

Aggregate states

Birgit Knoechl's series *shape of the black line*

Radial, stalky, needle-like, grape or bud-like, tuberous, cylindrical, cubic, prismatic – the characteristics, which describe crystalline forms point at the same time to the liveliness of those forms. Differing from biological organisms like plants, animals or human beings, which need energy to develop, the formation of crystals implies the recovery of energy. When the fine particles, which make up crystals change from the gaseous to the solid state their energy of motion decreases, attraction forces become dominant, and – as soon as a crystal nucleus has formed – condense into permanent repetitions of basic structural elements. The crystallisation process finally results in bodies with corners, edges and faces – similar to growth. It is such a collection of basic building blocks of nature, which constitute the starting point of Birgit Knoechl's series *shape of the black line*. Her objects are made from cardboards, which the artist forms into crystalline shapes by folding, gluing and covering them with layers of black-inked latex. Both the haptic and optic properties of the organic material underneath – paper – are condensed and transformed layer by layer. Similar to her objects, Knoechl precisely draws crystalline forms with the ruler. While the drawings are never the same as the objects, the basic elements are repeated as in the process of crystallisation, reflecting Knoechl's artistic intention to liberate the drawn line from two-dimensionality into space. One form turns into another, a face cuddles in another, creating an edge which itself forms the starting point for additional structures and monumental sculptures, growing out from paper. Being inspired by grotesque architectures, Birgit Knoechl refers in *shape of the black line* to the vocabulary of constructivism, with her objects modulating Buckminster Fuller's biomorphic architectures and her drawings varying the isometric lines by Sol LeWitt. Taking recourse to the collective knowledge about the variety of natural forms, Birgit Knoechl gives the line space which she reproduces in variable and manifest aggregated states - radial, stalky, needle-like, grape or bud-like, tuberous, cylindrical, cubic, prismatic - or in any possible intermediate state.

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