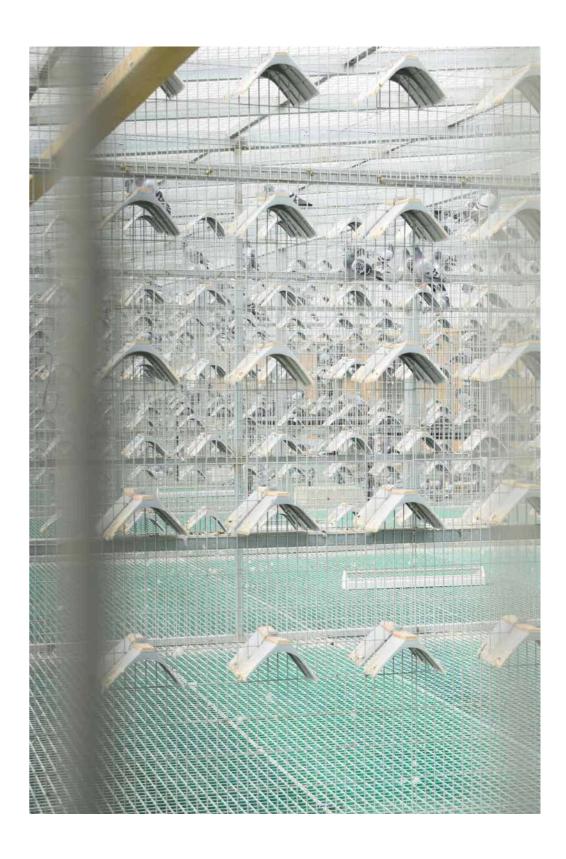


Selma Gültoprak concentrated on racing pigeons for the exhibition AWARE OF ANOTHER and researched the topic during her 2016 residency in China. In and around Beijing, she sought out pigeon fanciers and interviewed them, which led to an increasing network of contacts with fanciers and their pigeon lofts. Since the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution in 1976, pigeon races are no longer prohibited by the state that before suspected capitalist tendencies in the races and their associated betting markets. Nowadays the races are a lucrative market for the new Chinese middle class. The cultural significance of the racing pigeon is diverse and reaches far back in history: while serving as messengers during ancient times until now, the pigeon is still used today for military purposes.

Selma Gültoprak developed new works for AWARE OF ANO-THER in the gallery Matjö — space for art honouring the pigeon: taking the pigeon as an example, the artist examined the meaning of culture, memory and change over time.



lost leg

Cher Ami

going up again

Stella

Sony

remaining together until death



TWINS! is an oversized magazine featuring photographs taken while Selma Gültoprak conducted research on racing TWINS! pigeons in China, enhanced with short splinters of poetic text. In addition, she used virtual picture material for the 2017 catalogue, for example from pigeon fanciers, posting their success and progress on the WeChat timeline, or from the Photo magazine chinaxinge.com platform, where you can watch and follow live streams of moderated pigeon races from different 32,5 x 45,0 cm

The catalogue zooms into the pigeon racing scene. It shows the scene as a growing body in the social, historical, and political realms, connected by the deep dependencies and ties between the lives of the breeders and the pigeons in a world both free and confined, in their hearts and minds and their visions and dreams. The pigeon racing scene is framed by architecture, staged by the media, and driven by science and economics.

From the pigeon breeder Mr.Tang, who kept his small, self-built pigeon house on his roof in Beijing from the 1980s to 2018, and who stopped racing years ago because he no longer wanted to participate in the competitive and greedy market; to the young emerging breeder Mr.Yi, who involved his family into his self-built and growing pigeon business to escape lifelong poverty; and to the pigeon breeder and collector Xing Wei (better known as Kaier, famous for his impressive and monumental Kaier Pigeon loft in Tangshan), who owns the most exclusive and best pigeons in the world. In 2017, he bought the world's most expensive racing pigeon ever, for 458,297.00 USD. Pigeons are born as twins.



