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IRIS HÄUSSLER



Iris Häussler

Lost Gazes: Wax Works From the 1990s



Iris Häussler, *Verlorener Blick (Lost Gazes)*, 2000, wax and fabric.

Articles of laundry appear in many of Iris Häussler's works, in particular laundry which would come in direct contact to a person's skin, such as bed linen, towels, sleepwear and underclothing. Where the bed linen and towels played a certain role in her early hotel works (1995) and in "Xenotope" (the inversion of a hotel work where guests could spend the night at different art-institutions sleeping in the exhibition rooms), underclothing is a central point in another body of work: Häussler's works with wax.

Here, the articles of clothing are set in blocks of wax of varying formats - a process of conservation with an amazing effect. Because, depending on the qualities of the fabric and the random effect caused by the fluid wax meeting with the soft fabric, very different works come about. In some, the used piece of clothing, for example, a child's undershirt, is completely recognizable right down to the label. In others however, it is so abstracted that surprising painterly effects occur, almost as though it were a study of a baroque garment or even an abstract painting. Seen together however, all the works are an antinomy of distance and nearness. The wax not only takes away the accessibility of the article, but also sometimes its visible shape. It nearly disappears into the depth of the block of wax - like an object fallen into a deep body of water and as it sinks deeper, becomes less and less visible. On the other hand, there is the intimacy of the article of clothing that at one point had warmed and protected the body of a person and was once close to their skin. The intimate quality of the piece of clothing points to the skin being a border between the inner and outer sides of a person. Then, in another sense, it points exactly to the borders between the private and the public, to the nearness and distance that Iris Häussler examines and delves into. At the same time, it is clear that the clothing possesses a face that is linked to the biography of a person about whom the viewer learns nothing more. The titles of the wax works also hint at this biographical aspect. They are



called “Kind” (“Child”), “Schwester” (“Sister”), “Onkel” (“Uncle”) or “Mutter” (“Mother”), so that the work is bound to a grid of familial relationships and dependencies.

Iris Häussler has preserved other objects that represent the biography of one or more people, such as mattresses, curtains or letters, and removed their direct accessibility. This method is equally attached to an unsettling vulnerability. Wax is highly sensitive to outer forces: to heat, which melts it, and to touch, which leaves behind traces and imprints. This could be a hint at human existence, whose relics are enclosed by the wax, being extremely fragile. An example of this is an exhibition that Iris Häussler realized in Potsdam in 1995 which points to this idea. Under the title “Leihgaben” (“On Loan”), she presented articles of laundry that came from public institutions. The type of institutions to which people are usually committed against their will and for existential reasons: hospitals, prisons and orphanages. The laundry doesn’t speak of the fates of those that wore or would wear them after the exhibition, but they communicate a spectrum of human fate in which a single moment suffices to destroy or radically change the existence of a human being. Häussler in a sense creates a contemporary *memento mori* that makes the viewer poignantly aware of the temporality of one’s own existence and the dangers to which they are exposed.

Therefore, it is the person – as Iris Häussler has said – who is the central issue in her work, and not herself. There have always been distancing instances interposed in the form of substitutes, the fictive people or their personal articles in “fictive legacies”, and the pieces of clothing in the wax work. These substitutes enable Iris Häussler to construct and visualize the most intimate life situations without actually harming the privacy of a person. They enable her to experiment with different forms of acts, in which the borders between the everyday and art, normalcy and manic behaviour, are unnervingly similar, as in the films of David Lynch. The substitutes enable the existential issues, to be understood as exemplary and then: the substitutes enable Iris Häussler to carry out her own artistic endeavours almost as detached work. Her experimental formations and her quasi-scientific methods contain, at the core, questions of the possibilities and boundaries of an artist’s work, and with that, of the role of the artist in today’s society. Clearly, the answer to this question does not come easily, but rather a spectrum is demonstrated in which, through the fictional and subversive interventions, a scope of action is opened, not only for the possible user, but also for the artist herself. Consequently, Iris Häussler’s work proves to be not least a research into itself: a research into art.*

- Martina Fuchs, 2000

*Adapted from the text “Distance From the Alien Work. On the Work of Iris Häussler” by Martina Fuchs (translated by Laura Bruce). This text was originally published in *Iris Häussler: It Wasn’t Me*. (Fuchs, Martina. *It Wasn’t Me*, ISART Galerie, Westermühlstraße, Munich. 2001.).

Iris Häussler (b. 1962) studied at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts. Her work has been the subject of solo shows, including *The Sophie La Rosière Project*, a three-part exhibition shared between the Art Gallery of York University (2016), Scrap Metal Gallery (2016), and Daniel Faria Gallery (2017), *He Named Her Amber* at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2008-10), and most recently *Apartment 4* and *Tale of Two* at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan (2018). Group exhibitions include *Groupe Mobile* at Villa Vassiliev, Paris (2016); *Somebody Everybody Nobody*, Scrap Metal Gallery, Toronto (2015); *Kunst Oberschwaben 20. Jahrhundert: 197- bis heute*, at Museum Villa Rot in Burgrieden, Germany (2014); *More Real? Art in the Age of Truthiness*, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, and SITE Santa Fe, USA (2013); and *All Our Relations*, The 18th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2012). Häussler has been the recipient of numerous grants including the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts. Her works can be found in the collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), Städtische Sammlung in Lenbachhaus (Munich), Goetz Collection (Munich) and the Collection Opitz-Hoffman (Bonn).

Martina Fuchs (1962 – 2016) was born in Munich in 1962. Fuchs earned her doctorate in Art History at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.



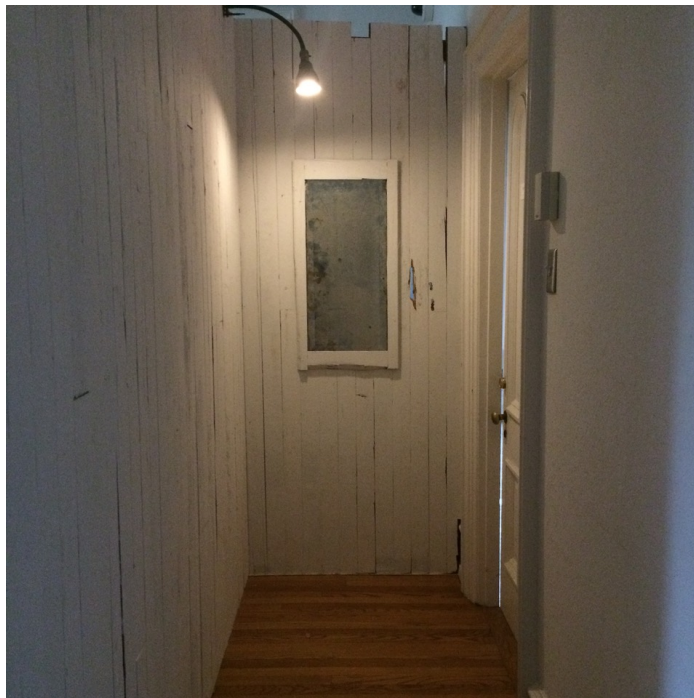
JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER
ARTS CENTER

Apartment 4: Iris Häussler

John Michael Kohler Arts Centre, Sheboygan

June 22, 2018 – June 16, 2019

Iris Häussler presents another chapter of her novel in three dimensions, this time in Wisconsin USA, by further developing her protagonist Florence Hasard from the narrative of 19th century French painter Sophie La Rosieere. Introducing newly discovered artworks and exploring the intricate relation of these two women and their historical circumstances.



