Black,⟩ 2016

⟨Schreiben in convey,⟩ 2016

Exhibitions

Finished and begun in the next one, Featuring a collaboration with WIENER TIMES, Wönerth Dejaco, 2023–24



Gertrude Yoko, 2017/23



Friederike, 2017/23



Photos by Georg Petermichl Chairs selected by Axel Koschier

Hannah Tavi, 2017/23
Textile marker and digital print on cotton poplin, linen, polyester filling, 90 × 70 × 10 cm

Rotweinfärbung für Studio 1528

5 An environmental sculpture applying red wine as a plastic medium.

The main colorants of red wine are anthocyanins and tannins. Fresh tannins come from grape stems, seeds and skins. They taste astringent, bitterly dry, producing a tingling, pasty sensation on the tongue. They have very little color on their own but they can blacken over time in reaction to oxygen or iron. Also, anthocyanins come from fruit skins. They give wine a bright red to deep purple color depending on the pH value; the more acidic wine tastes, the brighter it is tinted.

For this installation, Constanze Schweiger folded a 12-meter-long sheet of fabric into the size of the shower tub at her studio, which she filled with many bottles of red wine. The wine dried into the fibres, the foldings formed a pattern and the remains of the dye stuff added a firm body to the textile. The work was mounted on the facade of the building by hanging it from the studio window into the yard, where it connected with the people and processes of the locale.

Related Writing

«Tannines and Iron», 2022

Exhibitions

Cité internationale des arts
Paris, 2022



View from the studio into the courtyard



Installation view at Cité Internationale des Arts Paris, July 2022

Rotweinfärbung für Studio 1528, 2022
Plant dyes on bleached cotton, 1000 × 154 cm

Now Is I Know

6 With the limitations related to COVID-19 in 2020, Constanze Schweiger spent more time outdoors. In that year she picked all kinds of plant parts, tested their dye colors, documented the results in a journal, and developed a series of plant dyes on canvas.

The following year, Schweiger folded the dyed linen pieces into liquid gypsum plaster and let the two materials consolidate into sculptural compositions. By matching the colors of the textiles, she tinted the plaster with earth pigments from distant places like Verona in Italy, Mels in Switzerland, or the Troodos mountains in Cyprus. While minerals are chemically stable and therefore lightfast, the organic plant dyes continue to react with their environment and continuously change over time, comparable to our skin.

The exhibition title is composed of the text fragments 'Now Is' by Gertrude Stein and 'I Know' by Walt Whitman. The literature the artist reflects on in her own writing is often the starting point for her sculptures. In the case of Stein and Whitman, it is the understanding of the human subject as part of a dynamic network of relationships in space and time with the natural and social environment that provides a strong point of reference for Schweiger's work.



May 2020, photo by Michael Part

Related Writing

«Now Is I Know,» 2021

«Letter to Ariane Müller,» 2021

«Notes on the Title,» interview for Trebuchet Magazine, 2021

Exhibitions

Constanze Schweiger: *Now Is I Know*, Wonnerth Dejaco, Vienna 2021

Browse / Spot / Date, Parking Space, Vienna 2021

All Work and Time and Care, curated by Katharina Höglinger, Zina Gallery, Cluj-Naboka 2023



Now Is I Know (Kirschholz), 2021
Plant dyes on linen, earth pigments, gypsum plaster,
42 × 28 × 1,5 cm



Notes on the Title *Now Is I Know* 2021

Gertrude Stein wrote “Composition as Explanation” (1925–26) for two lectures she delivered at the Cambridge Literary Club and Oxford University to engage a wider interest in her work. In this essay she writes about the methods she applies to writing – the “prolonged present” and “continuous present”, “beginning again and again”, “using everything”, “everything being alike and naturally different at the same time”. She contemplates the notion of time after the First World War, that peace will make time take new forms, and the relationship between time and composition, especially the relationship between time, composition, and perspective. Stein concludes the text with two short sentences, “And afterwards. Now that is all.” Stand-alone they could read, “I have spoken. Here I finish my lecture,” like a rhetorical formula at the end of a story. Or in relation to the lecture, “The only certainty is the present, a continuous now.”

