

Arnaud Lefebvre Gallery is pleased to show

HELGA NATZ

SACRA CONVERSAZIONE

Exhibition Sept. 20 - Oct. 27, 2018

Opening Thursday Sept. 20 from 6 pm to 8 pm

Sarah Möller

Dialogue between epochs

Parisian gallery Arnaud Lefebvre presents pieces of Helga Natz' oeuvre in a thematic solo exhibition.

Since her first visit of the monastery San Marco in Florence in the early 1980s, medieval Fra Angelico has been influencing German artist Helga Natz's works over the last 30 years. Although more than 500 years apart, all of the exhibits of this mini retrospective have a direct link to the works of the Florentine monk. The name 'Sacra Conversazione' refers to two items. Of course it is a technical term of art history, that means Virgin Mary and infant Jesus with a group of saints, which developed in the 15th century—Fra Angelico was one of the artists, who 'invented' this type of image. In a figurative sense the title 'Sacra Conversazione' shows the personal connection of Helga Natz to the artist Fra Angelico, the dialogue that takes place in her contemplation in front of his masterpieces.

In fact, Natz studied painting in Muenster and Duesseldorf, but impressed by the frescos of San Marco, she created one of her first free standing sculptures in 1989, *No. 31*. As a consequence she focused almost completely to sculptures. *No. 31* doesn't reflect a specific detail of a painting in San Marco, but its two sided structure echoes the artist's perception examining the frescos. Like praying hands the two plaster bodies reflect the spiritual charisma of San Marco.

Height, material, colour and composition of each exhibit are not chosen at random. The small gap between the two parts of *No. 31*, for instance, creates a tension and cohesion within this piece of art.

Often it is the colour that links Helga Natz' works with those of Fra Angelico. Blue used to be the most precious pigment. Difficult to produce from crushed stone, it was meant to highlight important scenes or people. Ultramarine was made from Lapislazuli. It was known as 'Fra Angelico Blue' for a long time. This exhibition hosts two sculptures that reflect the expressiveness of the colour in Fra Angelico's works.

The two halves of *No. 224* face each other like a night sky and a surface of water. The arrangement on the wall and the floor supports this impression. The deep blue colour of the upper part contrasts the turquoise of the floor. This difference is increased by the different materials they are made of, one dull, one reflecting.

No. 232 is the other piece of art related to blue. The wooden shelf holds the blue glass. This fragile structure carries a white marble cube, its grey grain resembles a cloudy sky. The preciousness of the deep blue colour is crowned by the exquisite material of the marble. The surface of the cube has been ground by hand, therefore it has no sharp corners, but it is nice to touch. Its height refers to the human body, which enables the beholder to have a close contact. The marble cube is meant to be approximately at chest level.

Looking at works of Fra Angelico, Helga Natz is often inspired by certain details. These are drawn into her sketchbooks. One of them is displayed here. Sometimes it gives the impetus for another sculpture, transposed in different shape and form.

The small picture of the nun from the Predella of the *Trytichon of St. Peter Martyr*, today in Courtauld Institute Galleries in London, forms the basis of *No. 225*. It is the only sculpture with a direct template. With its bent copper sheet filled with wax and oxidized to a black-green colour it is an abstract version of the Nuns gown. With the closed shape of the piece the view is focussed on the coloured lines in the wax and the shining copper needle. *No. 225* recreates the symbolism of a religious habit, which reflects the inner attitude, in an abstract form.

As Helga Natz is very precise in her imagination of material and colour, she sometimes has to experiment with different ingredients, even unusual ones. Ground red lentils were used between the copper sheets of sculpture *No. 231*. It is a variation of former pieces when she combined big steel sheets with sand. The sharp edges of the metal contrast the smooth landscape made out of the lentil flour, the salmon and rosy colour of the lentils matches the red of the copper plates. The basis of this work were the gowns of Mary and the Angel in Fra Angelico's *Annunciation*, Prado, Madrid. Shadows and incidence of light strengthen the stunning effect with which *No. 231* depicts the shining of the garments.

Helga Natz has never sought closeness to a certain movement of art. To her mind, colour, material and composition require one another in a creative process. Her love for nature as the origin of matter is omnipresent. Her unity with Fra Angelico's art is based on two pillars: one is her love for spirit, which speaks within Fra Angelico's artwork, the other is the fascination of work in progress and her affinity to material and their physical character.