The shadows in shade (and) you made (me) 2017

Two windows, sticker, rectangular steel tube 159,2 x 74,2 x 149 cm, 109,5 x 74,4 x 124,1 cm



Just next to the big display window of the show room, the work The shadows in shade (and) you made (me) is located. The stickers on two windows standing in their frames on the gallery floor are fragments of pictures from advertising, magazines, and catalogues about racing pigeons from 1980 until now (*1). Others are messages or pictures from the WeChat timeline of pigeon fanciers and their employees, who are frequently posting updates about races, victories, breeding, and the like.

The divers shape and history of the racing pigeon is overlapping, which is presented in this artwork by, for example, combining the signature of the painter Andrew Beer (1862-1954) (*2), a racing pigeon enthusiast who portrayed special pigeons in life size oil paintings, with advertising and slogans of pharmaceutical products for racing pigeons.

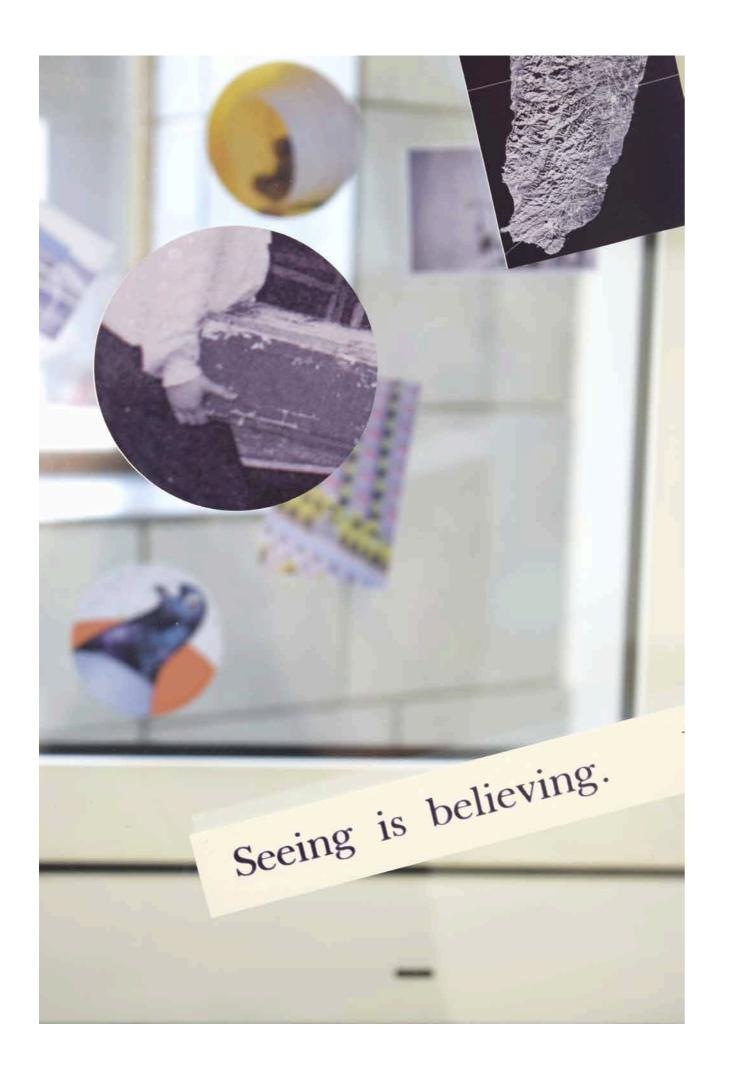
Genetic research and technology crossed with architecture, landscape and theory. The image "Seeking Wisdom - From Darwin to Munger" is from a post on WeChat by Xing Wei's closest assistant Shirley Suen (Xing Wei is famous for its Kaier Pigeon). The quote: "A man who has committed a mistake and doesn't correct it, is committing another mistake." is wisdom from a book starting with these words by Confucius.

The pigeons market evolved worldwide, but especially in China, to a very special and self-sufficient world. This melting pot unites economical, industrial, social and cultural interest, in order to breed the best pigeons to achieve the most victories. Internationally, there are successful breeders of all kinds, private dovecotes or giant, fully organized pigeon lofts with professional trainers and breeding or feeding systems.











