

Deborah Uhde /// Portfolio 2023

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Tomorrow is the 30th anniversary. Security checks on the campus gate got really strict. I'm not sure whether this is connected, but it would make sense. I'm wondering what „safe“ means here. It's a safe country, a safe city in terms of crime rates. I can run around in the dark Hutongs at 2am and no one will bother me. Still I don't feel safe. I don't feel safe when I set one foot in front of the other, because I'm afraid that I'll miss a line. A limit I didn't see before I stepped over it. The boundaries around me are getting closer and closer. It's difficult to breath. I'm not safe. My words are not safe. The computer I am writing on is connected to the internet. Maybe someone is reading, while I'm writing. And even though it's just my lab diary, my thoughts don't feel safe here. I'm crying while I'm writing this. I love this city. It's a magical place. But there's a dark side. A side, tourists don't see when they enter. Neither do business people or exchange students. You need to be part of the system to see it. You need to be part of the backstage group. I love my lab, I love the research I'm doing and the freedom I have. But there are these fine lines. Now we have to pass angry looking security guys with helmets and truncheons every time we enter our campus. We're not allowed to stay away at night. I know this fear is part of the system. It's part of the strategy. Still, I can't help but feel it. I got used to the security checks in the subway stations, to the security guys in our dorm. What I can't get used to are the random room checks. The uncertain boundaries that I don't see. Suddenly you're black listed. Suddenly they yell at you. Suddenly they shower you in overwhelming friendliness. I don't see the lines. There's light, there's shadow. But I don't see where one ends and where the other starts. I'm lost in between, don't know which side I'm standing on. I know I have to choose, but I don't know how to make a choice. I don't know what the options include. And while I'm crying, I feel like I don't have a reason to cry. I'm here because I chose to be here. Two more years and I can leave for good. But I know they will try to keep me here. Giving me offers for good jobs and good money. Playing with my mind. It's tough to live in an abusive relationship. But how do you leave an abusive country?