Installation view of Iris Häussler "Apartment 4" at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, 2018



Installation view of Iris Häussler “A Tale of Two” at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, 2018



Installation view of Iris Häussler "A Tale of Two" at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, 2018



A Tale of Two: Iris Häussler

John Michael Kohler Arts Centre, Sheboygan

February 11 – August 19, 2018

In a 2017 review in *Art In America*, Milena Tomic wrote, “Iris Häussler has subsumed her identity in fictional artistic persona.” Second self, fictional artistic persona or alternative personalities are manifestations of an alter ego. Although many artists embody an alter ego as a creative tool, Iris Häussler has employed this creative tactic with not one, but many characters of varying ages and genders throughout her decades-long career. Häussler’s process involves an initial phase of extensive on-site research. After she finds an intriguing story line, she inserts herself—often under the guise of a character—into the timeline of a particular art history. Working collaboratively with many contributors, she seeks to build the story of this character into the form of an exhibition. Interviews, artifacts, memorabilia, and artworks are also included to build context and reveal aspects of her chosen track of historical research. Generating questions about research methods, regional art history, and the role of fiction in our daily lives, her exhibitions are at once informative and playful.

In this exhibition, Häussler introduces a new character, Florence Hasard, for the first time to American audiences at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. A French immigrant, Florence arrived in Milwaukee in the 1920s and, at this stage in the research, it is believed she was connected to Layton School of Art founders Charlotte Partridge and Miriam Frink, the WPA Wisconsin Handicraft Project, and the Milwaukee craft community. The details of her story and artworks will be revealed in the exhibition *Tale of Two: Iris Häussler*. There is a trace of Florence in Milwaukee after 1942, but we look to the recently discovered inventory of her paintings, drawings, sketches, and notes for clues of her experience in the region during the post-war era in Wisconsin.



Installation view of Iris Häussler "A Tale of Two" at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, 2018





Installation view of Iris Häussler “A Tale of Two” at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, 2018





**HISTÓRIAS
DA SEXUALIDADE**
20.10.2017-14.2.2018

MASP

In 2017, on the occasion of its 70th anniversary, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) will dedicate its entire program to the theme of sexuality seen through art. The program will include a series of monographic exhibitions of Brazilian and international artists – comprising Toulouse Lautrec, Tunga, Teresinha Soares and Guerrilla Girls – and a major group exhibition, *Histórias da sexualidade* [Histories of Sexuality] which will present diverse representations of the subject through different periods and territories – from Pre-Columbian, Asian and African art, to Latin American and European art, from painting and sculpture, to film, video and photography, as well as documents and magazines.

Comprising works from international and Brazilian collections including our own, the project is part of an ongoing series of exhibitions and seminars around the notion of *Histórias*, which in Portuguese encompasses fiction and non-fiction, historical accounts and personal ones – *Histórias da infância* [Histories of Childhood] in 2016, *Histórias afro-atlânticas* [Afro-Atlantic Histories] in 2018, among others. These exhibitions aim to go beyond the traditional modes of art history, placing artworks from different periods and genres into friction and dialogue, developing an approach that challenges boundaries and hierarchies between objects, their origins, categories and typologies.

Histórias da sexualidade is divided into different thematic sections, which include: the nude body, totemism and fertility, religion, gender performance and transsexuality, voyeurism, prostitution and the economy of sex, sexual games and plays, language, feminist and queer activisms, among others. The exhibition will include some 250 works from artists such as Edgard Degas, Édouard Manet, Suzanne Valadon, Pablo Picasso, Tarsila do Amaral, Larry Clark, Cildo Meireles, Louise Bourgeois and Ana Mendieta.

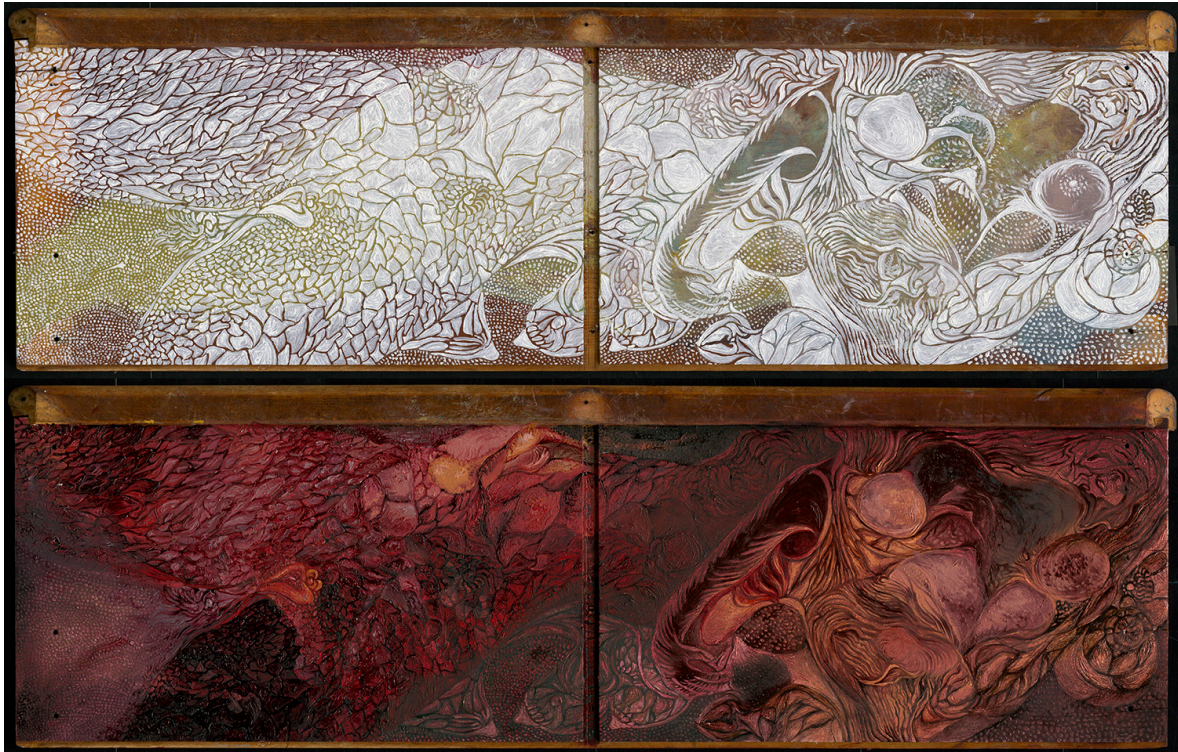
A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition and a separate volume will be published with key essays by experts in diverse fields such as art history, visual culture, gender studies among others.



Installation view of Iris Häussler at Museu de arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, 2017



Iris Häussler
The Sophie La Rosière Project: Chapter III



March 9 – April 29, 2017

The most appropriate artist for these times is an artist who doesn't exist at all.

- Caoimhe Morgan-Feir, *Canadian Art*

The Daniel Faria Gallery is proud to present the third installment (Chapter III) of Iris Häussler's most recent undertaking, *The Sophie La Rosière Project*. In Fall 2016, The Art Gallery of York University and Scrap Metal mounted two complimentary presentations of the project: the former was intimate and archival, while the latter was restrained and bordered on the forensic. In its third exhibition form, Häussler's project invites audiences to edge closer to Sophie La Rosière's work— to experience paintings, drawings and sculptures that have been dislodged from the fanciful artist's early twentieth century studio and released more openly, but thoughtfully, into the present.