Vertical In Spirit

8.000 imprinted pigeon rings, galvanized steel linking chain, hot glue, steel frame, yellow galvanized rail, key rings 226 x 100 x 285 cm



In the exhibition, you could find two more installations which consist of a total of 10,000 pigeon rings on chains. The rings were produced and imprinted with different text in China. Even in Europe, there is an official distributor for the production of registered rings. The work Vertical in Spirit contains of 8.000 blue and orange pigeon rings on chains, which form a double-layered curtain with pattern.

The blue rings wear the year 1976 with the numbers 00001 to 04000. In the year 1976, after the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, pigeon racing was allowed for the first time

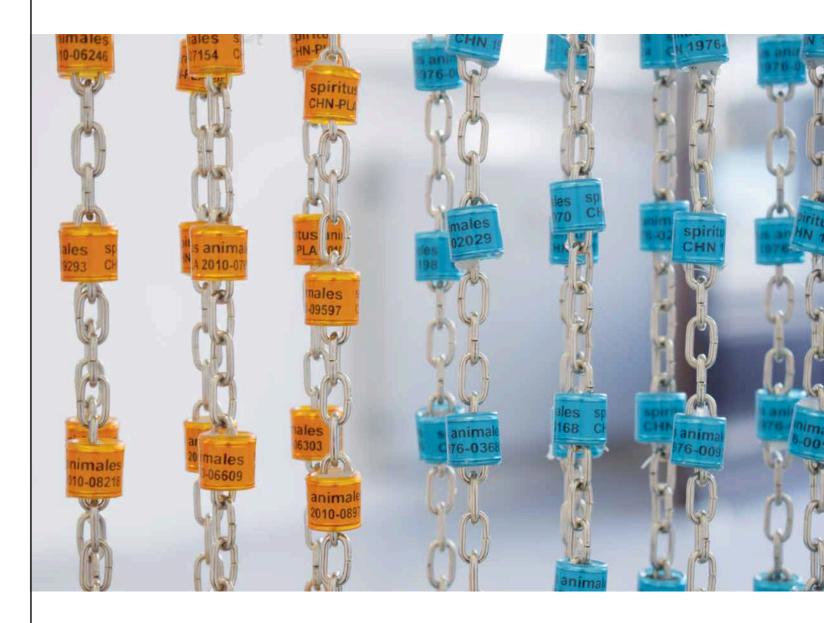
The orange rings wear the year 2010 with the numbers 04000 to 08000. In 2010, it was reported that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had trained 10,000 racing pigeons as messengers, in case of a breakdown in electronic communication. Since 1950, the Chinese military has bred a small unit of trained pigeons. Racing pigeons were widely used in the First World War in Europe. Until 1994, such a military unit still existed in Switzerland.

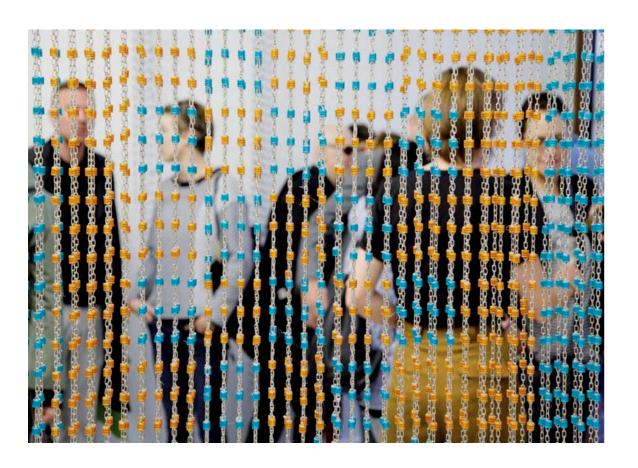
The Latin term spiritus animalis` (*3.1) means `life spirits and describes the theory of gaslike particles in the nerves, which are led through the blood (out of which they are extracted) with high speed into the brain and animate the soul, going back to the brain into the muscles. (Eisler, Rudolf: Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe [Dictionary of Philosophical Terms], volume 1. Berlin 1904, p. 583-584). This theory is based on Pneuma`(*3.2), the host and transmitter of all life functions through breathing.