I Don't See The Lines

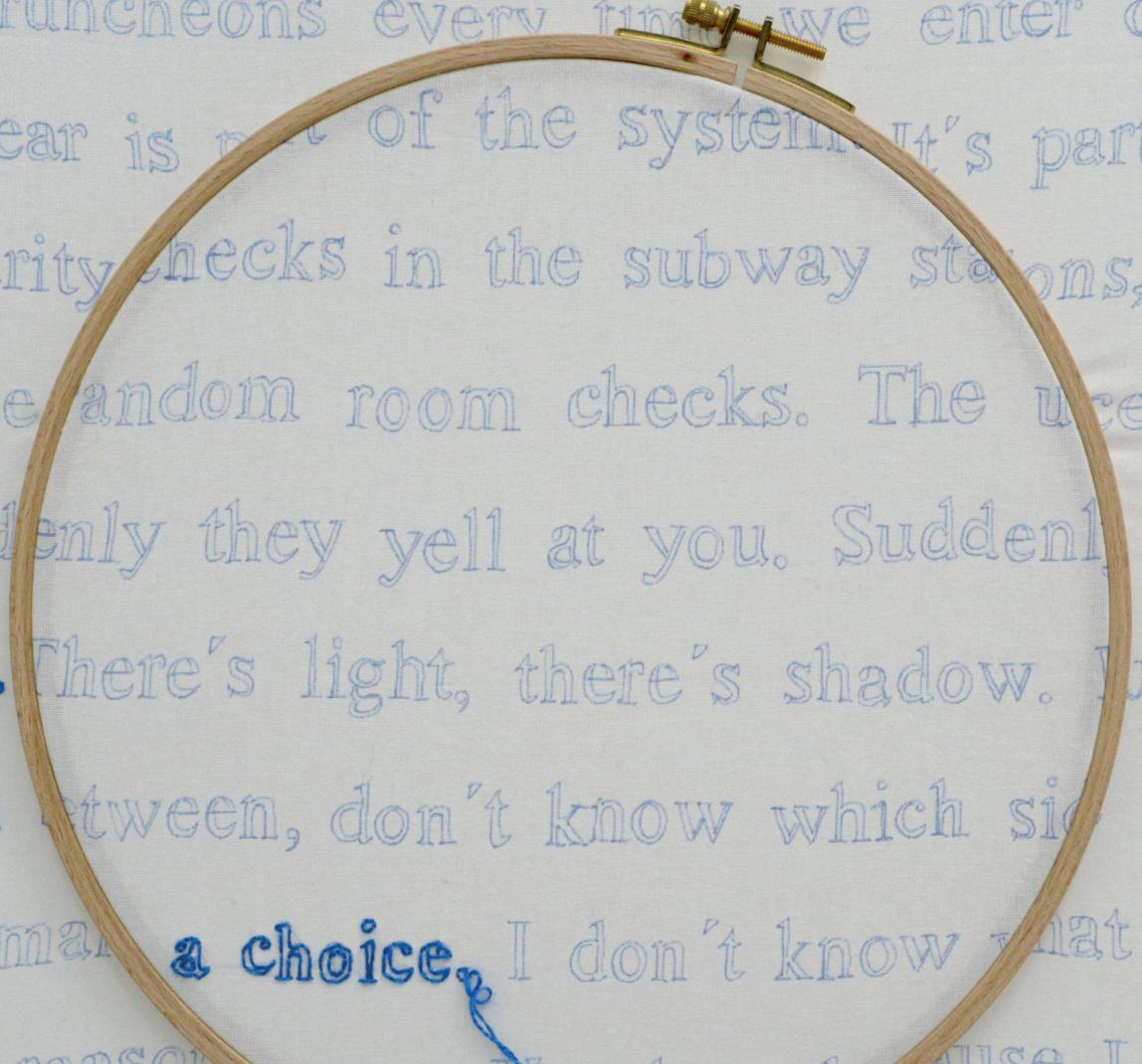
Deborah Uhde | 2022

Embroidery on canvas, 100 x 100 cm (2022)

A personal letter,
a diary entry embroidered on a large canvas.

Reading it, curiosity may mix with feelings of insecurity,
which begin to shimmer paranoidly and turn into
a confrontation with a surveillance state.

Self-observation is included in this.
The single letters are visibly connected behind the screen.



I Don't See The Lines (Detail) | Deborah Uhde | 2022 | Embroidery on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



I don't see the lines

„This is not a text. It is the expression of an observation of the unspoken.

The space of the unsaid,
the space between the lines
is a free space.

In it, the individual, perception and social interpretation enter into relationship.

- At the same time, the unsaid is a space of communicative power.“

Deborah Uhde, 2022

upper right:
installation view, Mixed Methodologies (Group Show),
Picture Berlin, WirWir Projectspace (2022)
other work (table) by Najia Fatima



Musterungen I | Deborah Uhde | 2022 | 3 UV-Prints, je 80 x 100

The German word ***Musterung***
has the triple meaning of

1. a military muster
2. a pattern
3. inspection



At first glance, the motifs are lovely embroideries.

With the knowledge of the unknown origin
of the traditional costumes from wartime,
as grandpa's „souvenirs“,
the same motifs tip over into an unpleasant, sucking vortex
of abysmalness.

Distorted, crumpled, surreal, between sharp and blurred,
the images are presented in large format on the wall.



Installation views:
White Slices Blind Spots - Joint Maelstroem of the War
(solo exhibition),
khbstudios (2022)

The work cycle ***White Slices Blind Spots*** is designed as a series of sequels.

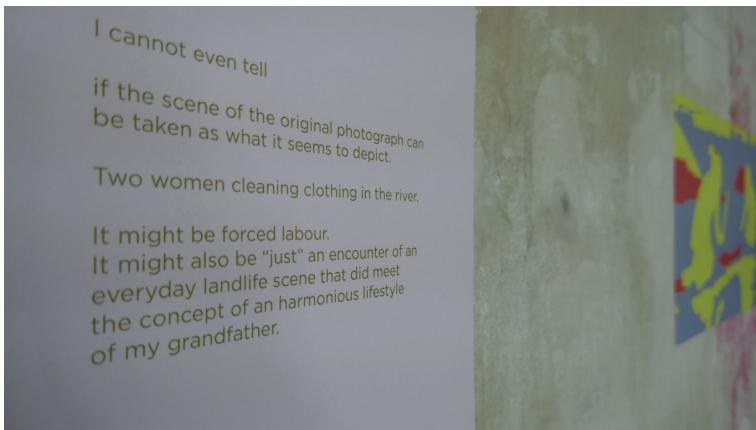
The work cycle deals with fictionalization processes in the construction of memory.