After studying art history and German literature in Münster and Bonn—then art criticism and curatorship in Bochum—Sarah Möller works as an art critic and freelance journalist (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Financial Times, Rhein-Zeitung, <https://www.kunst-am-mittelrhein.de>).

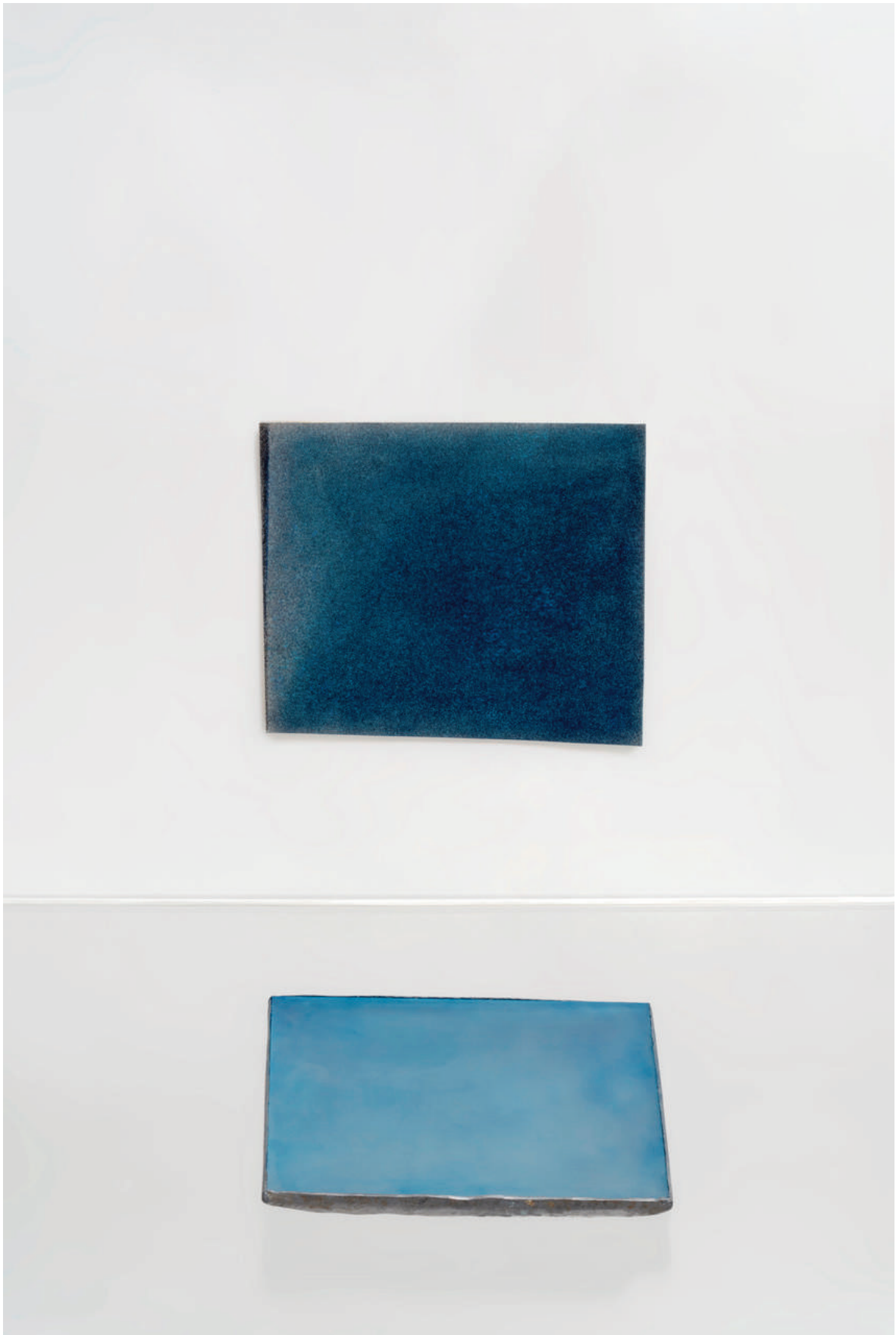
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Helga Natz, *No. 31*, 1989
Plaster, 7.9 x 7.9 x 7.9 inches.

