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Those who don't know Verena Pfisterer (and even connoisseurs of the art world would agree), might think her work the amazing feat of a newcomer. Such is the freshness of her *Lichtbrunnen* (light fountain) concept and her *Glasbett* (glass-bed), currently being exhibited in the Kienzle & Gmeiner Gallery. Even the small rotating heart, shaking in circles at the end of a wire, could compete with the work of Rebecca Horn without having to renounce its ironic facet. The only, albeit decisive, difference between her plan for a blue-lit glass room, with floors covered in billowing fog, and that of Ann Veronica Janssens' *Mist Sculpture* (recently presented in the Neue Nationalgalerie), is that the latter was realised. Indeed, all of Pfisterer's exhibited work date back a long way.

In 1967 Verena Pfisterer moved to Berlin and gave up art. She did so despite having exhibited with Jörg Immendorf, Franz Erhard Walther and Joseph Beuys as a Düsseldorf Academy of Art student one year previously. Her decision to turn her back on the art world coincided with her graduation from the Academy. Its reasons ranged from her mental constitution to her reluctance to struggle her way through an art career given the inevitable necessity of employing all means at her disposal. Her withdrawal was certainly not due to a lack of inspiration or talent. Proof enough are the works that art historian Jochen Kienzle has "excavated" with the help of Verena Pfisterer herself.

Despite her education as a psychotherapist, Pfisterer remained true to her art practice and continued to develop sketches of plans and ideas up to the 1970s. One of these is a kinetic black and white lamellae space of changing colour. Another is a 25-metre-long series of ten red glass rooms, a third is a blue plastic mist-bed. The sketches now cost 800 DM.

Glass and light were big themes during Verena Pfisterer's one-and-a-half decades creating art. The influences of the Düsseldorf artist group Zero were still fresh, while the light sculptures and kinetic objects of Piene, Uecker and Mack remain resonant in her work. This notwithstanding, she had already found her own voice during her student days – one which drew its strength from immediate physiological and psychological impact. This is true of *Lichtbrunnen* (1966), an upright cylinder topped with a mirror above which is a cone-shaped lamp delivering 2400 watts of power. Similarly effective is a closed cabin in which one is exposed to silvery downpour, *Silberfallen* (1965). "A still, quiet occurrence, a silvery flickering on and around you," is how Verena Pfisterer once described this work. Both pieces have unfortunately only survived as photos (2000 DM), as has the *Bunte Glaskuppel* (multi-coloured glass dome) in which Pfisterer's fellow student, Katharina Sieverding, poses as a model (200 DM). These domes, much like parasols, could be seen as preliminary steps towards the later un-realised glass and meditation space with dome and internally lit glass beds, exhibited as sketches (800 DM).

Other facets of the artist's work are illustrated by clothing designs in felt tip and Indian ink: A sky-blue coat and bright yellow men's pants, a white frilly dress or an orange coloured woman's trouser suit. These combinations, still shrill by today's standards, were sometimes worn by the artist. In comparison, the tendril-like animal and flower compositions (4500 DM) or the blackbird, titmouse and goldfinch pictures in the style of encyclopaedias of German flora and fauna on top of bird cages filled with manuscripts (not for sale) seem almost traditional. Despite this broad display of artistic potency and compositional quality, Verena Pfisterer's example illustrates one thing: It takes more than art itself to make a mark in the art world.

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