



**SONJA SCHRADER**

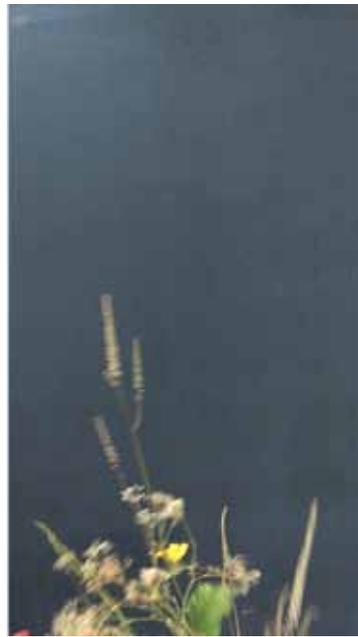
**Series of works, TS - Technical Support 2013-2020**



**/Kla'keur/ 2020**

Installation View, Collaboration with Konrad Mühe, CIAT, Berlin, Oktober 2020





HD, 9:16, loop







**Holding Device 1-4, Körper ohne Augen 2** 2020  
Installation View, CIAT, Berlin, Oktober 2020



**Körper ohne Augen, Nasen, Zähne, Vase 5** 2020  
Instalation view, CIAT, Berlin, Oktober 2020



Studio view

**I lost my ear somewhere** 2019, stucco marble, broken pieces, variety of sizes

**Text excerpt by Anna Redeker /kla'keur/ Sonja Schrader & Konrad Mühe**

CIAT, Berlin, Oktober 2020

(...) Starting from her preoccupation with aesthetic support and carrier objects in stone sculpture, whose function lies solely in holding an artistic composition, Sonja Schrader creates amorphous-convex objects reminiscent of vessels and fragile drawings. For her objects Schrader uses the fragments of old flower vases, which she then sculpturally expands associatively with colored stucco marble. The organically rounded forms and the interplay of surfaces convey haptic quality and an energetic presence of their own. Conversely, the vase objects created from the former molds of earlier works unfold their aesthetic quality on the inside: Rough and purposeful on the outside, the interior walls of the vessels reveal themselves bathed in smooth, shiny colored glazes. The vase objects articulate an interplay between the function of a form and its transformation: as a support object for the bouquet, it has lost its function, but the claim to an autonomous aesthetic function persists. However, the bouquet as an experience of nature composed for the interior, which, literally detached, symbolizes both life in its beauty and its transience, can hardly be placed without the vase - an aesthetic alliance with unclear attributions is created. The motif of cultivated nature is also taken up in Sonja Schrader's works on paper: Exact plant drawings, reminiscent of scientific studies, together with organ-like, delicate monochrome color surfaces form the background for a rectangular form, which with its rounded corners immediately brings to mind the display of a smartphone. The empty space that appears in the unprocessed surface of the display is filled in the form of the plants with reflections on processes of establishing, depicting, and preserving things and moments that are considered decisive for our respective understanding of identity.

The video work, which is part of the titular video sculpture created jointly by Konrad Mühe and Sonja Schrader, also deals with the motif of nature as an expression and contradiction of culture in connection with a blank space: various, carefully arranged bouquets of flowers rotate in front of monochrome luminous wall surfaces adapted to the aesthetics of the respective bouquet. Suddenly, the flowers collapse. The vessel as the supporting element of the bouquet and the pictorial composition, in which the beauty of nature is both celebrated and exposed to decay, suddenly takes on a supporting significance. The sculptural support structure for the video projector now proves to be a substitute for the missing vase: this is held by a metal shelf warped into an unstable structure, whose wobbly struts are supported by abstract, plant-like formations made of stucco marble. The bulges sprouting from the floor reconnect with the video in their organic appearance, resulting in a constant oscillation between formal and content attributes. (...)





**Follis, No. 1 - No.3** 2020, pencil and coloured pencil on paper, ca. 40 cm x 69 cm



**“Who killed the dog?“, sagte sie. 2018**

Instalation view, Kunstverein Die Brücke e.V., Klein Machnow, September 2018

The 2018 variation from the series TS, Technische Stützen (Technical Supports), which in its origin refers to a technical aid from stone sculpture applied to the equestrian monument of Frederick II in Sanssoucis, expands the field of interpretation by adding further artistic means, such as drawing and photography. The already set vocabulary „from aid to autonomous object“, which underpins the work The Secret Garden, is enriched: The naturalistic drawing, Cicuta virosa No.1, of the poisonous plant known from philosophy sets the frame for the general body and mind theme, whereas the photograph of the hairy leg, Billy, primarily raises questions about social nominatives. The spatial setting and formal overlaps set the signs vibrating, resulting in something unspoken in space, reinforced by the title „Who killed the dog?! she said. which suggests a narrative but remains a mystery.

