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In her artistic works, Kerstin Ergenzinger uses machines as media and instruments for conducting inquiries with regard to the world. They contradict our customary notions about technical apparatuses and how we use them in our daily life in order to speed up work procedures, to free ourselves from disagreeable activities, or to automatize production processes. And her works are not industrial assembly lines for generating (art-)objects or baroque mechanical marvels, but instead subtle perceptual machines. Their task is to record, to register, to visualize impulses in order to allow us to engage in a discussion concerning our experience of a jointly shared world. Kerstin Ergenzinger's machines translate subjective perceptions into a communally negotiable expression, because they culminate in artistic works of technical complexity and poetical powers of association which we can use as the basis for mutual dialogue. In this process, we the viewers are addressed as the observers of our own sensory impressions. How do we move in the world, and how does that feel to us? How do our bodies relate to other bodies, and how can we define the coordinates of our own position?

In response to these fundamental questions, the artist develops in her works diverse points of view that play with the opposition between metaphorical distance and physical immediacy. The installation *Wanderer* (2014) allows us an investigative view into the independent existence of small mechanical beings that ascend paper pathways like miniature mountain climbers. We observe them in their exertions as representatives of our own experience of nature, and we read their printed verbal vestiges as a commentary on the collective experience which the wanderers and adventurers among us have shared since time immemorial. For the video work *bergdenken* ("mountain-thought," 2001/2014), on the other hand, the hand of the artist herself becomes the means of making a sketch. We see neither Kerstin Ergenzinger's face, nor the object giving rise to her motif, for she shows us nothing other than the process of transference from eye to paper. Drawing as an individual expression of the artistic gesture and copying as an almost mechanical procedure overlap here in their levels of meaning. The hand of the artist makes a sketch and simultaneously inscribes into her body what she has seen. The quiet scraping of the pencil, along with the limited pictorial segment which isolates hand and pencil from their surroundings, emphasizes the impression of the technical aspect. Only the final sequence of the video disperses the energy field of presence and absence: the artist cuts up the drawing and gives prominence to the motif, a massive crystal. In the instant when she allows us a direct view of the translucent rock, she withdraws from the picture as mediator. Thus Kerstin Ergenzinger allows us to see how she herself becomes the tool of her artistic investigation.

Even if she does not allow us to follow her apparatuses with our eyes and our imaginative power, the artist does situate her viewers themselves at the center of mechanical processes of drawing and signifying. Her *Raumtaster* ("Space Sensor," 2013) constitutes a hybrid being between creature and space. The technically modified overhead projector moves along both walls and floors with variable, luminous lines of different width and length. It departs from the limited radius of its own area of support, takes possession of its surroundings step by step, and makes no distinction between human being and building. Everything becomes a part of its semiotic process and is included in a preprogrammed, fleeting choreography consisting of light. The spatial installation *...°W/...°O keingradwestundkeingradost* (2005/2014) plays with the borders and rules of architectural structures. The semiotic space is reminiscent of a virtual space which makes full use of its potential and envelops us in an experiential capsule. We can enter into this drawing and witness the space's process of becoming. The emergence and disappearance of demarcations, the

radiance and evanescence of ceiling, floor, and walls shows us a world which continuously creates itself anew and allows us to constantly reexperience our own perspective.

The artist places sculptural perceptual systems alongside these wandering spatial structures. Merging within them are worlds and beings, apparatuses and space-encompassing situations. Thus in *Whiskers in Space* (2010), we are surrounded by a field of delicate sculptures that react like sensitive whiskers to changes in their surroundings. The slender, feathery bodies use sensors to register extremely fine changes in air currents, which are translated into movements and sounds. Nevertheless, we can never be sure of the interconnection between cause and effect, because *Whiskers in Space* conforms to its own logic. The whiskers are programmed so that it seems as if they could decide independently whether to respond directly to our presence in the space or to reject an overwhelming flood of measurement data; thus they issue a challenge to our ceaseless search for the assistance of clear orientation. When in one moment we believe ourselves to be recognizing structures, in the next moment the sculptural field subsides once again into a state of intentional chaos. *Rotes Rauschen* ("Red Rustling," 2012) also plays with this human desire to be able to register and understand everything. A seismometer records extremely delicate earth tremors that are not perceptible to the human body. The apparatus is connected by wires to a hovering sculpture which, as a resonating body, gives expression to the data of the seismometer, sprawls like an uncanny being, and generates unusual sounds. The object is open and can receive the viewer into itself. We can slip inside it as if into a huge ear, and experience what otherwise remains closed to our perception.

Thus both *Whiskers in Space* and *Rotes Rauschen* combine the visual and the acoustic into a dense atmosphere. The quiet, metallic sounds of the nitinol wires that allow the sculptures to have an enigmatic life of their own envelop the viewer while they oscillate between familiar and unfamiliar noises. We believe ourselves to be hearing grasshoppers, creaking branches, or technical humming. These acoustic landscapes summon up subliminal knowledge, associations, and fears; they constitute a leitmotif that may also be found in Kerstin Ergenzinger's most recent work. With *Navigating Noises* (since 2013), the artist, together with the physicist Thom Laepple, has been developing an interactive sound installation which simultaneously functions as an experimental arrangement. The viewer enters a space beneath whose ceiling hangs an extensive, metallic honeycomb structure. At first, everything seems empty, but then one begins to sense the presence of sounds which emanate from the construction. They shift their location and sound-color as they summon us to trace out their movements, walk through the space, and "sound it out." *Navigating Noise* is an experiment with the lack of orientation that confronts us when we are deprived of access to our established experiences. Differently than in *Whiskers in Space* or *Rotes Rauschen*, this work is not a technical sensory organ, but instead an intellectual game that dispenses with clear points of reference such as seismic activities or air turbulence. Instead the installation is a parable with regard to the abstract yet fundamental question as to how we approach our world, with its complex flow of data and information, and attempt to arrange and comprehend it.

Whereas Kerstin Ergenzinger—with her apparatuses, seismometers, and systems of notational drawing—sharpens our perception of atmospheric subtleties that first provide us with an orientation, her spaces of signs and sounds deliberately deprive us of these supports. Here we are thrown back onto a reliance on our bodies. But what remains when all parameters are lacking? What happens when we are compelled to recognize that we ourselves are seismometers and sensors? Perhaps we come to experience the fact that perceiving the world is a constant, never completed, and multiform process.