

KLOCKER MUSEUM

CHRISTINE LJUBANOVIĆ - FPMS/CPPS*

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Although she has lived in Paris for almost 50 years, Christine Ljubanović is a traveller. She set off several times and travelled the world, gathering impressions and experiences, talking to people in faraway countries and studying with experts around the globe. The 83-year-old artist from Zams in Tyrol has retained her curiosity and thirst for knowledge to this day. Ljubanović recorded her expeditions in countless photos (e.g. *Conversation Portraits*), prints (e.g. *Impressit, Alphabets & Signs, Letters/Countries*) and also paintings, which today form a very extensive - almost archival - body of work.

Tracing, exploring, transforming and archiving - these terms could be used to describe Christine Ljubanović's system of coordinates. The art of research, or rather investigation, is a common artistic practice today. When Christine Ljubanović began doing this in the 1970s, it was still largely uncharted territory and at that Through her work, Ljubanović has made a major contribution to this art form ever since.

The central work in the exhibition at the Klocker Museum is her series of works *Colours/Pigments/Patterns/Scales* (short: CPPS). Since 2003 - 20 years now - Christine Ljubanović has been working on a topography of colours. This is based on the artist's investigative research into site-specific, often only fragmentarily preserved processes and knowledge about colours. In her studio in Paris, she creates her own archive in rows of folders, documents and also several hundred (cartographic) works, in which she documents and collects knowledge about pigments and colours, some of which has almost been lost. This is a meticulously laid out and systematically ordered collection of knowledge, some of which seems alchemical, which Christine Ljubanović's research work does not want to disappear from the collective memory.

In addition to collecting and preserving knowledge, Christine Ljubanović's work is also characterised by experimentation with the insights gained. A play with opacity and colour intensity, which is mainly determined by the grain size or the degree of grinding of the pigment. In a short film within the exhibition, the grinding process of the Glanzbraun-Zürs pigment is also shown.

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Individual pigments often represent a cultural area that the artist travelled to and which was the starting point for her research on this colour.

Vermilion, a bright red pigment, is strongly associated with Chinese culture in this context, which is why the symbol of the lotus, for example, has been taken up several times by the artist in this series. Traditional and also here partly almost forgotten patterns are thus preserved in Christine Ljubanović's painting.

Most recently, the artist worked with a pigment made of ground porphyry, a mineral that was reserved exclusively for emperors and their portraits, especially in Roman antiquity, due to its purple colour. In the course of these works, Ljubanović also developed a series entitled *Maximilian's Ancestors and Heroes*, in which she combined photo collages with her pigment studies. The artist took the portraits of the "Schwarzen Mander" in Innsbruck's Hofkirche during her residency on the occasion of the exhibition at Kunstraum Innsbruck 2019. In the following years, she worked on the collages and then began to paint them with porphyry. The shade of the porphyry varies due to its natural composition. It is not a classic painting pigment, which is why Ljubanović often added caput mortuum or used diamond dust, Mary glass or rock crystal to set accents.

The artist also worked extensively with historical pigments such as Egyptian blue, Egyptian green and smalte. As the name suggests, Egyptian blue was already a blue pigment used in Ancient Egypt, and in Roman antiquity it even became the most important blue pigment of the time. However, the knowledge of how to produce it was presumably lost during the migration of peoples and it was not until the beginning of the 20th century that it was possible to produce the pigment synthetically again. Robert Fleck, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf, draws a wonderful comparison to Michelangelo Pistoletto's *progetto d'arte* in his text "A Theory of Colour as Topography", in which he deals with Christine Ljubanovic's series of works CPPS: "Art essentially consists of artists passing the baton to each other, like relay runners." This is also evidenced by the artist's documented conversations with knowledgeable people, archived in binders, who willingly shared their knowledge and repeatedly referred to the need for this knowledge not to disappear. Fleck ends his essay as follows: "The big question about this important work today is: how and when can it be exhibited in a relevant way?"

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It is therefore a special honour for us at the Klocker Museum to be able to present a representative part of this collection to the public for the first time as part of the exhibition *Christine Ljubanović - FMPS/CPPS**.

The presentation of this series of works is complemented by excerpts of Christine Ljubanović's photographic work. She achieved international fame as a photographer before it became quiet around her for quite a while - at least in Tyrol. For decades, Ljubanović's work was far more respected and well-known internationally than in her country of origin. In this country, her exhibition at Kunstraum Innsbruck 2019, curated by Karin Pernegger, is considered her rediscovery.