**Billy** 2018, 70 x105 cm, Fine Art Print



**The Secret Garden** 2018, plaster, concrete





**Pferdefuss** 2018, 14 x 27 x 24 cm,  
metall, porcellan, acrylic glass  
30 x 80 x 125 cm, body of acrylic glass



**Haufen** 2018, 8 x 13 x 18 x 21 cm,  
Porcellan



*Cicuta virosa*, ungefährdet (Hemlock - not endangered), No. 1 - No.5 2018, pencil on paper ca. 40 cm x 69 cm





## Technische Stützen

Zeiss-Grossraumplanetarium, Berlin/ Ausstellungsansicht „Staging Distance“/ August 2018

### Technical Supports—Sculpture between Tradition and Consumption, Dr. Joachim Penzel Technical Supports

Within the sculptural and plastic arts, the imitation of nature (mimesis) and its transcendence through idealization, expressivity, and fiction serve as the foundation for technique. Nowhere is this clearer than in Sonja Schrader's multi-part group of works Technical Supports. Constructed Lightness. In order to solve the problem of stability for unstable forms, sculptors in the past have traditionally used "technical supports," which are usually unrecognizable since they are formally and thematically integrated into the larger conception of the figure as a kind of symbolic or narrative accessory. Diverse tree stumps, folds of cloth, stones, or prosaic foot supports guarantee the sculptural tectonics, in other words stability, even in the case of figures that seem to have been animated to the point of weightlessness. By adapting fragments of horse legs from the equestrian monument of Fredrick II at Sanssouci, Schrader merged such supports into seemingly abstract sculptures (TS 1.0). In emancipating these servile elements and letting them become autonomous sculptures, Schrader creates an object of artistic reflection that practices a kind of psychoanalysis of sculptural doctrines in the sense that these technical elements which had previously been repressed into the sphere of invisibility and meaninglessness are now being elevated to the main object of aesthetic experience. In the context of this critical evaluation, it seems only logical that Schrader also treats the molds for her artificial horse legs as autonomous sculptures (TS 1.2). She thus manages to reveal the medium-inherent dichotomies of movement and rigidity, volume and space, positive and negative, body and impression, as well as art and craftsmanship. One could read Sonja Schrader's work as primarily an investigation into a more timely concept of sculpture. On one hand, the work is an institution-critical self-analysis of certain aspects in the history of sculpture as a genre. On the other, it is also an attempt to develop the potential for contemporary forms and expressions out of this history. The recent part of this group of works (TS 1.3) illustrates that the concept of a technical support can also be seen as a general principle of cultural object production. Here, the figures are assembled like in a construction kit, evoking serial furniture, toys, and advertising displays. Thus it becomes clear that symbolic value and exchange value as well as the subsequent fetishization of commodities today all belong to the basic experience of objects, which pervades the spheres of consumption and art equally.

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**Folge 1.o 2013**

71 cm, 56, cm, 61 cm , 83 cm, plaster board, acrylic glass



**Folge 1.2**  
plaster, gold leaf, paint



**Folge 1.o** 2013  
71 cm, 56 cm, 61 cm, Plaster





## **Die Bühne im Kopf 2015 HD 15 min, Sound**

### Log Line

In a space that knows no walls, only floor, the idealized self meets the limits of physical being.

### Synopsis

The protagonist moves through an endless space and negotiates the discrepancy between wanting and being. The four-part choreography is introduced by a prologue, which contains the creator's address to the world, which is borrowed from „The Great World Theater“ by Calderon de la Barca (1600-1681).