The first part,

- ***Joint Maelstroem of the War***
deals with my heritage of German war crimes in the 20th century and the family-connection to it. which is traceable through fragments

It is about photographic reflections of violent contexts beyond the depicted „frames“ and the attempt to make repressed structural entanglements sensually accessible.

Halle Leipzig Berlin Breslau Oppeln Tschenstochau Kielce Lysa Gora Kamien Radom Deblin (ehem. Iwangorod) Lubin Hrubieszow Cholm/Chelm Teptiukow Swierszczow Monialycze Janki Slawecin Zamosz Krasnystaw Werbkowice Zawada Tomaszow Gronsko Rejowiec Warszaw Kutno Posen Neu-Bentschen Guben Cottbus Falkenberg Eilenburg Halle Nordhausen Oppeln Kielce Radom Deblin Krasnystaw Lublin Siennica Nadolina Krupa-Popowka Czarnoziem Chelm Krasnystaw Zosinek Bialka Predniescie-Krakowski Zapolkiew Rudka Chelm Krupa-Zosinek Rejowiec Werezcsze uze Chelm Hrubieszow Paryzsie Ahopa Janow Rudka Okszow Nowiny Lesniczowka Serebryszcze Wolka-Czulczycka Horodyszcze Strupin-Duzy Zaly Paryzsie Serebrysczi Wolwinow Dziewicza Parypsie Wereszcz-Wielkie Spar Stolpie Cholm Jena Eisenberg Cholm Pokrowka Krzywice Rozdzalow Pokrowka Deputycze Krolewskie Krzywice Rozdzalow Pokrowka Kasilan Rozdzalow Bialopole Wolwinow Strachoslaw Kamien Czerniejow Wolkowiany Dryszczow Klestow u zmudz Bialopole Raciborowice Cholm Janow Trubakow Pokrowska Krasnystaw Cholm Warszaw Llodz Kalisch-Ostrowo Sagan Cottbus Leipzig Chemnitz Freiberg (Sachsen) Oberschöna Jena Eisenberg Freiberg Oberschöna Dresden Radebeul Dresden Hoyerswerda Elsterhorst Senftenberg Coswig Riesa Leipzig Halle Eisleben Nordhausen Northeim Altenbecken Paderborn Soest Unna Dortmund Essen Gelsenkirchen Wanne Recklinghausen Münster Emsdetten Rheine Salzbergen Bentheim Oldenzaal Hengelo-Amelo Ryssen Deventer Amersfort Utrecht Rotterdam Dordrecht Roosendaal Esschen Antwerpen Mechelen Hombeek Dendermonde Gent Kortrijk Mouseron Tourcoing Roubaix Lille Seclin Libercourt Ostricourt Leforest Pont de la Deule Douai Arras Bapaume Albert Camon Compiegne Creil Bourges Versailles Trappes Ramouillet Epernon Le Mans Maintenon Chartres Courville Pontguin La Loupe Bretoncelles Condé Nogent Le Rotron Le Theil St Mars la Brières Champagne Montfort Sauvigne l'évêque Le Mans Alencon Secs Argentan Caen Bayeux Lison Pont Hébert St Lô Pont Hébert Cherbourg Carentan-Volognes St Lô St Jeanne de Daye Carentan St Lô Bayeux Caen Lisieux Evreux Pacy sur Eure St Germaine Paris Versailles Pont Hébert Caen Cuseuelles Arromanches Le Havre Bayeux Pont Hébert St Lô