

Dialogue between the painter Claudio D'Ambrosio and Tatjana Schülke in Villalunga in April 2003

D'Ambrosio: *You studied painting and for years you have been painting pictures. Since some time you have mainly been working on reliefs and objects. How did this change happen?*

Schülke: The development from working on paintings to working on sculptures was very slow and continuous. Already while painting I had the urge to go more into space, using wax, cloth and wood etc. When I discovered the Kapa foam board (Kapa Platte) as an artistic way of expression, I used it only as carrier for my paintings in the beginning, cutting and scraping it. Then I started to layer the foam boards. That's how the reliefs and wall objects originated. Not too long ago I started making sculptures, besides the wall objects, which stood nonattached in space.

D'Ambrosio: *How do you envisage your work in the future?*

Schülke: I can only answer for the near future. Ten years ago, I never would have thought that some day I would predominantly work plastically (on sculptures). Presumably I will be surprised, how I will be working in 10 years. It's this unpredictability that makes me find my work so interesting. The subconscious mind plays an important role in my work. Only in retrospective I see coherences clearly, also in an autobiographical nature. Regarding the near future, I would like to make sculptures in a bigger dimension. I can imagine many of my sculptures in a much bigger size.

D'Ambrosio: *The topic of this exhibition is „Interconnected (Interacting) Vessels.“ Vessels have often been a theme in your paintings. What do you associate with this theme and what does communication mean to you?*

Schülke: Each vessel symbolizes the outside and the inside at the same time. I find this aspect interesting and in some way or the other it has been a theme in my work for long while. In a metaphorical sense every human is a vessel: a container for impressions, feelings, ideas.... A vessel can be emptied, filled, clogged or can conceal mysterious things. Communication is any kind of contact, with words or without words. Often one of my creations consists of several objects, which are related through their form and their contents.

D'Ambrosio: *Are the themes of your work unchanging or do they vary depending on the life situation?*

Schülke: There are events that occasionally have a strong influence on my work. But apart from that, there are many themes that are like a thread in my entire artistic work. For instance the topic duality: two poles, forms, which are not in balance, which are attracted or rejected. Or the topic boundaries – in form of fences, webs, mergers, behind bars, just to name a few. Since I started working on objects, my work tends to be more playful, lighter, and maybe even more humorous.

D'Ambrosio: *Sometimes you integrate items you found, e.g. plastic, metal, rubber... But the main material is the KAPA foam board (KAPA Platte), which is rarely used in the artistic area. Why does this appeal to you?*

Schülke: In order to build a form, I cut each foam board, one at a time and then glue them together. I like this principle of working in layers, because during the process of joining the pieces a dynamic of its own develops. That's how all work performed originates from an interaction between accidental occurrence and intention.

D'Ambrosio: *With these layers I associate the theme of time, the trickling of time.*

Schülke: Yes, time plays a significant role in my work. For me it was important to show the passing by of time in my pictures by using different layers of paint, the same is happening now, as I layer thin boards on to each other.

D'Ambrosio: *Yes, now that you remind me of the invisible or visible time...*