From the term spiritus animalis is also derived Animal Spirits`, a term used in economics for describing irrational motives, unreflected upon instincts, emotions, and actions, which can have deep impact on the economy. The economist John Maynard Keynes(*4) introduced the term in 1936. Nowadays the economists Robert Shiller and George Akerlof(*5) are linking the interpretation of the "Animal Spirits" to new insights in behavioural economics.

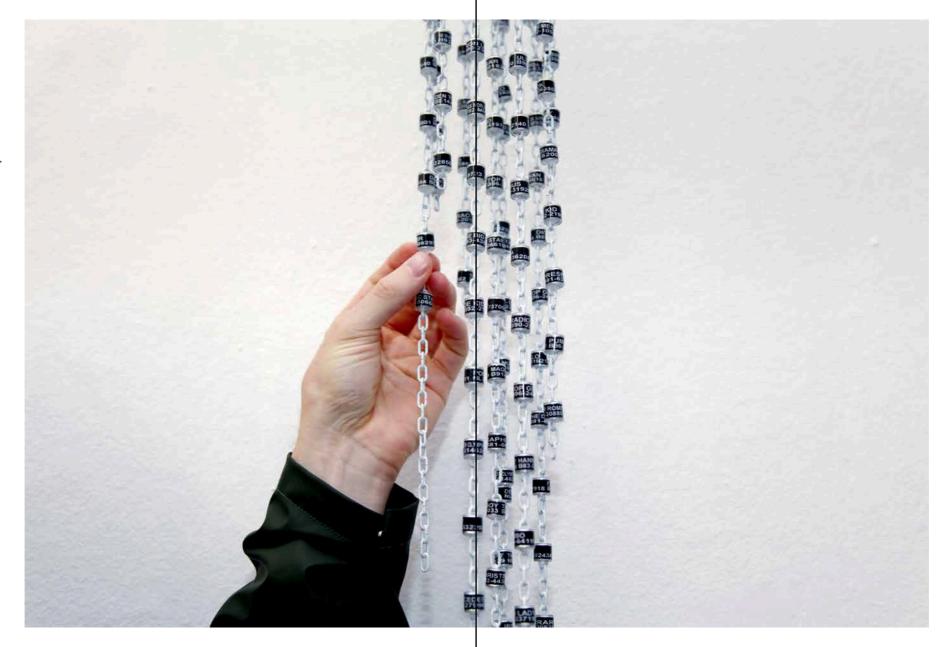
Pigeons seem to spot a pattern in the sky that indicates the direction of polarisation of light. They can orient on this and realize the whereabouts of the North Pole.











Pearls

2017
2.000 imprinted pigeon rings, galvanized steel linking chain, yellow galvanized angles
10 x 10 x 280 cm, 10 x 10 x 288 cm