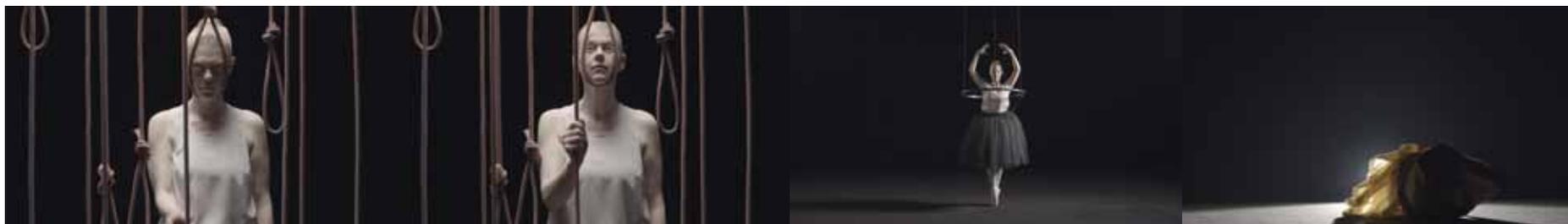
**„In a space that knows no walls, only floor, the idealized self encounters the limits of physical being. The protagonist moves through an endless space and negotiates the discrepancy between wanting and being in a dance-performative way.“** Sonja Schrader

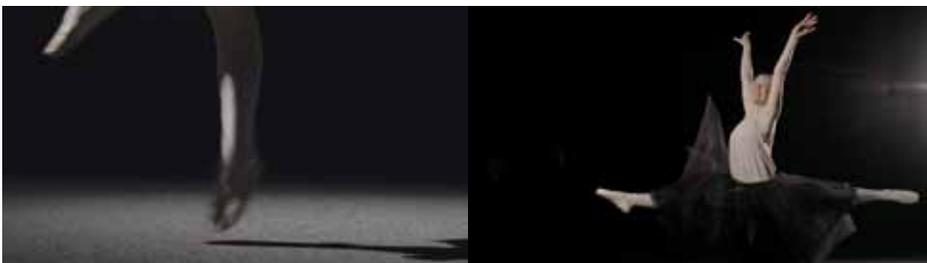
### **Dr. Joachim Penzel**

The four-part choreography opens with a prologue that, as the camera glides along, shows details of strange devices that are equally reminiscent of the human body and instruments of its conditioning. From the off, one hears the „Creator's Address to the World“ from Calderon de la Barca's (1600-1681) mystery play „The Great World Theater,“ in which human existence is described as a stage play under divine direction. The difference between social role and individual person, allegorically formulated in this leitmotif, symbolically introduces the polar structure of the film. Here, still image sequences conceived as full figures, which the artist wants to be understood as „poses,“ alternate with action sequences filmed in a flowing manner, visible only in body excerpts, which she calls „inner negotiations.“ In the poses, the dancer's body is brought into shape by the devices seen in the prologue. The body and thus the subject obey here entirely an aesthetic norm, namely different standardized movements, so-called positions of classical ballet. The technical supports consequently serve as prostheses for the taking of stylistic figures. While here the body is treated as a sculpture and thus the marionette-like character of human beings is symbolized, the „inner negotiations“ give an inkling of that search for bodily autonomy, for an authentic self-experience and self-expression, which elude the normative constraints of the aesthetic and the social or fail because of them. While the poses display the public body of the protagonist, in the „inner negotiations“ one suspects the private, even intimate body, on the surface of which the subtle movements of the mental are revealed, from which individuality possibly emerges. In the epilogue, there is a shift from the symbolic-allegorical level to the reality of film production. In this final making off, we see the last clapperboard fall and shortly afterwards, after a loud bang, a shower of confetti pours over the film set. Accompanied by a liberating laugh, „Stage in the Head“ ends.

<https://vimeo.com/145610078>

**PROLOG** „Der Schöpfer bin ich und du bist mein Werk,/ heute vertraue ich Dir einen meiner Gedanken/ zur Aufführung nach Deinem Gutdünken an./ Ein Fest will ich veranstalten zur Feier meiner eigenen Macht, denn ich denke, / daß nur zur Verherrlichung meiner eigenen Größe die große Natur Feste veranstaltet;/ und da ja schon immer/ das, was mich am meisten zerstreut und erfreut hat, / ein Schauspiel ist,/ soll es ein solches Bühnenstück sein, das der Himmel auf deinem Theater zu sehen bekommt. {....}“





**EPILOG** „Alles auf Anfang! {...}“





picture, Simonow\_Kahn