

ANNA

K.E.



FOR OUR PARENTS

ENGLISH

HLHE Dialogue: The Human Scale

Since 2017, the Kunstmuseen Krefeld's *HLHE Dialogue* series has been promoting the juxtaposition of historical and more recent or contemporary positions in art, design, and architecture in the neighboring villas Haus Lange and Haus Esters, continually reflecting the legacy of modernism anew. In this iteration of the series, works by the artist Marion Baruch (b. 1929) and works by the young Anna K.E. (b. 1986) come together under the theme of *The Human Scale*. For both artists, their own and other people's bodies are surveying instruments and a yardstick for the perception of space, movement, and interaction. While Marion Baruch's textile works focus on the absent body, Anna K.E.'s installations explore spatial and social bodily experiences.

Anna K.E. was born in Tbilisi in 1986 and grew up during a time of political upheaval in Georgia. Her parents are two of the country's most famous artists, Ketikapanadze and Gia Edzgvradze. After training in classical ballet at the Vakhtang Chabukiani Tbilisi State School of Ballet Art, she moved to Germany in 2000. From 2002 to 2004 she studied at the State Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart and then at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts until 2010. Anna K.E. has lived in New York since 2010. In 2019, she represented Georgia at the 58th International Art Exhibition in Venice. Her works were last shown in 2024 in the solo exhibition *Dolorem Ipsum* at the Kestner Gesellschaft Hannover.

Anna K.E. For Our Parents

With her staging of objects, words, drawings, and films, Anna K.E. explores the spatial order of Haus Esters, turning the house into a place of disconcerting placelessness. One constant in the artist's work is her examination of early twentieth-century modernism, which is particularly evident in the Lange and Esters villas. The artist subjects the ideals of Western modernism—the norming of the body, the standardization of space and formal language, universality—to a critical revision. Her toolbox contains signs, colors, structural elements, words, and her own body, the latter of which opens up physical and social spaces in choreographed or improvised actions. With a playful joy in experimentation, Anna K.E. assembles ordinary things such as plant seeds, cat litter, magnets, metal scraps, and a range of other items into clear forms and complex architectures. Her working process is characterized by elaborate manual work as well as by the coincidences and shortcomings of material experiments.

Recurring arrows, grids, linguistic fragments, and built constructions run through the rooms of Haus Esters. They form a system of references and stations that dynamize the spaces in an unusual way. The visual and physical perception of the place is thus realigned. We are guided as if by a navigation system and confronted with neglected sections of walls and corners of rooms. Our own body follows the choreography and experiences the unexpected. Our position is literally and figuratively rendered unstable, kept in motion. On one wall we read: "Located in drift—following the traces as a companion." Drifting in space, but also in time, the transfer of past and present, tradition and renewal aptly describes the atmosphere that unfolds in Anna K.E.'s exhibition *For Our Parents*.

With *For Our Parents*, the Kunstmuseen Krefeld are organizing the artist Anna K.E.'s first solo exhibition in a museum. With the exception of one work, all of the pieces have been created in the last two years. Haus Esters has also inspired the artist to create a new video and a site-specific work in the outdoor area.

Warning:

Strong magnetic fields are present inside Haus Esters. These may interfere with technical devices (e.g., pacemakers, cell phones), data storage devices, and magnetic strips (e.g., ATM cards, ID cards).

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1 Cognitive Shift

2024

Single-channel video, color,
no sound, ca. 20 min

Inspired by the architecture, spatial sequences, and transparency of Haus Esters, Anna K.E. created a new video work on site, *Cognitive Shift*. Here the artist combines the performative with media recording, acting alone in front of and for the camera.

The trained dancer measures the empty spaces with her body. She moves rhythmically, crouching, following along the inner boundaries of the floor plan of the building, like a cat. The artist embodies an unidentified creature that temporarily resides in the house. An unknown, future time seems to have dawned in which humans no longer play a role. They no longer exist as inhabitants of Haus Esters. A linear concept of time, which dates the house back to the late 1920s, seems to have been suspended.

The presentation of the video in the peephole of the main entrance reverses the functional and spatial perspectives of the aperture. Instead of looking from the inside to the outside to see who is knocking at the door, we look from the outside to the inside and thus become voyeurs. Through a hole in the door, the whole house opens up in its dimensions and with its new occupant.

The video is shown in two places in the exhibition: behind the peephole on the front door and in the rear terrace area of the house as part of the installation *For Our Parents*.