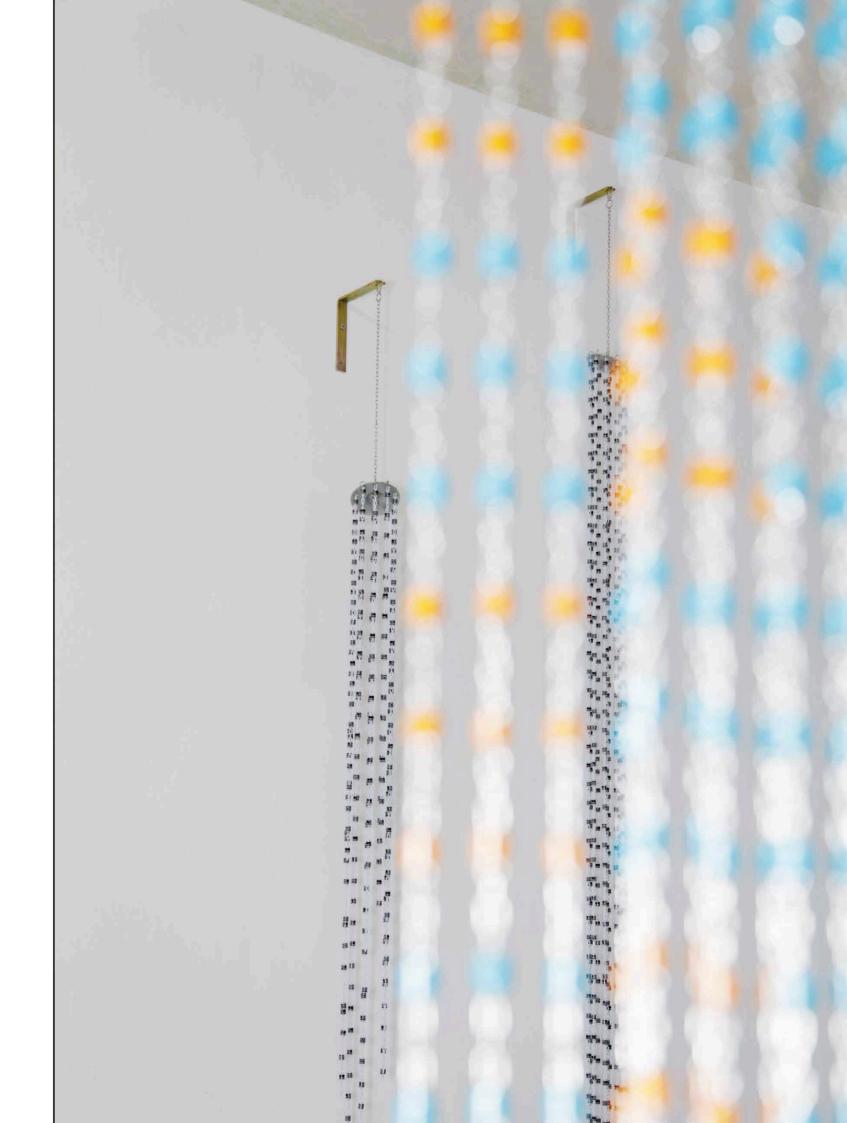
The 2.000 black pigeon rings in Pearls are imprinted with the inscription of various identity numbers and poetic names of victorious pigeons, chosen by their owners.

The collection of pigeon names for the work Pearls was collected from pigeon specific magazines, books, and catalogues.

PONY	THE BOSS
SONY	DERRICK
STELLA	CASANOVA
YOUNG ARTIST	MOZART
TARZAN BOY	GERDA
HANNIBAL BOY	ASI
DR POL	DE KID
SUPER ROMEO	APOLLO
SUPER 188	RADIO
DEN TORNADO	FARAO
DAUGHTER OLYMPIADE	JUMBO
SUN WARRIOR	IRON LADY
TOP GUN	HERO-19
THE BOSS	MAGIC STAR
DE FANTAST	SUPERSTAR
BOEMERANG	DE SUPERPROVINCIAAL
ABBA	MUSKETIER
ULTRA	FERRARI
RITA	BETTY
PUMA	DIRK
DERRICK	DRACULA

MISS WORLD TAN-TAN	
ALIBABA	FUJIYAMA
PRESIDENT	DIEGEL
DALI	DIESEL
DIOR	DARKWING
GOLDEN BOY II	
LOTUS	GOLDRUSH
ROMULUS	
REMUS	MONEY
DARCO II	
JONGE DAX	AMIGO
CLOUSEAU	MISTRAL
SUPERMAN	
THE BIG SHOT	THE DIAMANT
DE CONCORDE	
CHRISTINE	SAPHIR
MERCEDES WENDY	CAECAD
RAMBO	CAESAR
BIRGIT	VIKING
MOHAMED	
	I and the second





sign signed signed 2017 work attire, embroidery, coat hanger 116,5 x 55 cm



The work sign signed signed is a blue coat from the 1970s with an embroidered signature from Andrew Bolton.

It is a reprise of the cover photo of the exhibition Aware of Another, being a photo of the photo of the photo. The cover photo shows a Chinese and a Belgian pigeon breeder in the 70s. This time was intensively influenced by Anthony Bolton's (*6) work, which made him famous in that era.

