

Press release of 9 August 2013

Sonja Knapp: «Universe»

The bamboo pictures and insect sculptures of Sonja Knapp transform any room into a microcosm full of poetry. Inspired by the pure forms of her motifs and by manifold encounters with Japanese culture, the artist creates works in which fantasy and reality combine harmoniously.

The Swiss artist Sonja Knapp made a name for herself as an illustrator, graphic designer and art director in 1960s Paris, before advancing to co-found the fashion house Ungaro. As a fashion designer she stayed in Japan several times for long periods. She was deeply impressed by the art and culture of the country and this began to be reflected in her work. In the mid-1980s Sonja Knapp left the world of fashion to devote herself exclusively to her art, art which grants us insights into an amazing universe.

Small and partly inconspicuous insects, such as dragonflies, scarab beetles or butterflies, are transformed by Knapp into imposing, lustrous or glossy sculptures that convince through their elegant simplicity. With their reflective surfaces they fit into their surroundings as harmoniously as their real-life counterparts in their own respective habitats. Knapp's insects move and change with the play of light and shadow on their metal surfaces. A person who is reflected in them becomes part of their richly-formed and mysterious world and also perceives that world with new eyes, like the continuous alternation between tranquillity and restlessness in the environment that is reflected in the artworks.

Bamboo, a traditional motif in East Asian art, also comes across in Knapp's work as surprisingly multifaceted. In an effort to capture the essential, the artist often focuses on a small section of bamboo stem and condenses it down to a few shapes and colours. The manifold symbolism of bamboo and the artist's interactions with the art and culture of Japan shine through in every picture.

In her works Sonja Knapp combines elements of Western and East Asian art and brings us closer to a world full of aesthetics, modesty and poetry that instantly appeals and fascinates.

You and your friends are warmly invited to the exhibition preview on Thursday 22 August 2013, from 17.00 to 20.00. Sonja Knapp will be present.

The exhibition «Universe» runs from 23 August 2013 to 5 October 2013.

On Thursday 12 September at 18.30 the artist will give a tour of the exhibition. Introduction: Charly Iten, PhD, art historian. Drinks to follow. Registration would be appreciated by 6 September.

Opening hours: Wednesday to Friday 12.00 to 18.00, Saturday 11.00 to 15.00, or by appointment.

Further information available from:

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Sonja Knapp

Background

Since 1986 Full-time artist with studios in Paris, Klosters und Caslano

Co-founder of fashion house Ungaro (Paris/Milan/Tokyo)

Art Director Galeries Lafayette (Paris)/Charles Jourdan International (Paris/Tokyo/New York)

Teacher at the Ecole des Arts Appliqués, Paris

Illustrator in Paris and London

Graphic design education at the Zurich School of Applied Arts

Solo exhibitions

- 2010 Galerie Klinik Barmelweid
 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters
- 2009/2010 Skulpturen im Park, Hotel Waldhaus Flims
- 2004 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
- 2003 Galerie am Paradeplatz, Zurich
- 2002/2003 Galerie 63, Klosters
- 2002 Galerie Chalet Muri, Münsingen
- 2001 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
- 1999 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
 Galerie Chalet Muri, Bern
- 1998/1999 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters
- 1996/1997 Galerie Chalet Muri, Bern
- 1995/1996 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters
- 1995 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
- 1994 Stampa-Atelier, Chur
 Galerie Graphes Librairie, Paris (F)

Group exhibitions

- 2013 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters
 Mendrisio in Arte
 Museo Sergio Maina, Caslano
- 2012 Galerie Pesko, Lenzerheide
 Festival of the Miniature Sculptures, Altes Bad Pfäfers
 Bad Ragartz, Swiss Triennial Festival of Sculpture, Bad Ragatz and Vaduz
- 2011 Asian Art in Zug, Zug
 Kultur Unterägeri, sculpture exhibition, Unterägeri
 Artists for Japan, charity exhibition, Sotheby's Zurich
- 2010 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters

- 2009 Bad Ragartz, Swiss Triennial Festival of Sculpture, Bad Ragatz and Vaduz
 Sculpture exhibition, Altes Bad Pfäfers
 Small sculpture exhibition, Bad Ragatz
 vierARTstättersee, sculpture exhibition, Vitznau
 arTosa 09, sculpture exhibition, Arosa
 Galerie am Paradeplatz, Zurich
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
- 2008 Galerie KURA, Lenzburg
 arTosa 08, sculpture exhibition, Arosa
 Alex's Art Galerie, Klosters
 Sculpture trail, Uznach
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
 Included in the Visarte, association internationale des arts plastiques, Paris section
- 2007 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
 Galerie Klinik Barmelweid
- 2006 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
- 2005 Malakoff, Paris (F)
 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
- 2004 Sculpture exhibition, La Fabbrica, Losone
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
- 2003 Arte Fides, Luzern
 Galerie Walo Steiner, Densbüren
 Bad Ragartz, Swiss Triennial Festival of Sculpture, Bad Ragatz and Vaduz
 Sculpture exhibition, Altes Bad Pfäfers
 Small sculpture exhibition, Bad Ragatz
 Art Gallery Lai, Lenzerheide
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
- 2002 Municipal museum, Cosne-sur-Loire (F)
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne
 Galerie 63, Klosters
- Since 2001 Galerie Maeght, Paris (F)
- 1999 Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris (F)
 Galerie zur grünen Tür, Uznach
 Galerie du Chêne, Donald Vallotton, Lausanne

Selected works

1. Sonja Knapp, *Dragonfly*, 2011, aluminium, 70 x 75 x 29 cm.
2. Sonja Knapp, *Bamboo*, 2002, monotype, oil on Japanese tissue paper, 62.5 x 47 cm.
3. Sonja Knapp, *Scarab Beetle with Butterflies*, 2012, aluminium, 15 x 22 x 19 cm.
4. Sonja Knapp, *Bamboo*, 2002, monotype, oil on Japanese tissue paper, 121 x 67 cm.