2 Blowing From the East Fallen Leaves Gather in the West, 2021 – 2024

Wood, zinc metal sheets, magnets, metal rods
screen, media player

62–90 x 30–51 x 2685 cm

Video: *Found in Diffuse*, 2021

Single-channel video, color,
no sound, 1:26 min

As a central work, a kind of treadmill runs through the large hall of Haus Esters over a length of twenty-six meters and continues into the two adjacent rooms. On a filigree substructure lies what seems to be an architectural model that appears to multiply into infinity. Even the linguistic description treads on uncertain ground. After all, what seems to be a utopian idea of a constantly evolving architectural landscape is in fact a magnificent test of materials and construction. Countless magnets in a wide range of formats and various metal offcuts are lined up next to each other. With their strong and stabilizing force of attraction, the magnets contrast starkly with the delicate overall construction, since everything is merely laid on and leaned against. The artist tests the forces that are essential in construction, drawing our attention to uncertainties and provisionality in architecture—and this in a place that exemplifies modernist building in the early twentieth century. Standardization and normalization led to increasingly efficient, serial construction methods during this period. Anna K.E. invokes these achievements of modernism only to immediately dismantle them again. Her magnets function instead as data units. Together they encode the possibility of a world that materializes in the magnetic field between the North and South Poles in a state of provisionality.

Warning:

The installation *Blowing from the East Fallen Leaves Gather in the West* generates a strong magnetic field. It may interfere with technical devices (e.g., pacemakers, cell phones), data storage devices, and magnetic strips (e.g., ATM cards, ID cards).



3.1 Located in drift

2024
Chalk, marzipan
275 x 943 cm

Located in drift—following the traces
as a companion.

Companion of trembling preoccupied
gardens; grounds;
quivering questions, assembling the concepts.
In the torture of the posture:
the remanence keeps limping towards
the afterthought.

Overstepping the steps, previously stepped on,
previously walked on, previously lived on.

In ease of redemption
the path of repetition
—as conclusion in rotation.

Cognitive shift—
tease and tweeze off the kindness
—disregard the inclination.

3.2 Vibrations in collusion

2024
Chalk, marzipan
275 x 540 cm

Vibrations in collusion are holding on tight.

With an open eye a bird flies over the fields of
mechanically assembled landscapes.
Focusing on no other than the trajectory of essential
coordinates.

Fields offshore—appointed by inner acclimatization.

3.3 Neglected corners

2024
Chalk, marzipan
30 x 110 cm

Neglected corners compose the ungiven dialogue,
tuning into an abyss of indifference.
Knocking on undisclosed substance—
for a celebration of pristine metabolism.

Knocking on the hatch for our parents.

A grid of fine charcoal lines covers several walls in the living and dining areas of the house. It seems as if the artist has continued the tiled walls, as found in the dressing room next to the kitchen, as a drawing. In fact, the tile is a central metaphor and an important building block both in Anna K.E.'s work and in early twentieth-century modernism. Installed in kitchens and bathrooms in the 1920s, it embodies the desire for standardization, practicality, and hygiene. Seen in formal terms as a grid, the lattice pattern can be found on many modernist building façades. In the 1960s and 1970s, Minimal and Concept artists took up the grid as an organizing modular system to remeasure spaces.

When Anna K.E. reactivates the tile and the grid, she refers on the one hand to the historical dimension of the motif. On the other hand, she reinterprets the grid formally and metaphorically. On the walls of Haus Esters, the grid is subdivided into ever smaller units, dissolving completely in places, until only the white wall remains. The artist inserts a linguistic form into this disintegration of order, linking the concrete location with a poetic space. She forms the fragmented sentences and words using marzipan paste, giving the text image a lively material texture.

4.1 Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.1

2022

Metal, MDF wood, plastic
different types of grain
10 x 408 x 180 cm

4.2 Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.2

2024

Metal, MDF wood, plastic
different types of cat litter
15 x 110 x 342 cm

4.3 Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.3

2024

Metal, MDF wood, plastic
12 x 200 x 380 cm

Anna K.E. emphatically dynamizes the space where the series of works *Mandala: Tranquil Gaze* is shown. As large, sometimes pointed and at other times wider arrow shapes, the pieces dominate entire rooms. It seems as if the whole villa should turn toward the indicated direction of the sky. As flat floor works, they mark the level on which we stand as viewers. At the same time, seen from a bird's-eye view, they each display their own circular, sometimes intensely colored pattern. The geometric fields in *Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.1* are filled with plant seeds while those in *Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.2* contain cat litter. Anna K.E. was inspired by her everyday micro and macro experiences to create the "paintings": whether flying over a landscape with fields or looking after her cats at home.

