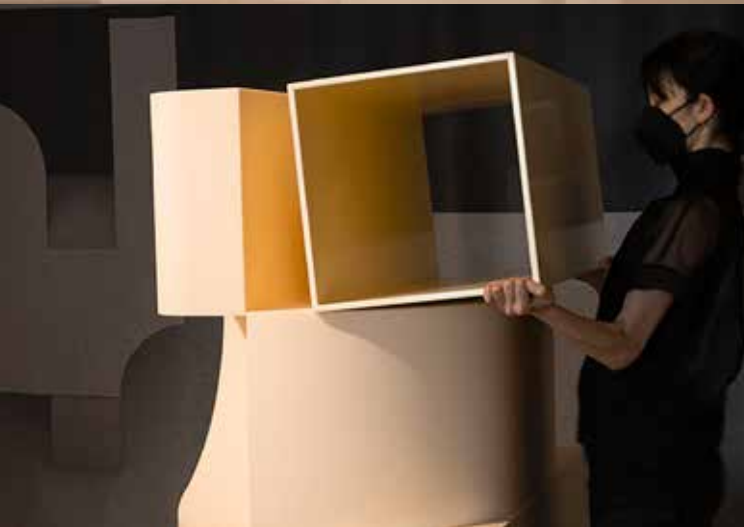


BODIES WITHOUT ORGANS

In 1968 Brazilian artist Lygia Clark made an analogy between architecture and the human organism with her installation *A casa é o corpo* (The House is the Body). The walk-in work was modelled on the inside of the body and aimed at the interaction between visitors and their immediate surroundings. In 1926 Siegfried Ebeling made 'The Room as Membrane', depicting the wall as a transition stage of forces, analogous to the skin. And as early as 1924, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was speaking about 'skin-and-bones architecture'.



Bodies Without Organs, Berlin



Behind this thinking is an ecological conception of architecture, which can be explained by the fact that both the house and the skin represent instances that are inextricably linked to people. Both function as a border and as a connecting surface that takes on the tasks of a shelter. They not only separate the inside from the outside, but also serve as a place of retreat and a reflection of an environment that is changing ever faster. However, especially during a pandemic, the perception and function of public and private spaces must be re-thought.

In 'Bodies Without Organs' artists Lila Chitayat and Gabi Schillig explore the relationship between space, body and sculpture to overcome supposed spatial boundaries by placing the body in an intuitive relationship to the environment and material. Their poetic title 'Bodies Without Organs' is a reference to French philosopher Gilles Deleuze

who developed the abstract idea of a body that lacks all organs. His is a complex theory that questions the organisational principle of the organism and can still be applied to various disciplines. It is clear that Chitayat and Schillig understand the organ-free body as a system without order, which makes it changeable and (de-) malleable. The function of the forms they developed and present are not specified. Despite certain properties such as height, shape and dimension, they are neither furniture nor architecture; their use is open and intuitive.

The playful objects seem to be soft and hard at the same time, inviting the audience to touch them. The shapes move the body into various positions and tempt one to act intuitively. In this way, the objects also take on the task of mediators between the environment, the architecture and the bodies. Fol-

lowing the idea of the organ-free body, their function is lifted, they can be changed, without any hierarchy - free to be explored, experienced, and the spatial properties re-designed. It is up to the audience to bring order or disorder into an existing system. By turning and plugging in, intervening in what is found, an almost infinite number of new figures and functions can arise and thus the spatial structure can also be fundamentally changed.

Chitayat and Schillig's origins lie in architecture and their inspiration is Bernard Tschumi's 'Folies', a modular building system that follows its own rules. The function of its construction is the result of human action. The same creation of temporary, changeable structures manifests itself in 'Bodies Without Organs', through which the artists create an awareness of the dissolution and ambiguity of the objects. Let us stick to the view that archi-

Bodies, scaled – Bodies Without Organs, Berlin

ecture itself functions like a body that is kept alive by its inner workings, or its 'organs'. In this conception, the modules in the exhibition are consequently part of this body-like structure and can take on different functions. Although Chitayat and Schillig's installation looks organic at first glance, on closer inspection the project can also transmit the idea of an organ-free body: the three-dimensional structures take up neutral positions in space. Their geometry is not an expression of rigidity but a means of investigating a new and physical form of language.

Over the course of the pandemic, the places around us have changed significantly. The result is a new perception of the public and private sphere. As public places have been limited and their quality as meeting places has been lost, private places have come more into focus. Galleries have and still have a special

position as semi-public spaces: as hybrid zones, they are neither completely public nor exclusively private. Nevertheless, for many people they represent a passive place that is associated with fear of contact. The shop window of a gallery is often a symbol of a barely visible border through which one might catch a glimpse but not want to enter.

'Bodies Without Organs' represents the attempt to dissolve this supposed border. The installation becomes a fluid means of communication. Similar to the function of a skin, the permeability of the shop window comes to the fore. As a zone of contact, it does not represent a static barrier, but is receptive and penetrable on both sides.

Since this project began in quarantine, the digital space was an important factor. The symbiotic way of working between two artists – Chitayat in Tel Aviv and Schillig

in Berlin – resembled a game of ping-pong with specific rules. The three-dimensional objects that visitors encounter in the gallery were designed over digital communication and have become haptic models thanks to the 3D printer.

The symbiosis of two parts is also visible in the material of the sculptures: foam and wood complement each other in an embrace of opposites.

For the artists, the project is not over and at most represents a glimpse, a snapshot of an ongoing conversation between people, space, sculpture and time. 'Bodies Without Organs' is a reciprocal exploration with an open ending. <

Bodies Without Organs will continue into 2022 at Liebling Haus, Tel Aviv

Bodies Without Organs, Tel Aviv