Photo credit: Siegfried Renvert/ Gisela Schaeper



Helga Natz, *SaPa 33* (on the wall) 2012
Sand paper, pigment, 8 × 8.27 inches.

Helga Natz, *No. 224*, 2012
Lead, pigment, acrylic, 8 × 8 × 0.79 inches.

Photo credit: Siegfried Renvert/ Gisela Schaeper



Helga Natz, No. 232, 2012
Acrylic, wood, marble, 52 x 8 x 8 inches.

Photo credit: Siegfried Renvert/ Gisela Schaeper



Helga Natz, No. 225, 2018
Copper; wax, 19.49 x 11.02 x 16.93 inches.

Photo credit: Siegfried Renvert/ Gisela Schaeper



Helga Natz, *No. 231*, 2018
Copper, ground lentils, 27.54 × 48.82 × 13.39 inches.

Photo credit: Siegfried Renvert/ Gisela Schaeper

///Biography

Helga Natz

Born in Engelskirchen/Bergisch-Gladbach

Lives and works in Germany

SOLO SHOWS

- 2018 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2017 *Helga Natz/Simone Nieweg*, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2013 *The clay woman*, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2011 *Selected Sculpture*, Kouros Gallery, New York
- 2008 *Unity in Variety*, Kouros Gallery, New York
- 2005 *Arnaud's room*, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2004 *Installation Sculpture Nr. 150 ART'insula*, Nova Scotia, Canada
Galerie Deschler, Berlin
- 2002 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
KWEA Berlin, aci and Holly Solomon Gallery New York
- 2000 *Sandpit NRW*, aci and Holly Solomon Gallery New York
Rohbau-Projekt, aci - art connection international, Düsseldorf
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Atelier Brancusi / Centre George Pompidou, Paris
- 1999 Museum Ludwig - Projektraum, Köln
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1998 Museum Ludwig - Projektraum, Köln
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1997 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1996 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1995 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1994 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1990 Gallery Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf

GROUP SHOWS

- 2017 GALERISTES Art Fair, le Carreau du Temple, Paris
- 2016 *MULTIPLES ET PETITS FORMATS*, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Waiting for Carnival, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2014 ART PARIS Art Fair, le Grand Palais, Paris
- 2012 Kouros Galerie, New York
ALICE IN WONDERLAND, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2011 GALERIE ARNAUD LEFEBVRE 1990 - 2011, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
TURTLE SALON MICHAEL SHAMBERG, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Kouros Gallery, New York
- 2010 Kouros Gallery, New York
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2009 Exposition en soutien à Ryo Takahashi, Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Toronto Art Fair 'HEARTland' Special Project Exhibition, curated by Jeffrey Spalding
- 2007 Kouros Sculpture Center, Ridgefield, CT, U.S.A.
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
ArtMbassy 'Cuore bianco', Berlin

- 2006 NIU Art Museum, Chicago
ArtMbassy "Berlin-Chicago", Berlin
Villa Merkel
- 2005 ArtMbassy "Berlin-Chicago", Berlin
- 2004 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
ARTinsula, NS, Canada
- 2003 Ernst Barlach Museum, Hamburg
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Gallery Tschudi, Zuoz/Engadin, Schweiz
Visitor Artist N.S.C.A.D. Halifax University of Art, Nova Scotia, Canada
- 2002 Gallery Tschudi, Zuoz/Engadin, Schweiz
Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT, USA
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 2001 Sammlung Hoffmann, Berlin
- 1999 Armory Show / New York, Gallery Holly Solomon
- 1997 Graham & Sons, New York "sculpture"
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1996 Kunsthalle Recklinghausen
Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
- 1995 Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, Paris
Art Cologne, Gallery Konrad Fischer
Gallery Konrad Fischer
- 1994 FIAC Art Fair, avec la Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre, le Grand Palais, Paris
Atrium Gallery, University of Connecticut "Sol Le Witt Collection"
- 1993 Art Cologne, Gallery Konrad Fischer
Gallery Konrad Fischer
- 1992 Art Cologne, Gallery Konrad Fischer
- 1991 Atrium Gallery, University of Connecticut "Sol Le Witt Collection"
Art Cologne, Gallery Konrad Fischer
A Summer Show, Gallery Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf

Wallpaintings, IMI-House Port Hilford, Canada

///Contacts and practical informations

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Tuesday - Saturday : 10:30 - 12:30am / 02:30 - 06:30pm