Coutances St Pair Caroles Mont St Michel Avranches Pontorson Granvilles Caen Pont Hébert St Lô Cherbourg Pont Hébert Caen Pont Hébert Lison Caen Mésidon Lisieux Rouen Amiens Arras Namur Maastricht Mons Charleroy Namur Maastricht Herzogenrath Aachen Neuß Düsseldorf Soest Paderborn Northeim Nordhausen Jena Nordhausen Leimbach Aachen Maastricht Lüttich-Namur Charleroy Mons Arras Amiens Pouen Lison Pont Hébert St Lô Pont Hébert Cormelles le Royal Pont Hébert Lison Mézidon Argentan Alencon Le Mans Le Derrey Frappes St Cyr Versailles Versailles-Chantiers Champigny le Plante Noisy le sec Epernay Chalons sur Marne Revin Bar le duc Nancy-Tonville Léonville Verdun Thiaucourt Arneville Neuburg/Neufchatel Ars an der Mosel Metz Trier Ückingen Diedenhofen Perl Trier Koblenz Opladen Wuppertal Schwalm Hagen Schwerte Soest Ottbergen-Nordhäusern Hattorf Halle Leipzig Dresden Friedrichstadt Pirna Bodenbach Aussig Teplitz-Schönau/Teplice Eichwald/Dubí Jena Nordhausen Teplitz/Teplice Aussig Dresden Radebeul Doberlug-Kirchhain Berlin Eichwald/Dubí Bilin Eichwald/Dubí Wißrig Drehunken Pihanken Weißkirchitz Turn Teplitz/Teplice [...] Wien Szajol Ploesti [...] Bukarest Timisoara Belgrad Nisch Skopje/Skopje Veles Gevgeli Idomeni Saloniki Gevgeli Idomeni Lachanokipi Latomion Philadelphia Gallikos Kilkis Chersos Metallico Kalindia Doirani Poroi Dede-Agatsch Valovista Drama Platania Neochorion Stawropolis Xanti Poliantos Komotini Macchia Sikaragi Kirka Potamos Fere Peplos Tichion Larina Suflion Lavara Dimotika Thurion Dimotika Saloniki Propilaon Sindos Adendron Ludia Plati Gidas Werria Naussa Episkopi Skidra Edessa Agra Fufas Arnissa Agie Panteleimon Amineon Xinonero Klidi Wewi Armenochori Florina Saloniki/Thessaloniki Neu-Magnesia Dion Litochoron Plaka Leptokaria Platamon Papapuli Pirgetos Tempi Makrichori Girtoni Larissa Messurio Krannon Doxara Orfana Parlafarsalos Kalambaka Volos Proerna Domokos Thawmakos Achare Xinia Kifera Therme Neseros Karia Stirfaka Lianokladi Gorgopotamos Arpini Assopos Eleftherochori Grawia Liliea Amfiklia Parnassos Thitorea Elikon Dawlia Cheronia Lewadia Rachti Alkomene Petra Aliartos Sphinx Theben Ipaton Eleon Tanagra Inoi Chalkis Euböa Awlon Spfndali Afidne Ion Dekelia Acharne Pirogos Liossia Athen Rodiza Megali Wrissi Agie Marina Wassiliki Stilis Piräus Athen Thitorea Amfiklia Thitorea Grawia Dekelia Domokos Theben Lamia Domokos Athen Amfiklia Domokos Larissa Saloniki Aliki Platamon Domokos Lianokladi Lamia Assopos Stilis Agie Marina Lamia Lianokladi Domokos Larissa Tempi Platamon Saloniki