After self-publishing *Leaves of Grass* in 1855, Walt Whitman spent most of his professional life writing, revising, and expanding the poetry collection until his death. The first edition was a slim tract of twelve poems, and the last was a compilation of over 400. While describing himself as the poet of the body and the soul, he focuses primarily on the body and the material world. He celebrates sensuality and the joy of immediate physical life. Part of Whitman’s inclusiveness of vision is that our entire bodies are crucial and that we are the same in death. “For every atom be-

longing to me as good belongs to you.” We arise from nature, and to nature, the grass, we return. By affirming ourselves as leaves of grass, we become more than individual leaves. We become part of the unity that is the field of green blades in the sun.

Left to right: *Für Ballgasse 6, Nr. 2*, 2021; *Now Is I Know (Walnuss)*, 2021; *Now Is I Know (Attichbeeren)*, 2021; *Für Ballgasse 6, Nr. 3*, 2021

Photos: Peter Mochi



Exhibition view at Wonnert Dejaco, May 2021

Now Is I Know (Kirschholz), 2021

Für Ballgasse 6, Nr. 2, 2021, paper and cardboard, 400 × 272 cm

Dye 1–13 for Per Albin Hansson Settlement

7 Färbung 1–13 are thirteen fabrics that Constanze Schweiger dyed in 2019 with leaves, twigs, flowers, bark and fruits from plants that she had collected over the summer in the surrounding area. For an art in public space project commissioned by the city of Vienna, Schweiger mounted the textiles in show cases along Bergtaidingweg at the Per Albin Hansson Settlement.

«The plants included nettle tips, birch leaves, oak bark or elderberries, which produced mixed colors such as golden green yellow or pink gray. The dyes resulted in monochromes, which record the manual act of dyeing. Mounted like billboards in showcases, the textiles develop an art object like status in the context of the exhibition. At the same time, the colors of the works relate to their surroundings and in this way also to the viewer. They cross the registers of applied and visual arts, of non-art and art, of shared personal entanglement and participation in art via aesthetic expressions of «I like».» — Ilse Lafer, 2019

Related Writing

«I Like / Ich mag,» 2019

Exhibitions

Per Albin 4: I Like / Ich mag,
exhibition series by Doris Krüger
and Ilse Lafer, commissioned by
KÖR for Per-Albin-Hansson-
Siedlung, 2019



Färbung 10 (Eiche), 2019



Färbung 11 (Kreuzdorn), 2019



Färbung 12 (Kreuzdorn), 2019
Cotton crêpe dyed with buckthorn bark, 182 x 125 cm.
Mounted in vitrines, approximately 220 x 140 cm



Photos: Peter Mochi

Left to right: *Färbung 2 (Brennnesseln mit Eisen)*, 2019; *Färbung 3 (Brennnesseln mit Kupfer)*, 2019; *Färbung 4 (Beinwell mit Eisen)*, 2019



Exhibition view at Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung, October 2019

Kurkumafärbung für 1137 South Cochran Ave.

8 is a 3 x 12 meter big cotton crêpe dyed with curcuma in the bathtub of one of Rudolph Schindler's Mackey Apartments on South Cochran Avenue, Los Angeles. The cloth was installed for hang drying at the Gallery of MAK Center for Art and Architecture.

Continuous Composition

9 is a series of dye swatches cast in gypsum plaster. The textiles are test samples which have been dyed with curcuma or indigo during the preparation of the exhibition. Always two swatches in contrasting colors were arranged in a repetitive fashion in order to assemble a continuous composition.

Färbeprobe (Kurkuma)

10 A sample of the dyed fabric was framed behind UV filtering Plexiglass. Through filtering sun light on a sample of the exhibited crêpe fabric next to its installation, one could observe the change of the turmeric color in relation to the swatch framed on the wall.

