

ASPECTS OF GROWTH

Prologue

Rampant growth is just as deadly as life-giving. Growth out of control. Phytobodies spurt from the corners, ambush the viewers, cloak the walls, writhe out of ventilation pipes, cross borders. Birgit Knoechl's installations are menacing forces of nature. The baroque black and white jungle overwhelms and seduces, terrifies and entices. Compact pitch-black works, reminiscent of mutations between insects and plants, delicate predominantly white cut_out objects, playful in light and shadow. By definition this growth is a work-in-progress: installations of all different shapes and sizes evolve from a modular system. But sometimes the works take the opposite path, not Big Bang proliferation but a retreat into the Renaissance chamber of wonders: plants safely kept behind the glass of little display cases, filigree and fragile, banished into long rows of an impressive plant archive on museum walls. In turn, the austere and discreet, small ink drawings juxtaposed with edged crystalline objects. Restraint and explosion: These are the two poles between which Birgit Knoechl's work oscillates. Between science fiction film and historical archive, alpha and omega, taming and its opponent, ecstatic growth.

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