His work can be found in numerous magazines, private homes, and in the memories of the breeders, experts, and aficionados of that time.

Keith Mott pays tribute to Anthony Bolton — the 'Master':

"It was very sad hearing about the passing of Anthony Bolton on 26th February 2011. It is my opinion that the great Anthony Bolton was the pioneer of good quality pigeon photography and was the greatest pigeon photographer ever! Tony was a perfectionist and it came through in his wonderful pigeon portraits, which now hang on many thousands of pigeon fanciers' living room walls throughout Europe.

(...) He inspired me to take up pigeon photography, but compared the 'Master's' work, mine were rubbish and never came close to his perfection!

I could not begin to imagine how many times his perspex pigeon photography box, with the turn table floor, has been copied by would be photographers through the years and the patience he must have had to produce those wonderful stances on his subjects. I had been into photographing pigeons for many years, mostly to enhance my own articles in the fancy press, but in the 1980s when I wanted a colour portrait of my thirteen times winner Champion 'Kenny', I took him over to Barnes for Tony to photograph. Tony was so pleased with the finished photo of the old grizzle cock, he featured it on his stand at the BHW Blackpool Show the following January.

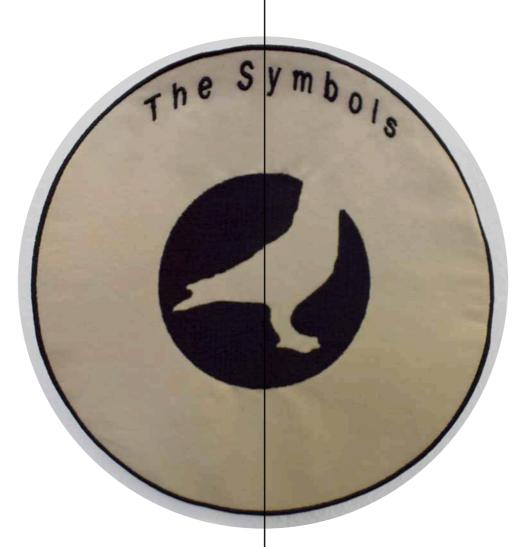
(...) In Tony's day he never had the luxury of the use of a computer to do his pictures; he used film and touched up his wonderful work by hand!(...) There are many excellent pigeon photographers in the sport today, but Anthony Bolton was the 'Master' of them all.



When Symbols Shatter

Three different embroidered patches, Bugatti coat fabric Ø 17 cm







When Symbols Shatter are three embroidered logos on round patches which were taken from multiple realms of the pigeon scene and then modified and blackened to an almost unrecognizable condition.

The template for the But, what ends when patch is the logo of the current Chinese glossy magazine "Pigeon Racing File", which contains Chinese, Dutch and English articles about pigeon racing and is published monthly. The Symbols is derived from the logo of PIPA (Pigeon Paradise), a world known company with its headquarter in Belgium. PIPA engages in research, DNA tests, breeding, and has been a successful international commercial enterprise for years.

Shatter? bears the logo of a pharma product, called 'Zkade', which is a Chinese company, run by people who were breeders themselves and published a magazine about racing pigeons, which does not exist anymore.

The business with pigeons is shaped by varied tendencies, visions, and historical traces - from short-term success to lifelong engagement.





believer & breeder 2017 Tin Cast, boy: 8,3 x 6 x 14 cm, Monkey King: 7 x 6,3 x 12,2 cm



The two tin sculptures believer & breeder are Chinese good-luck charms. The "Monkey King" ("Journey to the West", Illustration from the 18th century) sits and waits on a rock of a Flower-Fruit mountain just before departing for a journey. He embodies a rebel with supernatural powers, who rises against the authorities. According to the myth he is becoming an immortal king of the apes, who creates turmoil in heaven.

