

MEDIA RELEASE**05.04. 29.06.2025****Wiebke Siem. Der Traum der Dinge****In cooperation with Fumetto Comic Festival Luzern**

The German artist Wiebke Siem (*1954) enables the fantastic and grotesque to invade everyday domestic life. Be it with costumes that invite us to slip into a different gender or furniture that lets our arms dangle, Wiebke Siem creates a cosmos which is as funny as it is unfathomable, and which renders the contradictions and inadequacies of our life-world visible with irony and humour. The artist's works combine a feminist gaze with a criticism of modernism's problematic strategies of appropriating non-European art. The sculptures prompt numerous associations with art history, be that the figures of Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Schlemmer's Bauhaus stage, Tadeusz Kantor's theatre, caricatures or surrealist collages.

With the interactive installation *Der Traum der Dinge* Wiebke Siem invites viewers to assemble their own sculptures. For this purpose, the artist has, over decades, collected wooden objects originating from households and workshops, smoothing and staining them so that they now have a uniform colour. Figures with different characters can be made up out of vases, wig heads, hat blocks, boot trees, clothes hangers, washboards and many other things. It really does make a difference, if a figure's belly is formed by a washboard or a bread bin.

The 19 figures, *Untitled*, are originally part of the extensive installation *Das Maximale Minimum*. They consist of sewing utensils, such as buttons, belt buckles, darning eggs or button tins. Their presentation is reminiscent of the way cultural artefacts of colonial origin are displayed in ethnology museums, divorced from the context of their creation. With this stage-like setting, the artist comments on problematic strategies of appropriating non-European culture in western museums.

Wiebke Siem repeatedly references stereotypes in her work to address social concepts such as gender or ethnicity. In both these works, therefore, the artist uses objects from areas of activity traditionally associated with women, such as the kitchen, the household or the sewing workshop. She thus points to gender clichés and power symmetries from a decidedly feminist viewpoint or reflects critically on collections of ethnological objects. What is more, by enabling viewers to participate and keeping herself in the background, she comments ironically on the concept of the great creative gesture and the cult of the genius.

Wiebke Siem was born in Kiel and today lives in Berlin. She has been awarded the prestigious Goslar Kaiserring prize as one of the "most innovative and original artists of her time". From 1979 to 1984 she studied at the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg. She became known in the 1990s for her extensive installations of alienated everyday items. The artist has received numerous awards and is represented internationally in exhibitions.

curated by Eveline Suter

DATES

Media Preview

Friday, 04.04., 10.15 am

Opening

Saturday, 05.04., from 11 am

Greeting and introduction

Andi Scheitlin, President Kunstgesellschaft Luzern

Fanni Fetzer, Director Kunstmuseum Luzern

Lea Willimann, Artistic Director. Fumetto Comic Festival Luzern

Eveline Suter, Curator

Events

All events take place in German. For more press information in English, please contact us:
caroline.glock@kunstmuseumluzern.ch or hannah.winters@kunstmuseumluzern.ch

Talk in the Exhibition

Saturday, 06.04., 11 am

Guided tour with the artist Wiebke Siem and the curator

Eveline Suter

Guided Family Tour

Sunday, 18.05., 11 am

Feeling instead of Seeing

Wednesday, 21.05., 6 pm

Experience the exhibition through different senses.

Finissage

Sunday, 29.06., 11 am

Build sculptures with the artist Wiebke Siem

Public Tours

Wednesday 6 pm and Sundays 11 am according to website

Schools

Various offers for all levels