For the last seven years, Häussler, vis-à-vis La Rosière, has been unfastening doors from their hinges— bedroom doors, wardrobe doors, cupboard doors and closet doors. She releases them from their function as safe-keeping devices, leaving in their absence a tangle of memories, longings and secrets that disperse into the world, now untangled and analyzed by art historians and psychoanalysts. Through her singular art-making process, Häussler reminds us that doors, too, absorb the histories they once guarded. Their layers of paint are bandages that conceal



the effects of time and use; they are discoloured, bruised, and punctured. In 2016, Häussler presented this pivotal series through x-ray scans that uncovered doors pregnant with art nouveau paintings buried beneath coats of black wax. For this exhibition, wax has been melted and stripped away from several of these works; viewers will come face to face with a bold and textured expressiveness that moves between love and loss.

The series may read as uncharacteristic for a German conceptual artist with formal training in sculpture, but, much like the Portuguese writer and poet Fernando Pessoa, Häussler gives fabled, historical artists literary and visual form, even if it means challenging her own artistic abilities and objectives. As she describes her first attempts at painting, Häussler notes, “My hands started to paint almost on their own. It was the strangest feeling, as if somebody else would lead my hands, not my body, not my mind. It resulted in what looked to me like a mixture of folk-art, art brut and art deco iconography—infused by symbolism and orientalism.” She continues, “I felt very embarrassed as I could not reference these things in my upbringing, my education or my artistic aspirations before. It felt as if I was a tool for someone else, not the master of my studio-practice.”

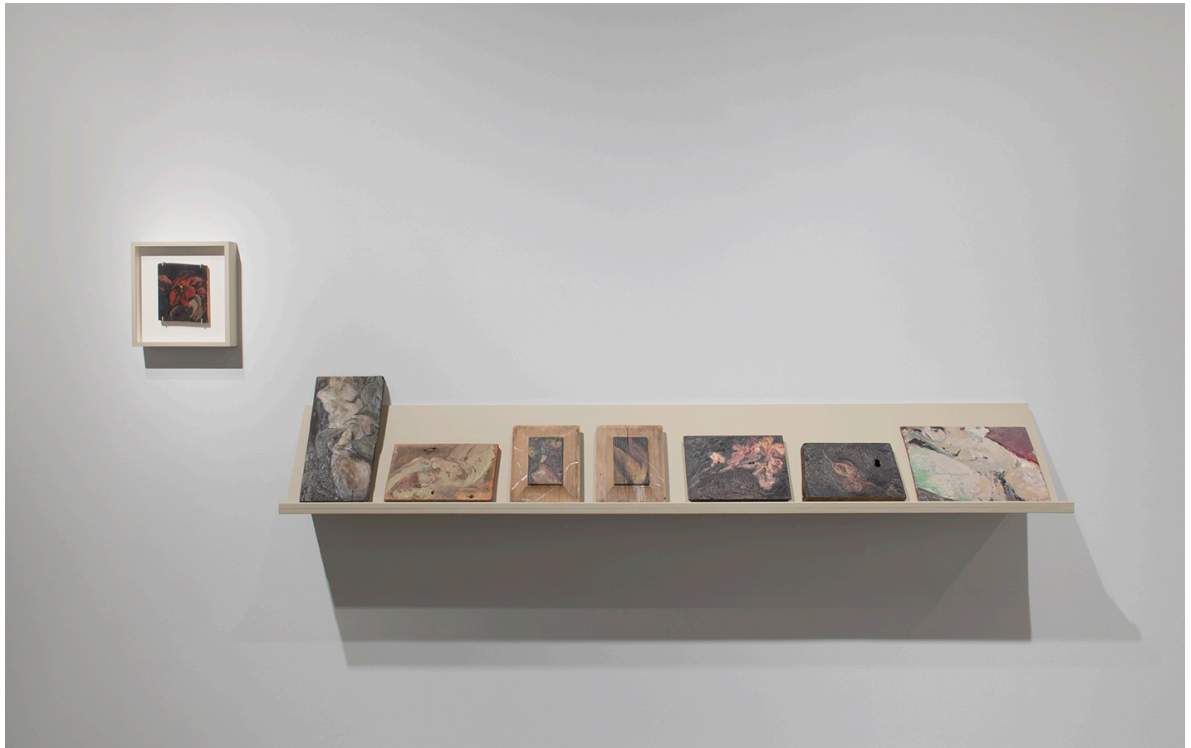
The paintings, some of which are now fully undressed, are seen as more gestural, corporeal, earthly and celestial than in their previously-seen x-ray form. Mixing her own paint, Häussler experiments with a diverse range of natural, readily available materials such as crushed dried flower petals, mineral grindings, dead ladybugs, and blood. This blend of ingredients carries over to the sensual images she has composed. Female bodies interlock. Seashells and flower-petals fly into orbit. Nerve systems sprout into spiraling ivy. Nipples bloom from breasts. Rivers flow from orifices. Wombs swell into oceans. Although seemingly out-of-step with previous projects, Häussler’s undertaking nonetheless renews and expands her roles as author, archeologist, and ethnographer. Guiding her practice is an acuteness similar to that which has characterized the legacies of outsiders Joseph Wagenbach, Mary O’ Shea and Ted Wilson. It is a willingness to listen carefully when those silenced, overlooked artists come out from behind their doors that confine them.

Informing her vocation as a contemporary artist is her interest in the loss of language and the obsessively, naively produced art objects that stand in for someone like Sophie La Rosière’s silence. How quickly something that provides security and protection, such as a door, a lover, or a father, can leave someone cold and scrounging for love. In our search to find stability, we may turn inwards, constructing a universe for ourselves with signs and symbols that only we understand, in the hope that we might once again feel armoured.

The *Sophie La Rosière Project* was created by Iris Häussler in 2009. It was undertaken with Catherine Sicot, Artistic Director of Elegoa Cultural Productions from 2013 to 2016. The AGYU exhibition was curated by Philip Monk and The Scrap Metal exhibition was curated by Rui Mateus Amaral.



Installation view of Iris Häussler “The Sophie La Rosière Project” at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2017





Installation view of Iris Häussler “The Sophie La Rosière Project” at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2017





Installation view of Iris Häussler “The Sophie La Rosière Project” at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2017



The Sophie La Rosière Project

Iris Häussler

How concrete everything becomes in the world of the spirit when an object, a mere door, can give images of hesitation, temptation, desire, security, welcome and respect. If one were to give an account of all the doors one has closed and opened, of all the doors one would like to re-open, one would have to tell the story of one's entire life.

-Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*

For the last 7 years, artist Iris Häussler has been unfastening doors from their hinges— bedroom doors, wardrobe doors, cupboard doors and closet doors. She releases them from their function as safe-keeping devices, leaving in their absence a tangle of memories, longings and secrets that disperse into the world. But Häussler reminds us that doors, too, absorb the histories they once guarded. Their layers of paint are bandages that conceal the effects of time and use; they are discoloured, bruised, and punctured. In her newest body of work, exhibited for the first time at Scrap Metal, Häussler presents a series of x-ray scans that uncover doors pregnant with expressionist paintings buried beneath coats of black wax.

The series may read as uncharacteristic for a German conceptual artist with formal training in sculpture, but, much like the Portuguese writer and poet Fernando Pessoa, Häussler gives fabled, historical artists literary and visual form, even if it means challenging her own artistic abilities and objectives. As she describes her first attempts at painting, Häussler notes, “My hands started to paint almost on their own. It was the strangest feeling, as if somebody else would lead my hands, not my body, not my mind. It resulted in what looked to me like a mixture of folk-art, art brut and art deco iconography—infused by symbolism and orientalism.” She continues, “I felt very embarrassed as I could not reference these things in my upbringing, my education or my artistic aspirations before. It felt as if I was a tool for someone else, not the master of my studio-practise.”