Related Writing

«Continuous Composition,» 2019

«After Composition as Explanation,» 2013

Exhibitions

Continuous Composition, MAK Center for Art and Architecture Los Angeles, 2019



Färbeprobe (Kurkuma), 2019
Curcuma, cotton crêpe, Plexiglas-UV100, 60 x 50 cm



Exhibition view at MAK Center Los Angeles, May 2019

Continuous Composition 3, 2019
Curcuma, indigo, cotton crêpe, plaster, 42 x 28 x 1,5 cm



Photos on this page: Esteban Schimpf

Continuous Composition 2019

Once, before there was a gallery on top of the garages at Schindler's Mackey Apartments, there had been only a rooftop lined with gravel. Unofficially, someone had assembled a washing line on there which was temporarily used by the coming and going residents at the apartments. For some years, the different people would repeatedly and interchangeably hang dry their sheets and clothing.

Borrowing from Gertrude Stein's 1926 lecture *Composition as Explanation*, Constanze Schweiger remembers this act as making «a natural composition in the world as it has been.» For Continuous Composition Schweiger dyes a 39 × 9 feet (12 × 3 m) roll of cotton crêpe with turmeric powder at the Mackey Apartments to hang for drying on a steel wire spanned across the length of the Garage Top Gallery. The dyed material will remain installed at the gallery for the duration of the exhibition, where it will be exposed to sunlight. Day by day, the sun will cause the infused dyestuff to change color from bright yellows to pale beiges.

Aside from being a spice for cooking, turmeric is one of the earliest dye plants along with madder and indigo. Dyeing with turmeric has since become outmoded while indigo is still common today in the mass production of denim, at least in its synthetic form.

Schweiger has invited the Los Angeles fashion house 69 to collaborate for this iteration, where they will extend their ongoing use of denim with a large-scale installation involving letter-shaped pillows forming the sentence «Everything is contemporary.» Further exploring this experiment in impermanence, 69 has created the entire alphabet in the same material for visitors to arrange as they wish.

In *Portraits and Repetition*, another lecture from 1935, Gertrude Stein states, «each time there was a difference just a difference enough so that it could go on and be a present something.» Stein was inspired by film where no two pictures repeat exactly the same, in turn combining in the memory to create one object persisting through time.



View from the Mackey Apartments into the gallery space

Kurkumafärbung für 1137 South Cochran Ave., 2019

Plant dyes on cotton crêpe, steel wire, 155 × 1100 cm

Letter Pillows by 69

Kurkumafärbung für Jägerstraße 56

11 is a 3 meters wide and 15 meters long cotton panel which was treated with curcuma and citric acid. These plant dyes make a vivid color, due to the exposure to sun light they change and bleache out rapidly. This process was to be followed over the runtime of an exhibition. The work was installed next to *Schreiben in convey*.

Schreiben in convey

12 are ten meters of heavy cotton satin fabric with six texts printed on: all writings are made from reflections on reading materials by Alison Knowles, Gertrude Stein, Friederike Mayröcker, Yoko Ono, Tavi Gevinson, and Hannah Black. Each of these authors had repeatedly discussed the processes of reading, writing, and publishing within their writing practices. The title of the work derives from the applied typeface convey by Gabriele Lenz.