Installation views:
White Slices Blind Spots - Joint Maelstroem of the War (solo exhibition),
khbstudios (2022)

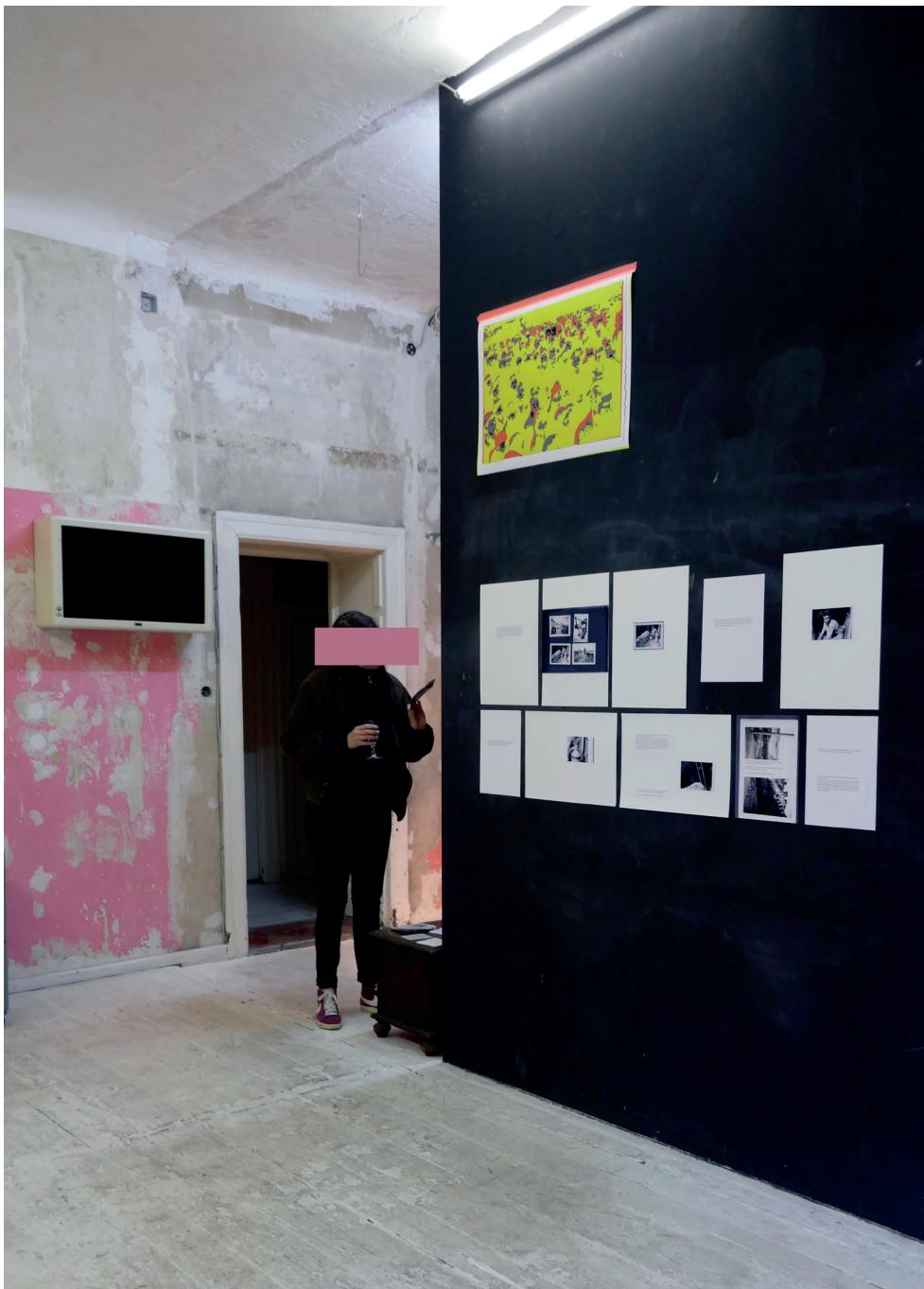
next page:
townscape Halle-Saloniki

The exhibition space: a former women's center. The pink paint residue on the walls merges with the women's clothes on the digital prints.

The neighboring picture to the **Musterungen I** shows an alienated original photograph from the grandfather's war album of women doing laundry.

The pictures in the room form a sequential relationship.

The pictorial level of the staged original documents is supplemented by text images, such as the extracted route across Europe as a loca-



Susan Sontag bezeichnet Photographien als <Bruchstücke der Welt>, die sich als Spiegelbilder ausgeben und doch notwendig Interpretationen sind. Darüber hinaus begreift sie das Fotografieren auch als <sublimierten Mord>. Einzelbilder verwandeln Geschichte in diverse Fakten und sie verändern den Fotografen in einen Voyeur, der den Betrachter auch gleich mit seiner Haltung infiziert.

Der Mann, der mich als Betrachter hier mit seiner Haltung infiziert, der Fotograf ist mein Opa. Er steht in dieser Situation mit seiner Wehrmachtsuniform hinter der Kamera.



Wechselseiten Page Changes | Deborah Uhde | 2015 | 7-channel-installation

Installation view:
exhibition Diplom, HBK Braunschweig (2015)

This work is an approach to German colonial history in China.

A document from the family archive provides the impetus: a letter from a relative who emigrated to China at the turn of the century and wrote to his parents in Thuringia. Extracts from the letter form the subtitles for this walk-in movie in process. A reflection on personal family communication and collectively created visual worlds.

Which forms of visualization shape the idea of history, of distance, of the familiar? Books, archives and Internet platforms bring visual material to the surface. Photographs, postcards, steel engravings, cartographies. I use these materials to create a three-channel projection screen of unconscious collective memory.