The paintings, accessible only through their scanned negatives, are gestural, corporeal, earthly and celestial. Mixing her own paint, Häussler experiments with a diverse range of natural, readily available materials such as crushed dried flower petals, mineral grindings, dead ladybugs, and blood. This blend of ingredients carries over to the sensual images she has composed. Female bodies interlock. Seashells and flower-petals fly into orbit. Nerve systems sprout into spiralling ivy. Nipples bloom from breasts. Rivers flow from orifices. Wombs swell into oceans. Although seemingly out-of-step with previous projects, Häussler's undertaking nonetheless renews and expands her roles as author, archeologist, and ethnographer. Guiding her practice is a sensitivity similar to that which has characterized the legacies of outsiders Joseph Wagenbach, Mary O Shea and Ted Wilson. It is a willingness to listen when those silenced, overlooked artists come out from behind their doors that confine them.

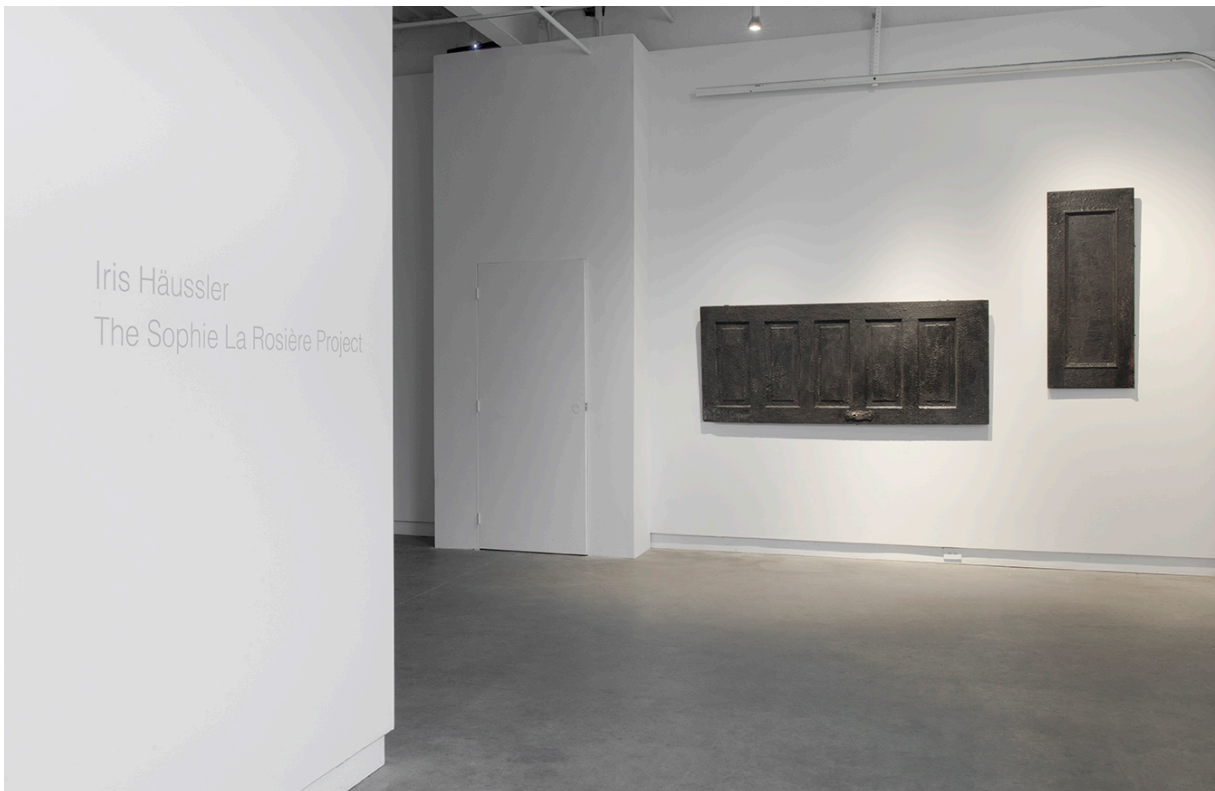
Since 2009, French artist Sophie La Rosière (1867-1948) has been reborn through Häussler's hands, as well through research and testimonies provided by a community of active curators, psychoanalysts, art historians, art conservators and gallerists. For the first time in Häussler's practice, one of her heteronyms unfolds through documentary-style videos, alongside a hyper-realistic reconstruction of La Rosière's domain, her artworks, drawings and writings. Working collaboratively with curator Catherine Sicot, Häussler documents interviews conducted by Sicot with scholars who each, by way of their own receptiveness and power, make room for La Rosière—shaping her life and enriching Häussler's impulses with meaning and authority. Häussler further includes thorough documentation of visits to late French artists' estates and national archives, lending to the project moments of stillness where history overwrites mythology and fact flirts with fiction.



Häussler's project owes much to the history of art, and in particular its French iterations. Still, that history—and La Rosière's place within it—is only one entryway into Häussler's undertaking. Informing her vocation as a contemporary artist is her interest in the loss of language and the obsessively, naively produced art objects that stand in for silence. How quickly something that provides security and protection, such as a door, a lover, or a father, can leave us cold and scrounging for love. In our search to find stability, we turn inwards, constructing universes for ourselves with signs and symbols that only we understand, in the hope that we might once again feel armoured.

-Rui Mateus Amaral, Director and Curator of Scrap Metal.

The Sophie La Rosière Project was undertaken by Iris Häussler in collaboration with Catherine Sicot, Director/Curator of Elegoa Cultural Productions.



Iris Häussler "The Sophie La Rosière Project" at Scrap Metal Gallery, Toronto, 2016



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Iris Häussler “The Sophie La Rosière Project” at Scrap Metal Gallery, Toronto, 2016





agYU

Iris Häussler. The Sophie La Rosière Project 14 September – 11 December 2016

Trained as a sculptor, since 2009 the German-born, Toronto-resident artist Iris Häussler has been painting. But not just any painting. It's been out of date for a hundred years! In fact (or is it fiction?), after teaching herself how to paint, Häussler has produced the complete oeuvre of unknown French artist Sophie La Rosière who died in 1948. In fact, Häussler has created an artistic persona (a heteronym) through which to channel this fictitious artist's secrets while, at the same time, fabricating a biography for her and an elaborate back story of a hidden erotic liaison that intersects, nonetheless, with real people, historical events, and actual artistic movements.

Häussler calls her project a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a total work of art—and it is more than all-consuming of the artist Iris Häussler herself, but a life work of Sophie La Rosière, too. The painting, though, is merely a kernel within the larger shell of La Rosière's life circumstances, which includes the recreation of her studio, its products and detritus, and also the elements of a forensic investigation that tries to answer the questions, after the paintings' discovery, of why these paintings were abandoned, why they were concealed by a layer of black encaustic, and, ultimately, what secrets do they conceal?

Häussler also calls her project a novel in three dimensions because the story unfolds over time and through its various material means—with surprising plot twists! Coincidentally, the story reveals itself tentatively over three different sites in Toronto. At the AGYU, La Rosière's mystery is encased in her abandoned studio with its encaustic-obscured paintings. At Scrap Metal (21 September – 17 December), the forensic investigation continues. The display there includes x-rays of paintings undertaken by the C2RMF laboratory (Centre de recherche et de restauration des musées de France), the official investigator in the project, as well as testimonies by and interviews with various French officials on the historical, artistic, and psychological circumstances of La Rosière's life. Finally, La Rosière's paintings are unveiled and their hidden subjects revealed in the restoration of the works exhibited at Daniel Faria Gallery, spring 2017.

The Sophie La Rosière Project was undertaken by Iris Häussler in collaboration with Catherine Sicot, Director/Curator of Elegoa Cultural Productions. The AGYU exhibition is curated by Philip Monk. The Scrap Metal exhibition is curated by Rui Mateus Amaral.