A mandala is a geometric diagram used in Hinduism and Buddhism as part of ritual practices. According to ancient beliefs, it represents the entire universe and is an aid to contemplation. The simplest possible shape of the mandala is the triangle. In Western culture, coloring mandalas is a common concentration exercise. *Mandala: Tranquil Gaze No.3* only shows the internal structure that still needs to be filled. It denotes a potentiality, the possibility of transformation.

5 Cardinal Directions

2024

Enamel, variable dimensions

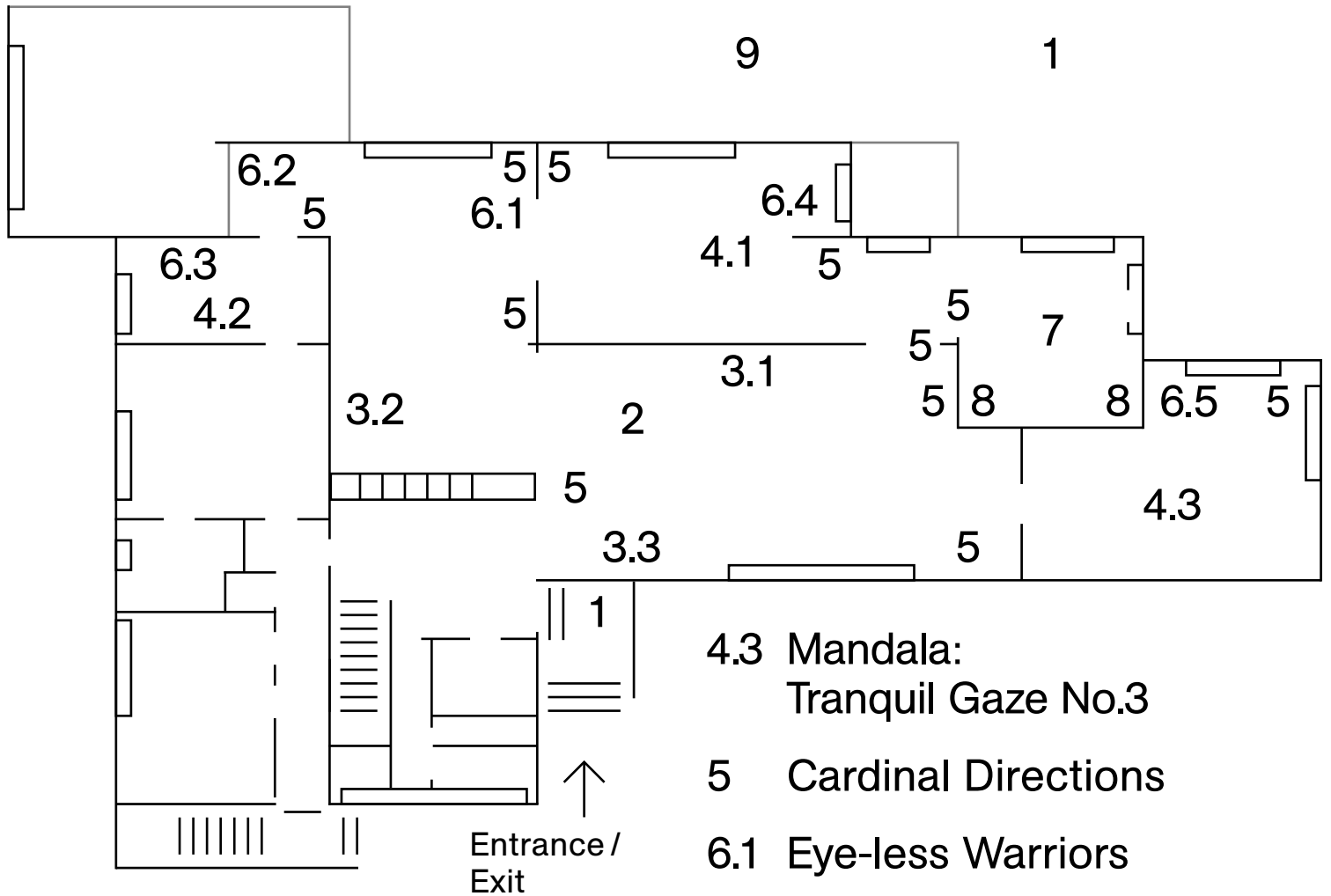
Anna K.E.'s *Cardinal Directions* occupy walls that are normally neglected in presentations—narrow strips of wall or areas directly next to the large window openings. Mounted at an unusual height, they mark these "non-walls" and prompt a change in perspective and perception. The *Cardinal Directions* thus also refer to a traditional form of exhibition practice.