The focus in the 2019 show was on her *Conversation Portraits*, a series of contact prints documenting the artist's encounter with her counterpart. The artist dedicated a photographic film to each meeting. The result is an almost cinematic sequence in which each image is related to the one before and the one behind it. A series of works that is of such importance for the history of photography that only recently the Centre Pompidou in Paris purchased a large part of the proof sheets. In the exhibition at the Klocker Museum, three large-format portraits are shown as representative of the entire series: Margarethe Haueis, Yoko Ono and Hito Steyerl. The origin stories and emotional relationships to Christine Ljubanović are three completely different ones, which is why they work so well in the compilation. The artist has an almost familial relationship with the Haueis family and her mother Margarethe Haueis, who has already passed away. The opportunity to portray Yoko Ono, a world-class star, arose in 2003 as part of the preparations for an exhibition at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris. One of the most recent portraits is that of Hito Steyerl. Painted in pandemic times, it is the first and so far only encounter that has taken place via Zoom.

In the course of recent investigations of her own work, Christine Ljubanović realised that she had unconsciously photographed and painted wire mesh fences and lattice structures of all kinds for many decades. Since the paintings, which were created in the course of a residency in Venice, were very much inspired by the impression of the lattice structures she found, they form the transition to photography in the exhibition. The photo series were created, for example, during travels in America, Tunisia or Italy, but also in her current home country, France. In the exhibition at the Klocker Museum, only an excerpt from this convolute will be presented. From September 2023, a filmic

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work by Christine Ljubanović will be shown in the Rabalderhaus in Schwaz, in which another part of the mesh photographs will also be on display.

The exhibition will conclude with two collotype prints from the *Paris/Lavis/Phototype* series, for which Ljubanovic went on a photographic tour of Paris to document writings on buildings. This includes a series of architect's signatures on the building facades, as well as entire passages of text. For example, one of the two collotype prints shows a text by the poet Paul Valéry, which he wrote on the occasion of the World's Fair in Paris in 1937. This text can still be found today on the façade of the Musée de l'Homme on the Place du Trocadéro in Paris.

For more than 50 years, Christine Ljubanović has consistently devoted herself to her artistic archive without being stuck in her visual language. Driven by curiosity, a thirst for knowledge and courage, the artist continues to develop her oeuvre and uses a constantly growing range of different media to do so. It is therefore a special pleasure and honour for us to be able to present an insight into this extensive life's work in the exhibition "*Christine Ljubanović - FPMS/CPPS**".

ART AWARD OF THE KLOCKER FOUNDATION

The Art Prize of the Klocker Foundation is the central instrument of art promotion in the spirit of the founder Emmy Klocker. Since 2014, it has been awarded alternately as the main prize and the sponsorship prize. The prizewinners are selected by a jury in accordance with the founder's intentions in the fields of painting and sculpture, the terms of which are interpreted in a contemporary, expanded manner. Living artists whose work is exemplary for the development of Austrian art and of international significance are honoured. The previous main prize winners were Lois Weinberger (2014), Martha Jungwirth (2016), Gottfried Bechtold (2018) and Ernst Caramelle (2022).

STATEMENT OF THE JURY

Christine Ljubanović's work convinced the jury by its profound as well as multi-layered complexity, its extraordinarily consistent realisations, but also by the great cultural-historical significance of her investigations. Ljubanović is what is often called an artist's

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artist, i.e. an important artistic personality who is highly esteemed in professional circles but is still too little known to the wider art public. The Klocker Foundation's Grand Art Prize 2023 is also intended to make a contribution to this.

The jury therefore feels extremely honoured to be able to award Christine Ljubanović, the outstanding cartographer of cultures, the Grand Prize of the Klocker Foundation 2023.

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CHRISTINE LJUBANOVIĆ

was born in Zams in 1939, lives and works in Paris. From 1953 to 1956 she attended the Bundesgewerbeschule Innsbruck. Between 1956 and 1960 she studied at the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna with Paul Kurt Schwarz. In 1961 she worked in the Zelger studio in Innsbruck. Afterwards she worked in the editorial department and on the design of the children's magazine "Teddy" with the publisher Rhoderich Thun, Innsbruck and with the publishing house Schreiber, Essen. Between 1963 and 1971 she ran an advertising agency in Paris and worked in the Ludic group (construction of children's playgrounds) with publication of numerous children's books, Albums du Père Castor - Flammarion publishing house.

Various stays abroad, including 1970 to 1972 in New York and 1973 to 1976 in London. 1978 to 1983 lithography and etching during the summer months at the Scuola del Libro, Accademia Raffaello in Urbino, and in workshops in Montelabbate, Pesaro, Urbino. 1983 to 1993 Graphic series project with the aim of interweaving writing systems with graphic techniques - Impressit, Alphabets & Signs, Letters/Countries, world tour to printing works in Africa, America, Asia, Europe. Publication in Paris in 1994 and exhibitions in Beirut, Mexico City, Vienna, Hall/Landeck.

A further wandering around the world 2003 to 2023 is the series of works Colours/Pigments

Patterns/Scales (FPMS), an artistic-ethnographic circumnavigation of the world in search of bodies of knowledge about "colour", and a body of several hundred prints, on-site paintings on paper from the USA, Brazil, Japan, China, Europe, Africa. 1974 to 2014 Portrait photography, publication conversation portraits, photo-suites 1974-2014, Verlag Hirmer 2016.