Installation view of Iris Häussler “The Sophie La Rosière Project” at Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, 2016



Iris Häussler
Ask the Frog

June 11 – August 15, 2015



In German-born, Toronto-based artist Iris Häussler's new solo exhibition *Ask the Frog*, the domestic becomes physically suspended in space and time, and overlooked elements shift between everyday life and poetic forms. Rather than weaving a narrative or becoming the vessel for artists such as Joseph Wagenbach, Ellen Stanley or Mary O'Shea (some of Häussler's most well-known heteronyms), Häussler's recently completed objects are a reflection of her conceptual experimentation with wax, prosaic remnants and space. This new body of work is abstract, yet familiar.

In Häussler's previous exhibition with the gallery, articles of women's clothing, both cherished or abandoned, were encased in wax slabs that were framed and placed on the wall. The artist's new wax sculptures combine curtains, bed sheets and blankets that Häussler has collected over the last thirty



years. They bear the traces of the many lives that have inhabited them. Set into wax slabs, these mundane surfaces lose their utilitarian function, but gain a lyrical dimension, becoming useful as metaphors for assurance, withdrawal and protection. Häussler heightens the feeling of domesticity and memory in the way that the fabrics, unlike the previous works, slip out and drape over the wax slabs, as if the viewer is encountering an unmade bed, or a washing machine that is spilling its load. These new sculptures are messy and lived in, as disorderly as they are graceful.

Häussler pushes the possibility of her wax forms by setting them off the wall, allowing them to fully inhabit the gallery space and be observed from various viewpoints. A few of Häussler's wax objects are dominated by the collected materials. Häussler extends these superfluous materials to the gallery's rafters where the sculptures become suspended and outstretched. For the most part, the wax in these suspended works hovers just above the ground. Placed throughout the gallery, the sculptures simulate architectural columns, forming an abstract path within the space. Viewers are invited to meander and to pause.

Receiving the viewer to the exhibition is Häussler's sculpture of a white male frog—an oracle-like figure that provides only hints and warnings in response to our questions about life. Häussler's frog resembles those charms and divine figures that pervade our homes. Much like her collected materials, the sculpture projects impressions of safekeeping, comfort and affirmation. The viewer is invited to inquire with the frog, shuffle his deck of cards and choose one as a response. Both front and back of the cards offer viewers an answer, one that may be meaningful in that moment or reveal its meaning over time. Spanning numerous cards, the replies range from precise to ambiguous and from humorous to burdening, echoing the uncertainty of our lives.

It is this notion of questioning, but never fully knowing, that interests Häussler – the ambiguities of life reflected in the way the wax holds and lets go of form and information, while the frog provides us with no definitive answers.







Installation view of Iris Häussler “Ask the Frog” at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2015



Iris Häussler

Also Known As...

April 3 – May 11, 2013



Photo taken by John Burnett, 2011

It might look like I am crafting and employing my characters, however, I experience it as these people coming into my life and making me their servant. When they leave, it might be a relief or feel like losing a dear friend. Some, like Joseph stay for years. – Iris Häussler

The Daniel Faria Gallery is pleased to present *Also Known As...*, an exhibition featuring the work of Iris Häussler.

Also Known As... continues Häussler's examination of the themes of authorship and hidden identity, a core characteristic of her practice, in the form of sculptures, objects, drawings and concepts.



Häussler invites viewers to examine works "created" by her fictional characters as works of her own. Placed on pedestals and set in vitrines, each object unfolds its sculptural qualities within the pristine setting of the white cube, asking for nothing more than the viewer's curiosity. Upon second reading, however, the exhibition becomes much more complex: it becomes a group show where Häussler exhibits alongside Mary O'Shea (2008-2010 Art Gallery of Ontario's exhibition *He Named Her Amber*) Ted Wilson (2012 Sydney Biennale) and Joseph Wagenbach (2006). As diverse as all the works appear, they are interconnected by a layer that is beyond the visible.

Throughout her 30-year career, Häussler has obsessively encased objects in wax. The exhibition features a selection of these wax works, which feel like frozen moments in time, and bring together processes and properties of sculpture, painting and photography. Some deal with familial relationships or an individual's relationship to a familiar space. The act of embedding someone's personal objects into wax, whether these articles were cherished or abandoned, parallels the photographer's act of capturing a moment in time, thus producing an object that ignites a sense of memory, time and place for the viewer.

The show also includes an artifact that forms the core of a 150-year-old story – a piece of jewelry that marked a key moment in someone's first encounter with romantic love, a chimera sculpture symbolizing a man's never resolved inner trauma.

Iris Häussler was born in Friedrichshafen, Germany, and has been living and working in Toronto, Canada since 2001. Häussler's work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions in international museums and institutions. Recently, she presented a solo project for the 18th Biennale of Sydney, Australia. Her work has been exhibited in numerous group shows, some of which include; *More Real? Art in the Age of Truthiness*, SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico and opening at the Minneapolis Museum of Arts, Minnesota; *Museum for the End of the World*, Nuit Blanche, Toronto. Häussler's works are part of the Art Gallery of Ontario's permanent collection, as well as European collections: Sammlung Goetz Collection (Munich) and the Lenbachhaus Collection (Munich).



Iris Häussler “Also Known As...” at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2013

A Selection of Sketchbooks Dating from 1984 – 2013

Ink, pencil, watercolor, pen, stamp-ink, oil-paint, chalk, acrylic, tape, masking-tape, vellum, mylar, cardboard, plant-residues, pressed insects, soil, sand, clay, iron-oxide, powered lead, wine, cognac, chain-oil, mold-release, hair-spray, human-blood, animal-blood, human ear-wax, animal-ear-wax, bees-wax, human-milk, butter, goose-grease, olive-oil, cacao-powder, coffee, tea, plant-sap, flour, body-lotion, medical remedies, aluminum-foil, wrapping-paper, news-paper-clippings, foot-prints, finger-nail-clippings, umbilical-cord, photocopies, tar, clue, dust, lint, fabric, silk, carpet, foam, vinyl, burlap, gasoline, paraffin, soap, make-up, baby-powder, bandage, leather, chewing-gum, saliva, human skin, bird-feathers, animal-fur, fish-bone, stamps, wood-stain, varnish, latex-paint, gesso, spray-paint, cement-powder, marble-dust, plaster and other non-recallable materials.



Ou Topos (concept drawing), 2012

Pencil, ink-pen, stamp, spay-paint, masking tape, photocopies, watercolor on vellum and paper
37.5" x 47"



Lost Gaze, 1999
Abandoned
curtain, candle
wax, mounted on
wood, encased
in plexi
46.5" x 27.25"



Iris Häussler at Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, 2013



He Named Her Amber (2008-10)





Relic-objects from “The Hidden Chamber” and “Dr. Lee’s Office”, 2008
Beeswax, wax, metal, burlap, fabric, cotton-string, vintage-dust, clay, cat-claws, baby-teeth, plant-seeds, shells, plaster, soil, wasp-nest, wood, soap and other undetermined materials
14” x 48” x 10.5”



Interpretive Drawing of the Amber-cone, 2008/2013
Ink-pen, pencil, post-it and paper on vellum
37.37" x 25.5"



F O U N D A T I O N
J O S E P H W A G E N B A C H
F O U N D A T I O N

Original Sculptures from “The Legacy of Joseph Wagenbach”



Male Torso; JW-06-#82, 2006
Mixed media on wooden plinth ;
48 x 36 x 176 cm (19" x 14" x 69")





Chimera; JW-06-#077, 2006
Bronze
4" x 3" x 22"



Leaning; JW-06-#017, 2006
Bronze
6" x 7" x 61"



Female Torso; JW-06-#81; 2006
Mixed media on wooden plinth;



