

SYMPTOM : BAROQUE



EUTIN CASTLE IN THE BAROQUE ERA

Special exhibition opens on 9 June 2023

The splendidly furnished baroque residence of Schloss Eutin in Schleswig-Holstein is to be experienced in a completely new way in summer 2023. Four contemporary artists want to dedicate themselves to the "Symptom:Baroque" with interventions in the historic castle tour.

Margret Eicher, Simone Demandt, Rebecca Stevenson and Myriam Thyes are fascinated by the furnishings and the collection of the baroque residence. For several years now, the artists have been exploring the thematic repertoire and aesthetics of Baroque, which they see reflected in world political as well as cultural phenomena: Ruptures in social cohesion, the friction between rationality and highly individualistic beliefs, end time fantasies. They shaped the Baroque and continue to shape our everyday lives today. In Eutin Castle, the architecture and furnishings, the dreams and the reality of Baroque are still present today. They trigger clear emotions in visitors, and yet the level of meaning often remains buried. After centuries, images and signs are not immediately comprehensible.

In the context of the fully furnished castle museum, it is particularly appealing that the four artists work in completely different media. In the sense of the baroque principle of "curiositas", this results in references between historical and contemporary works that are as diverse as they are varied: Sometimes their affinity lies in the material, sometimes in the theme, sometimes it is purely conceptual. The visitors can find their access on the level of sensual-aesthetic enjoyment, but they are also stimulated again and again to question the works of art and to re-read their artistic or also political and social positions.

Margret Eicher's media tapestries establish an exciting and unmasking dialogue with the Eutin tapestries of the 17th century. Not only is the pictorial power of the mass media explicitly demonstrated here, but Eicher's tapestries, elaborately digitally collaged and computer-assisted woven, also make the baroque textiles miraculously legible again. Power-political demonstration and the manifestation of political and ideological convictions become visible in today as in yesterday.

Simone Demandt's object photography denies preservation, safeguarding or the call to affirmative recognition. It questions, unsettles, evokes the magical or the groundless. When, for example, her photographs of fragmented hands and feet of baroque sculptures join the portrait paintings of the castle, the imperious representation of the ruler suddenly changes its expression – the question of humanity becomes possible.

As a sculptor, Rebecca Stevenson works mainly with wax. Her technique refers back to baroque wax sculptures, but at first also reminds us of the shiny perfect imagery of social media: smooth skin, bright colours, shiny surfaces characterise her still lifes composed from dead venison and fresh fruits. But the works are cut open or even torn open. Succulent roses and fruits emerge from the openings. Pleasure and

disturbance arise simultaneously in these virulently modern Mementi Mori, which are intended to have their effect in the historic kitchens and dining rooms of Eutin Castle.

Today's media landscape also benefits from the psychological and social potency of political and religious symbolism of Baroque. Myriam Thyes addresses this in her video works and photographs. For the baroque stucco ceilings of Eutin Castle, for example, she wants to develop various of her works and both exhibit and confront the preconceived Christian and Eurocentric perspective of the builders, the former inhabitants and today's viewers with their own limitations.

In close cooperation with the artists, Eutin Castle opens itself up in the telling of its history and gives space to alternative forms of interpretation. Fundamental to this is the accompaniment of the exhibition by intensive educational and mediation work, both analogue and digital.

The exhibition Symptom:Baroque will open on Friday, June 9th 2023 at 6 pm and will last until Sunday, October 8th 2023.

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