Related Writing

«Our limbs leave invisible pollen on the pages,» 2017

«1966 Alison Knowles,» 2017

«1984 Friederike Mayröcker,» 2017

«1935 Gertrude Stein,» 2016

«1964 Yoko Ono,» 2016

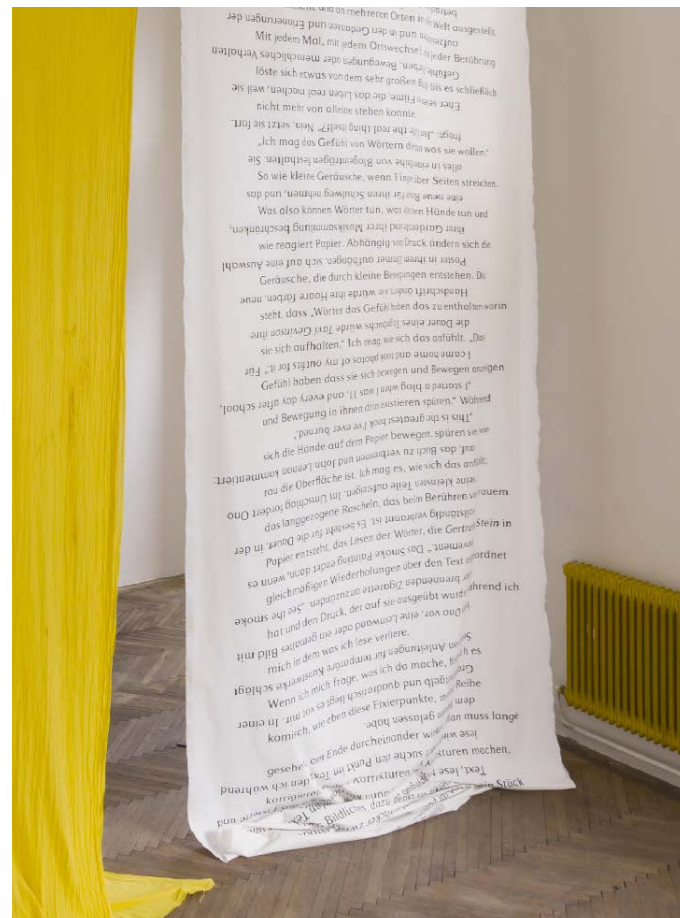
«2014 Tavi Gevinson,» 2016

«2015 Hannah Black,» 2016

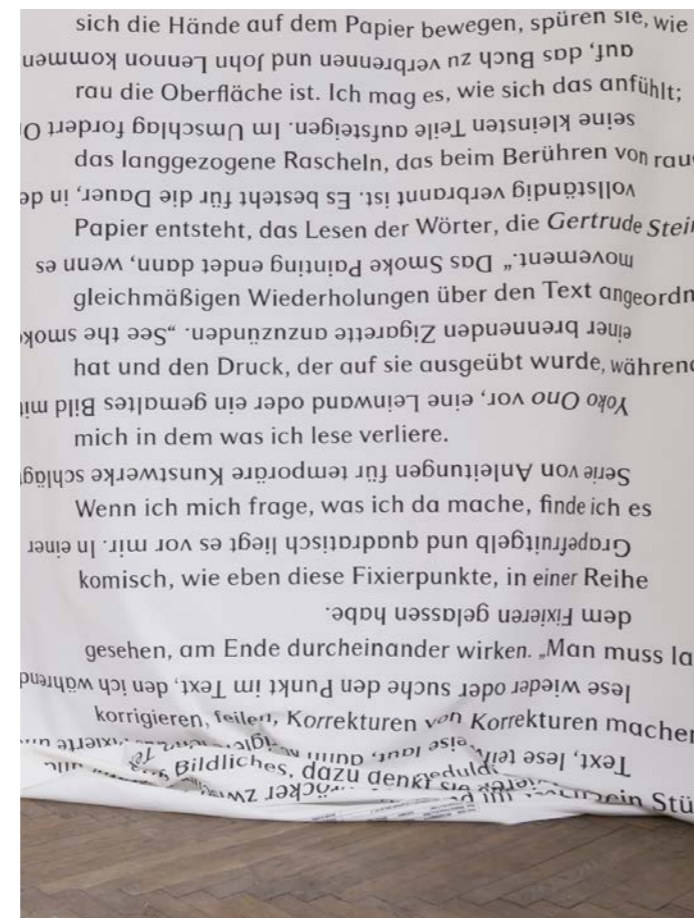
«Schreiben in convey,» 2016

Exhibitions

Kurkuma, convey. Our limbs leave invisible pollen on the pages, New Jörg, 2017



Photos: Stefan Lux



Schreiben in convey, 2017

Digital print on cotton poplin, steel wire, 1200 x 150 cm



Exhibition view at Kunstverein New Jörg, May 2017

Kurkumafärbung für Jägerstraße 56, 2017

Plant dyes on cotton crêpe, steel wire, 1500 x 300 cm

Nach «Anmut hat Gelingen»¹²

13 sind fünf tafelbildartige Skulpturen und eine Reihe von textilen Objekten, alle aus Gips gegossen. Die Tafeln fassen Abdrücke von Stoffstücken³, die nach dem Aushärten wieder aus dem Gips entfernt wurden und in denen Fasern mit Farben und Musterungen⁴ der Textilien zurückblieben. Die Gefäße⁵ sind aus den verwendeten Stoffstücken gefertigt. Sie zeigen Ausschnitte der Stoffmusterungen, gestrafft und fixiert durch den Gips, mit dem sie gefüllt sind.