30 x 35 x 155 cm (12" x 14" x 61")
Prototypes of Obsessions
(He Dreamed Overtime, Sydney 2012)





Heart, 2011
Beeswax, plant residues, sand; metal
x-ray, vellum, masking-tape, ink, pencil, photocopy, paper
Light box: 18.5" x 24.5" x 2.5"
Plinth: 10" x 10" x 4"



Arm, 2011
Beeswax, linen, burlap string, metal
x-ray, vellum, masking-tape, ink, pencil, photocopy, paper
Light box: 18.5" x 24.5" x 2.5"
Plinth 18" x 9.5" x 4"



AGO
Art Gallery of Ontario



Untitled, 2011
Beeswax, plant residues, sand
56" x 24" x 24"



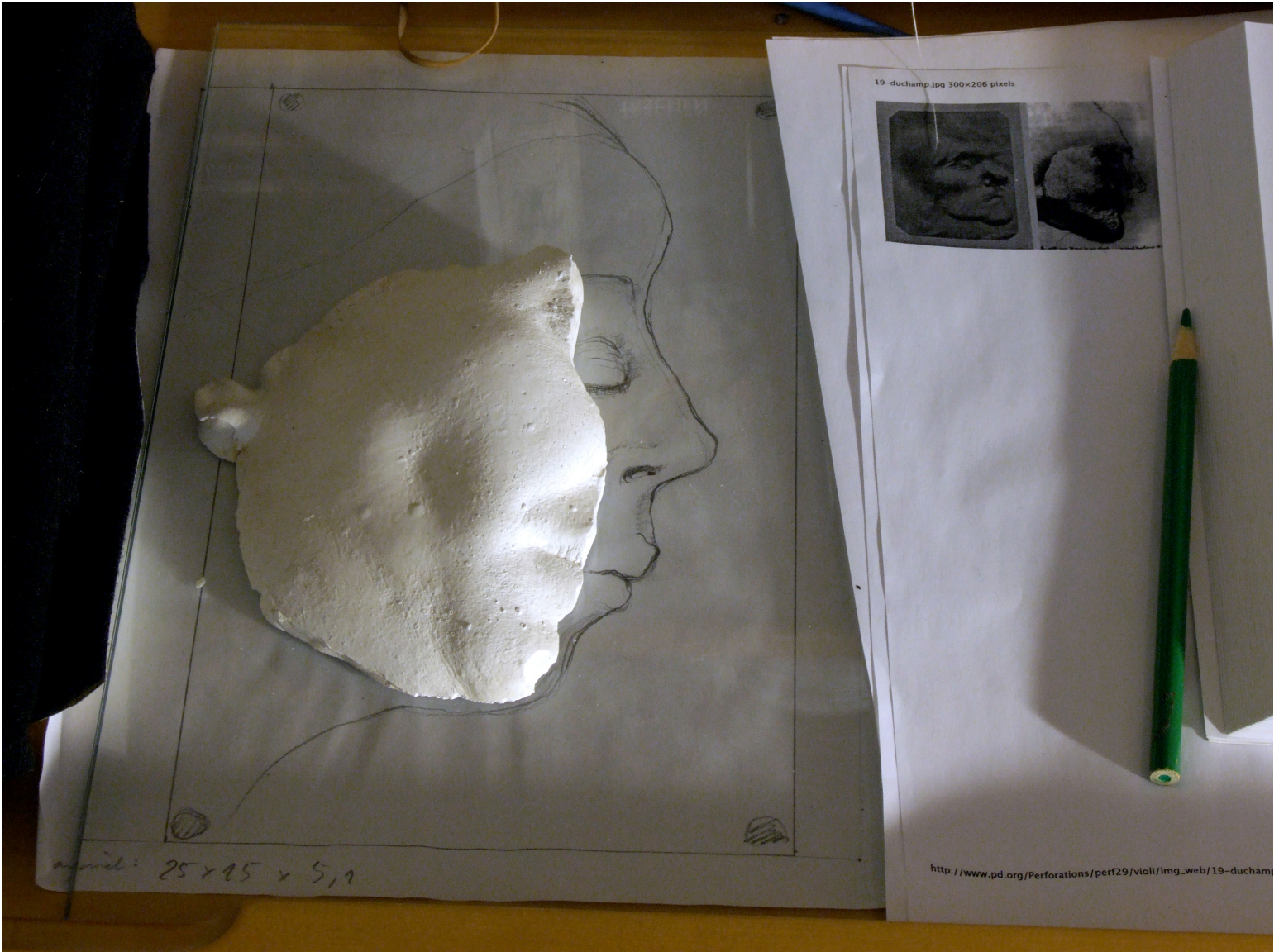
IRIS HÄUSSLER: HE NAMED HER AMBER

2007 – 2008



In 2007 Iris Häussler was invited to create a work for the inauguration of the newly transformed Art Gallery of Ontario. She proposed an elaborate in situ piece entitled 'He Named her Amber' to be located in [The Grange](#), a 19th century mansion now part of the Gallery. Häussler presented a complex narrative around a young Irish woman who had worked as a maid at the Grange. Mysteriously bequeathed papers revealed that Mary O'Shea had over the years hidden objects and documents in and around the house. Subsequently, [Archaeological Services Ontario \(ASO\)](#) found a veritable Pandora's box of items and, since opening in 2008, thousands of visitors have toured the site. Only after the event did the artist and the Gallery reveal to the world that 'He Named Her Amber' was a commissioned work of art and not an historical find.





Iris Häussler "He Named Her Amber" at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 2007



Iris Häussler "He Named Her Amber" at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 2007



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F O U N D A T I O N
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O N N I J I L S

Site of Discovery

The Home and Neighbourhood of Joseph Wagenbach

In July 2006, neighbours of 105 Robinson Street, Toronto, call the authorities when they notice that their old neighbor doesn't pull his garbage to the curb as he had done reliably for the last 40 years. The small house just off Queen Street West is opened, and the man who had suffered a stroke is saved.

Following the procedures of deciding his future and finding some next of kin, the “Municipal Archives” step in to assess the house and its contents. First, they encounter: stale air. Dim light filtering through layers of newsprint that obscure the windows. A sofa emerges, a phone, newspapers, books, medication, a TV, a radio, collections of aged photographs,.. . A narrow path through household clutter ends at an armchair before a wood stove. Beside it, a sectioned column transpierces the house, anchored in a kind of cellar-space and punctures the ceiling into the attic.

One is reminded of Constantin Brancusi's “Endless Column”. And sculptures everywhere: emerging from the walls, stacked on racks and rising from pedestals everywhere, the small rooms are packed with a veritable pandemonium of amorphous, organic forms. Greyish layers of wax sculpt human and animal chimeras; one can identify rabbits, doll fragments, human figures in parts and studies. They fill the shelves, emerge from the walls, huddle in corners.

Who was the man who lived here? What caused him to transform his space in this obsessive, consuming manner? A derelict coffee-cup seems to have dried out just a moment ago. One brushes



against hanging figures that block the passage, or squeezes past bulging coats in a claustrophobic hallway. Classical nudes co-habit with constructivist cylinders. Stacks of sketches adjoin splashed traces of vivid, physical labour. Many objects evoke an impression of art as the principal outlet for some unspeakable personal history.

Does Wagenbach's work display a lifetime of a kind of search for resolution, if not absolution?