This swirl of images of the unconscious is contrasted by two installation elements with a focused perspective:



above:

video tower with 3-channel photo film installation;
as an installation element, this is connected to two original books on display
(see next page)

right:

screen with letter excerpts,
which are based on the form of cinematic subtitling;





The same photograph of Chinese women appears in different reproduction contexts during my research.

The testimony to the shifting of sources is juxtaposed with the swirl of images:



In an anthology on „postcards from the colonial era“, it is depicted as a personalized postcard motif with the caption „Chinese women and girls around 1890“.

In a monograph on early photography in China, I discover the same motif with the caption „Pimp with her girls, Shanghai around 1880“.



TUNIS | Deborah Uhde & Sandra García Vilchis | 2019 | Film 07:19 min | Super8/2K

Installation view:
exhibition INPUT/EXPORT - PLEASE PROJECT YOURSELF!
Kunstverein Die H_LLE Braunschweig (2020)



Still image of the video work **Tunis** (2019)

2019 **Tunis**

Sandra García & Deborah Uhde collaborative work
07:19 min | Super8/2K | color | stereo | English

2023 (S) Utopische Interventionen in Tempelhofer Landschaften, cooperative Berlin

2020 (G) Input/Export, Kunsth_Ile Braunschweig

2019 (S) Home Movie Day, Filmmuseum Potsdam

In the collaborative work TUNIS, a clearly touristic memory is confronted with a diversely ambiguous soundtrack. Individual traces from various media products are woven into a fragile structure of the soundscape. News broadcasts relating to Tunisia and North Africa, as well as local field recordings and lyrical finds.

The video footage is Super8 material from the seventies. A time when economic development made it possible for young middle-class families from Western Europe to vacation in former colonial states. The famous sight of the embattled ruins of ancient Carthage captured on cine film for the home screen. To this day, the tourism sector is the country's most important source of income.

The soundtrack contains chanting demonstrators at the beginning of the so-called "Arab Spring".

The film is a montage that constantly creates tensions between the image, the sound and the points of view, also in the cross-section of time periods. The tension revolves around conquest, appropriation, occupation.

This work is a collaboration between Sandra García Vilchis (Mexico) & Deborah Uhde (Germany).



Kalbe | Deborah Uhde | 2014/15 | Film | 29:18 min

Kalbe

The film *Kalbe* is an experimental documentary that works with shifted time levels.

A small town in the former border zone.

At the beginning of 1945, a ten-year-old girl finds herself here, having fled the war with her parents. 70 years later, I meet her during a stay in the artists' town of Kalbe and interview her about her biographical memories.

The film works with predominantly photographic shots in which pointed movement takes place.

I visit the locations of her stories and the interplay of the different time levels with the current social and political situation develops its own dynamic.



Kalbe | Deborah Uhde | 2014/15 | Film | 29:18 min | still images



State of the Art of the State - A Dysfunctional Machine | Deborah Uhde | 2016 | Film | 11:52 min | still images



2016 **State of the Art of the State – A Dysfunctional Machine**

11:52 min | HD | 16:9 | col | stereo | en

- | | | |
|------|-----|---|
| 2020 | (S) | Alles auf Anfang, Ost-Passage Theater, Leipzig |
| 2019 | (S) | Screening im Pögehaus Leipzig |
| 2018 | (S) | Ace House Collective, Yogyakarta |
| 2017 | (S) | Medienwerkstatt Hannover |
| 2016 | (S) | Lampentalverdampfung Wien |
| | (S) | Directors Lounge Z-Bar Berlin |
| | (S) | Screening @ International Film School Saigon,
Ho-Chi-Minh-City |
| | (G) | Meisterschüler-Ausstellung, Raumkunstlabor,
Braunschweig |

Installation view
Meisterschüler-exhibition Raumkunstlabor,
Braunschweig (2016)

Deborah Uhde's piece „**State of the Art of the State - a Dysfunctional Machine**“ seems to be made of pieces of information about a space in a very different way. Views of a science campus, the „physikalisch-technische Bundesanstalt Braunschweig“, are being combined on a double screen and edited in associative ways.