1 In «Anmut hat Gelingen» erzählt Constanze Schweiger wie Michael Parts *Batiksocken*, während der Fotofilmentwicklung zufällig entstanden.

2 Der Titel der Geschichte kommt von «Bi», dem 22. Zeichen der chinesischen Textsammlung *I Ging*.

3 Angelehnt an den Text, behandelten Schweiger und Part Baumwollstoffe mit Natriumdithionit – einem Reduktionsmittel, das in der Fotografie als Entwicklersubstanz für den Silbergelatine-Prozess verwendet wird. Heute wird Natriumdithionit bei der Entfärbung von Textilien eingesetzt.

4 Gewickelt, verknotet und mit Natriumdithionit behandelt, entstanden auf den schwarz-, grau-, braun-farbigen Baumwollstoffen Marmorierungen, die im Gegensatz zum Batikverfahren nicht gefärbt sondern entfärbt wurden.

5 Die Stoffe wurden horizontal geviertelt und markiert, um sie den Abgüssen zuordnen zu können.

Related Writing

«Nach «Anmut hat Gelingen»», 2017

«Grace Has Success», 2015

«Anmut hat Gelingen», 2012

Exhibitions

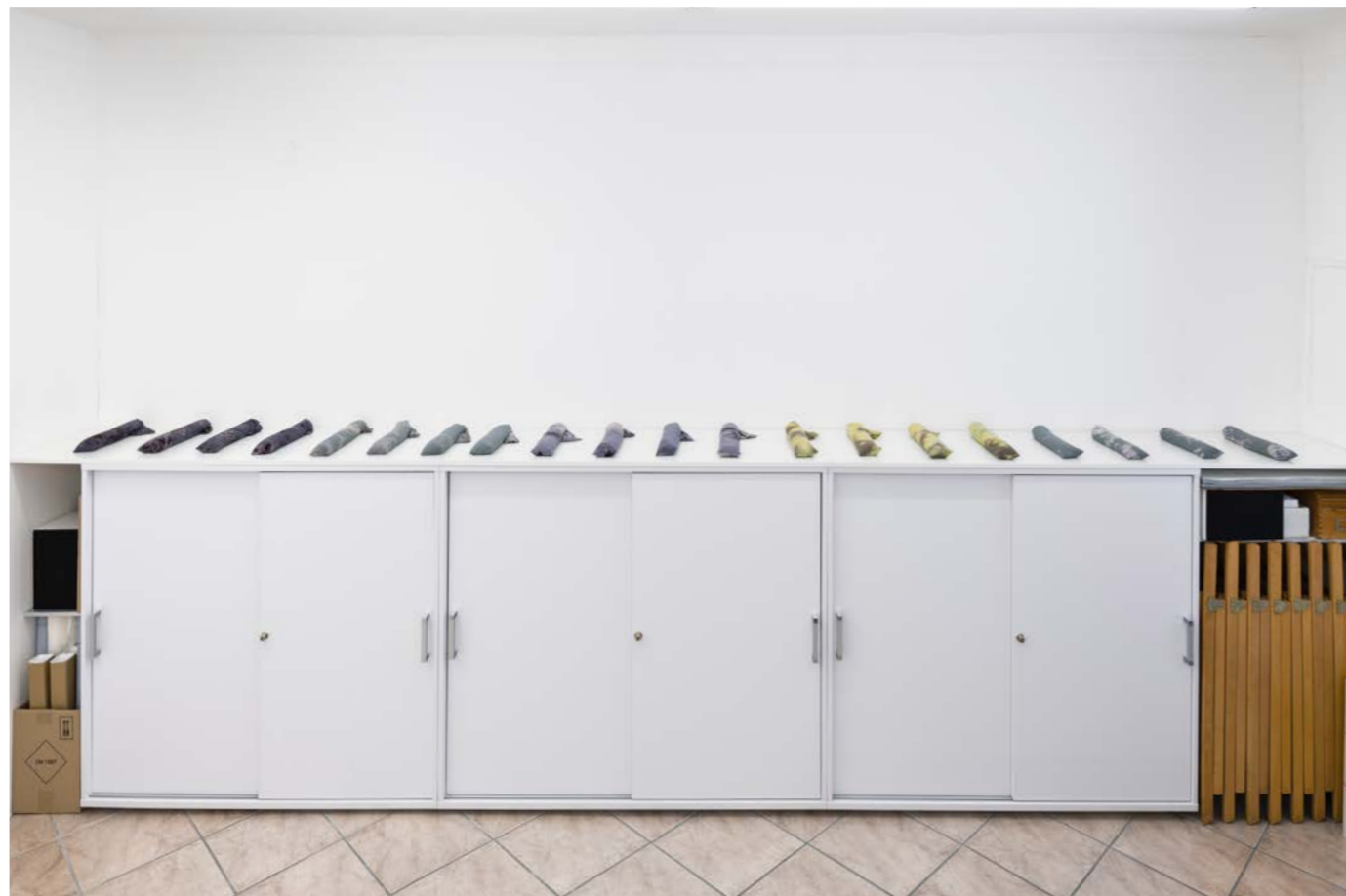
Nach «Anmut hat Gelingen», in collaboration with Michael Part, kunstraum langenois p.p., 2017