Iris Häussler “Joseph Wagenbach” at 105 Robinson Street, Toronto, 2006



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Iris Häussler “Joseph Wagenbach” at 105 Robinson Street, Toronto, 2006



Iris Häussler

Born in Friedrichshafen, Bodensee, Germany, lives in Toronto, Canada
1983/90 Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Germany

Representations

Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
PSM Gallery, Berlin, Germany

Solo Shows (selection)

- 2020 *Prototypes for Dirty Laundry*. Curated by Angela Brayham. Gallery Stratford. Ontario, Canada
- 2019 *Apartment 5*. Curated by Sally Tallant. Platform at the Armory Show 2019, New York
USA
The Sophie La Rosière Project. Curated by Sabine Schmidt. PSM Gallery, Berlin, Germany
Lost Gazes. Curated by Daniel Faria. Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2018/19 *Apartment 4*. John Michael Kohler Arts Center. Curated by Karen Patterson. In collaboration with the Chipstone Foundation, Wisconsin, USA
- 2018 *Tale of Two*. Curated by Karen Patterson & Faythe Levine. John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, USA
- 2017 *The Sophie La Rosière Project, Chapter III*. Curated by Daniel Faria. Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2016 *The Sophie La Rosière Project, Chapter II*. Curated by Rui Mateus Amaral. Scrap Metal
Gallery, Toronto, Canada
The Sophie La Rosière Project, Chapter I. Curated by Philip Monk. Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, Canada
- 2015 *Ask The Frog*. Gallery Daniel Faria, Toronto, Canada
- 2013 *Also Known As*. Gallery Daniel Faria, Toronto, Canada
- 2008/10 *He Named Her Amber*. Curated by David Moos. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada
- 2009 *Honest Threads*. Curated by Mona Filip. Off-site Project with The Koffler Centre for the Arts. Toronto, Canada
- 2006 *The Legacy of Joseph Wagenbach*. Curated by Rhonda Corvese. Off-site Project, Toronto, Canada
The Legacy. Curated by Doina Popescu. Goethe Institut Toronto, Canada
- 2003 *Zeit und Wieder*. Gallery Huber/Goueffon, Munich, Germany
- 2001 *Das geheime Leben des Wachstischtuchs*. ISART Gallery, Munich, Germany



- 2000 *Monopati*. Two part off-site project. Tucholskystr. 38, Berlin, und Hans-Sachs-Str. 5, Munich, Germany
Paulina, Versuch einer Erinnerung. Curated by Dorothee Opitz-Hoffmann. Opitz-Hoffmann Collection Bonn, Germany
Die Hand traut ihren Augen (Sketchbooks 1986-1999). City Hall Gallery of the City of Brühl, Germany
Xenotope und verlorene Blicke. Curated by Andrea Hofmann. Kunstverein Friedrichshafen, Germany
- 1999 *Liegt in der Familie*. ISART Gallery, Munich, Germany
You don't return from the place that doesn't exist. Hotel Franziskaner & Theater Neumarkt, Zürich, Switzerland
- 1998 *Verdeckte Nähte*. Curated by Axel Jablonski. Ausstellungsraum Balanstraße, Munich, Germany
- 1997 *Vertrauenssache*. Curated by Annelie Pohlen. Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany
Blind Date (with Maria Lindberg). Curated by Susanne Gaensheimer & Maria Lindt. IASPIS, Royal Academy of Arts, Stockholm, Sweden
- 1996 *Mneme*. Off-site project. Adlzreiterstr. 14, Munich, Germany
- 1995 *Erste Hilfe*. Insertive project. Kunstverein Hannover, Germany
Leihgaben. Curated by Thomas Kumlehn. Förderverein für instabile Medien, Galerie im Staudenhof, Potsdam, Germany
Wachswäschen. Gallery Klaus Fischer, Berlin, Germany
Huckepack. Hotel Leipziger Hof, Leipzig, Germany
- 1994 *Paidi*. Curated by Christiane Meyer Stoll & Martina Fuchs. Kunstraum München e.V., Munich, Germany
- 1993 *Pro Polis*. Insert-project. Hotel Gritti, Milano, Italy
- 1990 *Ou Topos - eine synthetische Erinnerung*. Off-site project. Kazmairstr. 37 Rgb. Munich, Germany
- 1989 *Ou Topos - eine synthetische Erinnerung*. Off-site project. Herbststr. 105/5/9, Vienna, Austria

Group Shows (selection)

- 2020 *Unwashed/Ungewaschen*. A collaborative project initiated and curated by Iris Häussler in collaboration with Matthew Varey and his students of the Etobicoke School of the Arts, Toronto, and Stefan Mayer and his students of the Markgräfin Wilhelmine Gymnasium, Bayreuth, Germany.
- 2017/18 *Historias Da Sexualidade*. Curated by Adriano Pedrosa. Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil
All The Names. Curated by Rui Mateus Amaral. Scrap Metal Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2017 *Art Encounters On The Edge* - Curated by Catherine Beaudette & Patricia Grattan. Bonavista Biennale, Newfoundland, Canada



- Jed Martin - Die Karte ist interessanter als das Gebiet.* Curated by Bettina Steinbrügge. Kunstverein in Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
- 2016 *Groupe Mobile: retracer la vie sociale des oeuvres par la photography.* Curated by Melanie Bouteloup. Villa Vassilieff, Paris, France
- 2015 *Somebody Everybody Nobody.* Curated by Rui Mateus Amaral. Scrap Metal Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2014 *Kunst Oberschwaben 20. Jahrhundert: 1970 bis heute.* Curated by Stephanie Dathe. Museum Villa Rot, Burgrieden, Germany
- Casting the Negative.* Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2013 *More Real, Art in the Age of Truthiness.* Curated by Elizabeth Armstrong. Minneapolis
Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, USA
- Family Ties.* Daniel Faria Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- 2012 *All Our Relations, 18.* Biennale of Sydney. Curated by Catherine De Zegher & Gerald McMaster. Sydney, Australia
- More Real, Art in the Age of Truthiness.* Curated by Elizabeth Armstrong. Site Santa Fe, Santa Fe, USA
- The Museum of The End of The World, Nuit Blanche.* Curated by Janine Marchessault and Michael Prokopow. Toronto, Canada
- 2011 *Thin Ice: Journeys in Polar Regions.* Curated by Courtney Gilbert. Sun Valley Art Centre, Idaho, USA
- Breaking and Entering.* Curated by Bridget Elliott & Anthony Purdy. ArtLab, The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada
- 2004/05 *Zeitzone der Welt. III.* Triennale zeitgenössischer Kunst Oberschwaben, Weingarten, Germany
- 2000 *City-Index.* Curated by Harald Kunde. KunstHaus Dresden and Hotel Martha, Dresden, Germany
- Art Goes Science.* Gasteig Cultural Centre, Munich, Germany
- 1999 *Czasowo Otwarte.* Curated by Thomas Kumlehn. Slubice, Poland and Frankfurt/Oder, Germany
- 1998/99 *Vollkommen gewöhnlich.* Curated by Annelie Pohlen. Kunstverein Freiburg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Kunsthalle zu Kiel, Kunstsammlung Gera, Germany
- 1998 *Stillehalten.* Curated By Christiane Meyer Stoll. Künstlerwerkstatt Lothringerstraße, Munich, Germany
- 1996 *Encircled Area.* Curated by Hilke Möller. Municipal Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1994 *0,073 ha Welt.* Curated by Annette Schindler. Kunsthaus Glarus, Glarus, Switzerland
- RENTA Prize 94.* Norishalle, Nürnberg, Germany



- Leerstand*. Curated By Harald Kunde & Klaus Werner. Lessingstr. 23, Leipzig, Germany
- 1993/94 *Z.B. Skulptur, ars viva 93/94*. Staatliches Museum Schloss Schwerin; Kunstverein Hannover; Bonner Kunstverein; Kloster Unser Lieben Frauen, Magdeburg, Germany
- 1992 *Magia Naturalis*. Curated by Helmut Friedel. House of the Stone Bell, Prague, Czech Republic
- 1991 *Milano Poesia 91*. Curated by Gianni Sassi. Spazio Ansaldo, Milano, Italy
- 1988 *Forum Junge Kunst*. Kunsthalle Baden-Baden & Kunstverein Stuttgart, Germany

