

The Loop
Liesl Raff

Sharp Projects
Blegdamsvej 38
Copenhagen, Denmark 2200

Opening September 24, 2021 from 4 to 8 pm
September 24 - November 7, 2021

Upon entering Liesl Raff's exhibition, the visitor steps through the work *corn dolly 2* (2021). The piece is made from straw and kept together by an industrial nylon net manually knotted smaller.

It follows the gallery walls and softens the room as it disrupts the 90-degree angle between wall and floor. It is a body that warms the white space and fills it with a natural scent. Otherwise, the room is rather empty, but the show cannot be described as minimal, the materials are not industrially sleek. There is a resistance in the materials used.

The works *loop 1, 2, 3* (2021) are ropes embedded in colored latex. Each latex cast has two colors, like the costume of a harlequin. The different textures of the latex works creates a specific awareness of the materials and a desire to feel the materials on one's skin. They are draped in pairs on short bamboo rods. In each end the ropes are hooped so no loose ends dangle around. These sort of lassos seem to give the objects a purpose or a possible usefulness, which nevertheless remains unclear. They are passive and active, and could point in the direction of some sort of action or ritual.

The straw work *corn dolly 2* (2021) can be said to create a space for this, an open or transitional room. The shape of the work is inspired from barriers used to control water and wind caused erosion in desert areas. The material and title of the work references the folklore tradition of making a dolly of the last straw of the harvest, in which the spirit of the corn and fertility was to survive during winter until the sowing in the spring.

Both the straw and the latex works are very physical. The materials have a strong haptic value and invite a bodily experience. These physicalities do not result in anthropomorphic works directly, but there is a connection between the haptic and the spirited feeling of Raff's work. They are terrestrial and spiritual. These different forms of being coexist in her work — sometimes they mirror each other as parallel narrations, sometimes the one consumes the other, superimposes it and leaves the other invisible. The other is nonetheless there and in Raff's work the other is never too far away.

Liesl Raff (*1979 in Stuttgart/Germany. Lives and works in Vienna, Austria)

Selected exhibitions and projects include: 2021 'AVANT-GARDE AND THE CONTEMPORARY' Belvedere 21 Museum of Contemporary Art, Vienna (AT), Biennale für Freiburg, Freiburg (DE), 'ENJOY – THE MUMOK COLLECTION IN CHANGE', mumok, Vienna (AT), 'EINATMEN, AUSATMEN', Kultum, Graz (AT) and 'THE SLOWEST URGENCY', Wiener Festwochen, Jugendstiltheater, Vienna (AT) 'VON FLIEGENFALLEN UND WIENER FREIHEIT' at Sala Terrena der Angewandten, Heiligenkreuzerhof, Vienna (AT); 2020 'ABOUT PALMS, SNAKES, AND TONGUES', Sophie Tappeiner, Vienna (AT); 'RESENTMENTS' curated by Christiane Rekade, Kunst Meran Merano Arte, Meran (IT); 2019 'CÄCILIA BROWN, CHRISTOPH MEIER, LIESL RAFF', curated by Peter Pakesch, Nicolas Krupp Gallery, Basel (CH); 'PEEL ADHESION', Ve.Sch Kunstverein, Vienna; 'Special School for Sculpture', Ausstellungsraum der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, Vienna, (AT); '#3 Liesl Raff', Crisis Contemporary, New York (US); 2018 'MATERIAL GESTURES', E-Werk, Freiburg (DE); 'MAXIMAL SOFT', Sophie Tappeiner, Vienna (AT); 'CAMPAGNOLA', Westwerk, Hamburg (DE).

Liesl Raff
loop 1, 2021
Latex, rope, bamboo
180 x 45 x 32 cm

Liesl Raff
loop 2, 2021
Latex, rope, bamboo
145 x 45 x 30 cm

Liesl Raff
loop 3, 2021
Latex, rope, bamboo
150 x 35 x 30 cm

Liesl Raff
corn dolly 2, 2021
Straw, nylon, yarn
Dimensions variable