Mercuri et al. by Michael Part, Belvedere 21, 2015

Neo Avalon, Mauve, Vienna 2015

Grace Has Success, One Work Gallery, Vienna 2015

ParalFotografie, Westfälischer Kunstverein Münster, 2015



Gefäße (Nach «Anmut hat Gelingen»), 2017
Sodium dithionite, cotton, plaster, ca. 35 × 8 × 6 cm each



Collaboration with Michael Part

Nach «Anmut hat Gelingen», Schwarz I, 2017
Sodium dithionite, cotton, plaster, 84 × 56 × 3 cm



Photos: Peter Mochi

Exhibition view at kunstraum langenlois p.p., September 2017

Constanze Schweiger 2025

Constanze Schweiger works in the fields of visual arts, literature, graphic design, and publishing. Her practices connect, and the results of her production relate materially, conceptually, formally, and economically. She uses textiles and textile processes to create sculptures that explore the relationship between time and composition as well as time and individual perspective.

Born in Salzburg in 1970, Schweiger studied *Painting* at the University of Applied Arts Vienna; *Fine Art, Design and Reflection* with Jon Thompson and Karel Martens at Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht; *Contemporary Book Design* with Gabriele Lenz at New Design University, St. Pölten; *Typography and Book Design* with Jost Hochuli at Die Graphische, Vienna. She was artist in residence at Cité International des Arts Paris; MAK Schindler Scholarship Program, Los Angeles; International Studio Program PSI, New York; and she received the State Scholarship for Visual Arts by the Federal Ministry of Austria.

She exhibited at Wonnerth Dejaco, Belvedere 21, Charim Galerie, New Jörg, Pina, Secession, One Work Gallery, Pro Choice in Vienna; MAK Center for Art and Architecture in Los Angeles; Galerie Art:Concept in Paris; MODEM Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, Debrecen; Austrian Cultural Forum and Belmacz Gallery in London; Zina Gallery, Cluj-Napoca; MoMa PSI, Priska C. Juschka and Foxy Production in New York; KM– Künstlerhaus, Graz; Museum der Moderne, Salzburg; Kunstfabrik Groß-Siegharts, Kunstverein Baden and kunstraum langenois p.p.; a.o.

She lives and works currently in Vienna and runs the publishing house *Two to 200*, where she realizes her own publications as well as collaborative projects. Her writings are available on constanzeschweiger.blogspot.com.

constanzeschweiger.com
constanzeschweiger.blogspot.com
twoto200.com
[instagram.com/constanzeschweiger](https://www.instagram.com/constanzeschweiger)