Residencies (selection)

- 2016 Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques, Nogent-sur-Marne, France
- 2014 Louis Odette Sculpture in Residence, York University, Toronto, Canada
- 2012 Sydney College of the Arts, Sydney, Australia
- 2010 Cape Farewell participation in their 9th expedition to the High Arctic, Svalbard, Norway

Scholarships & Awards (selection)

- Canada Council for the Arts: 2019, 2015, 2012, 2008, 2007, 2006
- Chalmers Arts Fellowship, Canada: 2018
- Ontario Arts Council: 2014, 2011, 2010, 2005
- Toronto Arts Council: 2020, 2009, 2005
- Anna and Joseph Fassbender Prize, Brühl, Germany: 2000
- Karl-Hofer Prize, Berlin, Germany: 1999
- Stipend of the Kunstfonds e.V., Bonn: 1994
- Gisela and Erwin von Steiner Foundation, Munich: 1993
- Ars Viva Prize of the Cultural Circle of the Federal Association of the German Industry (BDI): 1993
- Stipend of the State of Bavaria University Program: 1993
- City of Munich Arts Prize Emerging Artists: 1991
- German National Studies Endowment: 1986-89

Art in Public Space invited competitions (selection)

- 2013/14 Gedenkort für Deserteure und Andere Opfer der NS-Militärjustiz, Hamburg, Germany
- 2004 Jewish Museum, Munich, Germany
- 2003/05 Rahlstetter Höhe, Hamburg, Germany (1. Prize)
- 2003 Kindergarten Aschenbrennerstrasse, Munich, Germany (realized 2003)
- 1999 Municipal Department of Refugee and Housing Affairs, Munich, Germany

Works in public collections (selection)

- National Gallery of Canada
- Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada



Städtische Sammlung im Lenbachhaus, Munich, Germany
Goetz Collection, Munich, Germany
Collection Opitz-Hoffmann, Bonn, Germany

Solo Catalogues

- 2018 *The Sophie La Rosiere Project*. Monk, Philip. Ed. Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, Canada
- 2011 *He Named Her Amber*. Moos, David. ed. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada
- 2001 *Ich war's nicht - It wasn't me*. Iris Häussler, works 1989 - 2001. Ed. Martina Fuchs. Isart Gallery, Munich, Germany
- 1999 *Du kehrst nicht zurück von dem Ort den es nicht gibt*. Fuchs, Martina, ed. Zürich, Theater am Neumarkt.
- 1998 *Blind Date* (with Maria Lindberg). Pub. IASPIS, Konstakademien Stockholm. Susanne Gaensheimer & Maria Lind. Stockholm, Sweden & Munich, Germany
- 1996 *Leihgaben*. Kumlehn, Thomas, ed.: Förderverein für instabile Medien. Potsdam, Germany
- 1995 *Huckepack*. Werner, Klaus, ed. Förderkreis der Leipziger Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst. Leipzig, Germany
- 1994 *Paidi*. Pub. Martina Fuchs and Christiane Meyer-Stoll, Kunstraum München e.V. München.
- 1993 *Pro Polis*. Pub. Goethe Institut Mailand and Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, München/Mailand. Text: Lucia Matina, Christiane Meyer-Stoll
- 1991 *Ou Topos – eine synthetische Erinnerung*. Pub.: Kulturreferat der Landeshauptstadt München, Text: Christiane Meyer-Stoll. München, Germany
- 1989 *Ou Topos – eine synthetische Erinnerung*. Schmied, Wieland, ed.: Volksbildungswerk der Stadt Wien, Vienna, Austria

Monographs

- 2019 *This Is Not A Hoax*. Unsettling Truth in Canadian Culture. Jessup, Heather. Wilfried Laurier University Press, Canada
- 2016 *Iris Häussler. An investigative photo-documentary*. Perceval, Sophie & Walker, Ryan. Wondereur. October 2017 (online)
- 2008 *Opening Gambits*. By Mark Kingwell. Essays on Art and Philosophy pp. 124-132. Key-Porter, Toronto.
- 1999 *Die Spur des Gastes*. By Cornelia Gockel, Kunstforum International 146: pp. 274-283, Germany



Group Catalogues (selection)

- 2018 *Historias Da Sexualidade*. Exhibition-catalogue. Pub. Museu de Arte de Sao Paulo. Assis Chateaubriand, Brazil
Art Encounters On The Edge - Exhibition-catalogue; Bonavista Biennale, Newfoundland, Canada
- 2017 *Jed Martin - die Karte ist interessanter als das Gebiet*. Pub. Kunstverein Hamburg, Germany
- 2016 *Iris Häussler/Le Projet Sophie La Rosière*. Villa Vassiliev Mini Publications
- 2015 *Breaking and Entering*. Ed. Bridget Elliott. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, Canada
- 2014 *Kunst Oberschwaben 20. Jahrhundert , 1970 bis heute*. De. Martin Oswald, Heiderose
Langer, Stefanie Datte. Kunstverlag Joseph Fink, Lindenberg im Allgäu, Germany.
The Worn Archive. Ed. Serah-Marie MCMahon, Drawn and Quarterly, Montreal, Canada
- 2012 *All Our Relations*. 18. Biennale of Sydney exhibition-catalogue, Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
More Real, exhibition catalogue, by Elizabeth Armstrong eds., Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, USA
- 2011 *Losing Site: Architecture, Memory and Place*. Ashgate Studies in Architecture. By Shelley Hornstein. Farnham, UK.
- 2005 *Faktor X. Zeitgenössische Kunst in München*. Siemens Art Program, Munich, Germany
- 2004 *Zeitzone. III. Triennale zeitgenössischer Kunst Oberschwaben, Weingarten 2004*. Revolver Verlag, Berlin, Germany
Kunst-Architektur-Bauhütte. Stadteilerneuerungsarbeit im Hasenberg. Ed. Keller, Christoph and Peter Ottman. Munich, Germany
Stille Halten. Ed. Meyer-Stoll, Christiane and Axel Jablonski. München: Künstlerwerkstatt Lothringerstraße, Munich, Germany
- 2001 *Hand-Medium-Körper-Technik*. Thealit.Frauen.Kultur.Labor. Bremen, Germany
- 2000 *City Index*. Ed. Harald Kunde. Kunsthaus Dresden, Dresden, Germany
- 1999 *Czasowo otwarte / Zeitweise öffentlich*. Słubice. Frankfurter Kunstverein. Frankfurt (Oder), Germany
Malsch. Ed Michael Wesely. Walter Storms Verlag. Munich, Germany
- 1998 *Vollkommen gewöhnlich*. Kunstfonds e.V., Bonn, Germany
- 1997 *Vertrauenssache*. Ed. Pohlen, Annelie. Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany
- 1996 *Encircled Area*. Ed. Möller, Hilke. Städtische Galerie Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia
- 1995 *Max-Pechstein Förderpreis 1995*. Ed. Petra Lewey. Städtisches Museum Zwickau,



- Zwickau, Germany
- 1994 *0,073 ha Welt*. Ed. Annette Schindler and Marietta Schürholz. Kunsthaus Glarus, Glarus, Switzerland
- 1993 *Ars Viva 1993/94*, z.B. skulptur. Köln: Kulturkreis der deutschen Wirtschaft im Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie, Cologne, Germany
- 1992 *Magia Naturalis*. Ed. Friedel, Helmut, ed. Gallery of the City of Prague /Kulturreferat
der Landeshauptstadt München. Munich, Germany