The rhythm of the pictures is slow and seems to follow the pace of a documented research, the cataloguing and search for art on the campus as the subtitles state. However, we rarely get to see art, at least no paintings or sculptures but strange constellations of buildings, containers, rulers, marks and construction signs, any of which could be part of some art project but very unlikely is so. The one object that looks very much like a modernist sculpture, a steel object that combines spheres and poles, apparently is an object for measurement as the viewer is informed by subtitles.

Deborah's film thus combines spatial views in a poetical and rhythmical way, but then it seems, she rather asks the viewer to critically engage and make their own distinctions between aesthetic and utilitarian spatial use.

Klaus Eisenlohr
Director's Lounge



The Cluster | installation view ORTEN, Galerie im Höhmannhaus Augsburg (2017)

2018	(S)	EMAF, European Media Art Festival Osnabrück
	(G)	OFF, OVER & OUT, Montagehalle Berlin Wedding
2017	(E)	SYNDROME, Schwartzsche Villa Berlin
	(G)	ORTEN, Galerie im Höhmannhaus Augsburg

Deborah Uhde's work raises the question of how the world works and to what extent science can actually explain the workings of life. She systematically works out a blind spot by merging fiction and reality. [...]

The film is constantly about cosmic structures and organic networks. The viewer is tempted to want to understand everything and to devote the same amount of attention to every single view. [...]

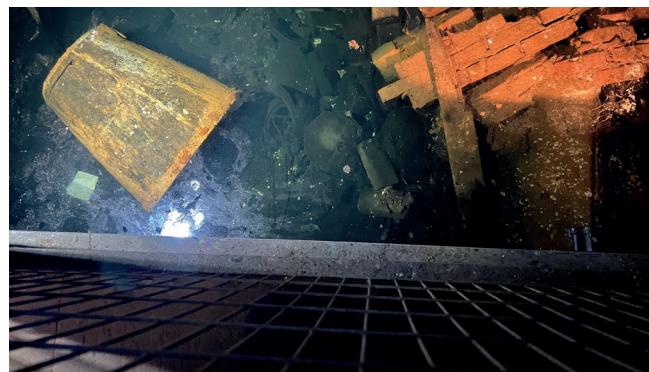
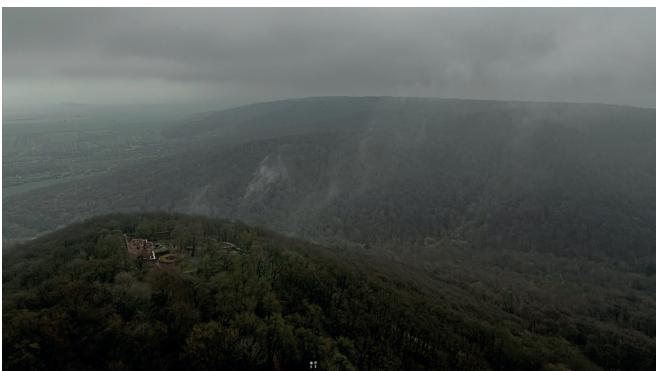
The philosopher Karl Popper says that the truth of a theory can never be definitively proven, only its similarity to the truth. We may know nothing about the clusters of this world.

The reality in which we dreamlike walk can be declared false again at any time. It is science that strives for a supposed objectivity, and it is art that dares to mock this objectivity in the face.

Stefan Ewald
Excerpt from the catalog text SYNDROME



The Cluster | Deborah Uhde | 2017 | 06:42 min | HD | 16:9 | col | stereo | german/english
Still image



Deborah Uhde | **Liquid Traces (AT)** | work in progress, research phase 2023/2024



Common Table | Erhard Uhde / Deborah Uhde | Woodpiece in development, 120 x 120 cm ;

Dieser Tisch wurde ursprünglich von meinem Vater angefertigt, der Tischler war. Er war sein Meisterstück und hatte eine besondere Bedeutung für unsere Familie - in seinen Augen ist der gemeinsame Tisch das wichtigste Möbelstück des Hauses.

Da die Familie auseinanderbrach, (nicht zuletzt wegen seiner Schizophrenie; dazu habe ich 2013 einen Fotofilm gemacht Titel: „EneMeneMu“) geriet dieses Stück in einem Keller in Vergessenheit.

Ich werde diese Platte des Tisches restaurieren, den Prozess dokumentieren und 2023/24 den „Common Table“ künstlerisch verarbeiten