With their intense colors, the arrow-shaped objects have a striking structure in themselves. Like abstract signals, they point in different directions. The *Cardinal Directions* form the logical "fellow player" for the series *Mandala: Tranquil Gaze*. While the floor works dynamize the space in a horizontal direction, the *Cardinal Directions* emphasize vertical dimensions. Together the series form a system of references that situates the villa and its visitors in a universal space that includes both geographical and social space.

The *Cardinal Directions* are a new series of works that Anna K.E. has developed especially for Haus Esters. With enamel, the artist has reactivated a venerated, traditional production process. Here, glass powder is melted at high temperatures, which, after cooling, results in a homogeneous, shiny surface. The abstract patterns and color combinations are free experiments with the aim of generating energy in space.

Haus Esters Ground Floor

Garden



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6.1 Eye-less Warriors

2018

CNC-routed anodized aluminum, marzipan
20,3 x 14 x 1,2 cm

6.2 The Highest Peak

2018

CNC-routed anodized aluminum, marzipan
10,5 x 27 x 1 cm

6.3 Manifestations Causing Digestions

2018

CNC-routed anodized aluminum, marzipan
8 x 13 x 2 cm

6.4 Dislocatable Shadings of the Future

2018

CNC-routed anodized aluminum, marzipan
17,7 x 28 x 0,63 cm

6.5 Odorless Fictions

2018

CNC-routed anodized aluminum, marzipan
16,5 x 9 x 0,6 cm

In the system of references, changes of direction, and body activations, this series of wall objects creates stations that allow perception to come to a rest. Although the works are positioned on forgotten walls of the villa and at an unusual height, the clear rectangular shape and dark background create an impression of stability and concentration. The aluminum panels give the impression of an almost leaden materiality. In Haus Esters, they are reminiscent of the massive steel skeleton that lies hidden behind the walls inside the house and supports the building. As in the artist's large wall pieces, the fragments of words and sentences here, too, are filled with marzipan—a mass consisting chiefly of almond paste and sugar. A subtle play of promises unfolds between the open meaning of the words, the sweetness of the marzipan, and the depth of the gray background.

7 A Different Engagement

2010

MDF wooden twin size mattress, metal
33,5 x 92,5 x 190,5 cm

The work *A Different Engagement* marks a transition. It was created during the artist's final year at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts, shortly before she moved to New York. Anna K.E. modeled her mattress out of medium-density fiberboard, or MDF, thus turning the yielding and flexible materiality of a mattress into its opposite: a hard object that is susceptible to breakage. The bed is a familiar object in a house and the place where the body comes to rest. *A Different Engagement* is therefore an invitation to self-reflection, away from the choreographed landscape of movement in the other exhibition spaces.

8 In Silence, A Cat Sleeps No.1 & No.2

2024

Wood, self-fired tiles, zinc
metal sheets, magnets, ceramic
each 27 x 232,5 x 17,5 cm

With the casualness of two bedside tables, the works *In Silence, a Cat Sleeps No.1 & No.2* flank the central object in the room, *A Different Engagement*. They repeat the construction exercise from the hall. As minimalist fragments made of magnets and metal elements, they mark the corners of the room. The objects defy any precise definition; they are neither an architectural model, nor a design object, or a trendsetting object. As an experiment in materials, they embody a reflection on the nature of space.

9 For Our Parents

2024

Metal pipe, screen, media player

75 x 2030 x 5 cm

Video: *Cognitive Shift*, 2024

Single-channel video, color,
no sound, ca. 5 min

With her work *For Our Parents*, Anna K.E. has created a site-specific installation in the outdoor area of Haus Esters. Directly behind the villa, the artist has copied and pasted the railing from the terrace on the upper floor of the house down into the garden. The railing has been completely stripped of its protective and aesthetic function. It blocks the way and seems surreal out of place. Just as many of the works in the exhibition rooms are positioned irritatingly low, the height of the railing also seems too low and wrong, although its dimensions correspond exactly to the original by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. This railing—whether at the top of the terrace or at the bottom in the garden area—fails to offer users safety. It reveals the shifts in building code and the German Institute for Standardization (DIN) definitions that have taken place since the beginning of the twentieth century and that condition the human body differently today.

The artist emphasizes the gesture of shifting and doubling by implanting the video *Cognitive Shift* in one of the open ends of the metal railing. The interior of Haus Esters, as measured by a crouching creature (the artist), is thus reproduced in miniature here.

Colophon

Anna K.E.
For Our Parents

Kunstmuseen Krefeld
Haus Esters
06.10.2024 – 09.02.2025

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Opening Hours

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