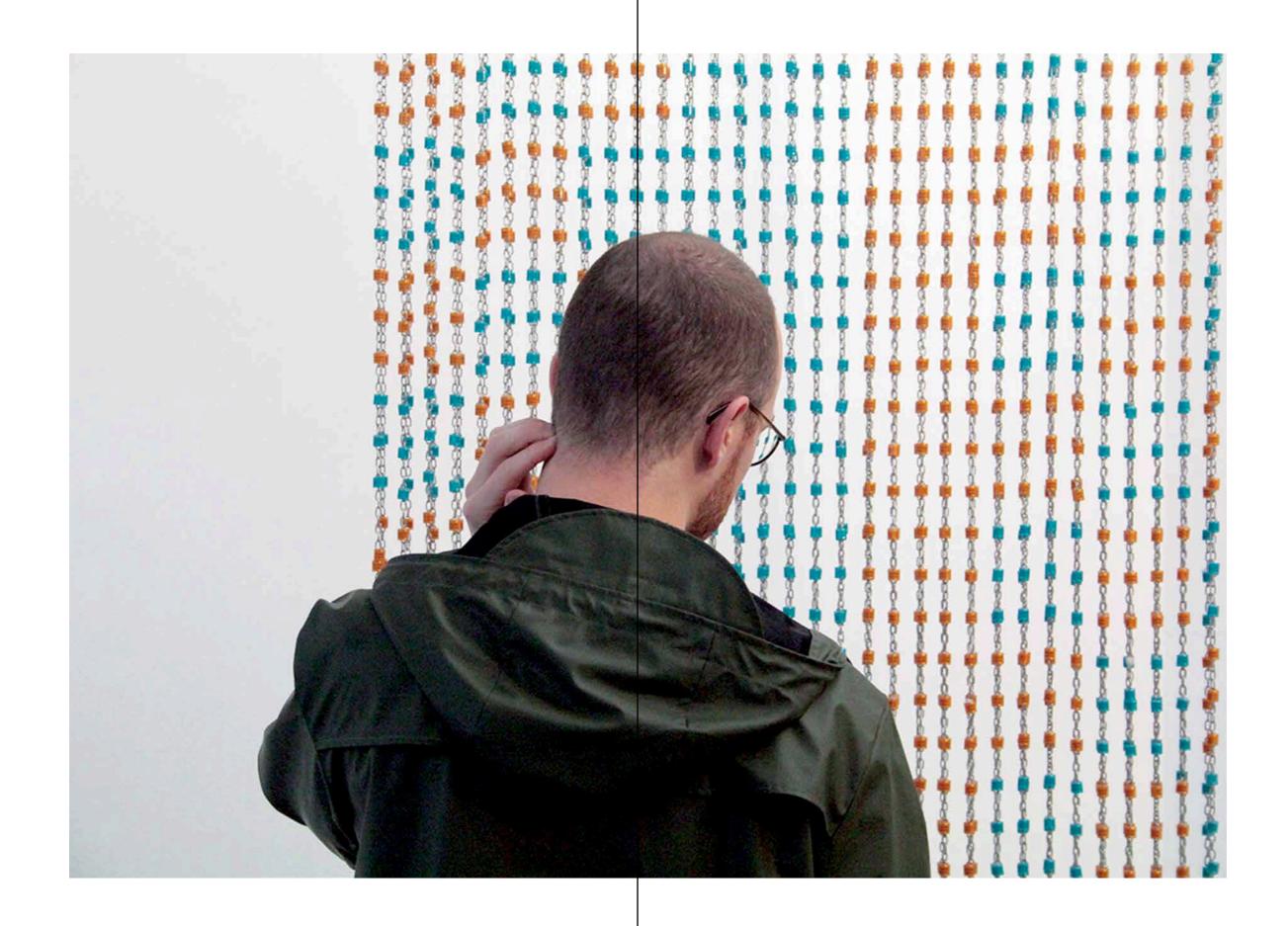
The boy figurine is the embodiment of the modern version of the following scene: the monkey transforms into a human form and thinks, he flew to the end of the universe. There, he encounters five columns. He urinates against the columns to mark his territory and claim ownership. Upon flying back, he realizes that the Buddha Sun Wukong transformed his fingers and turned them into the stated columns. Therefore, the monkey never left the palm of the Buddha.

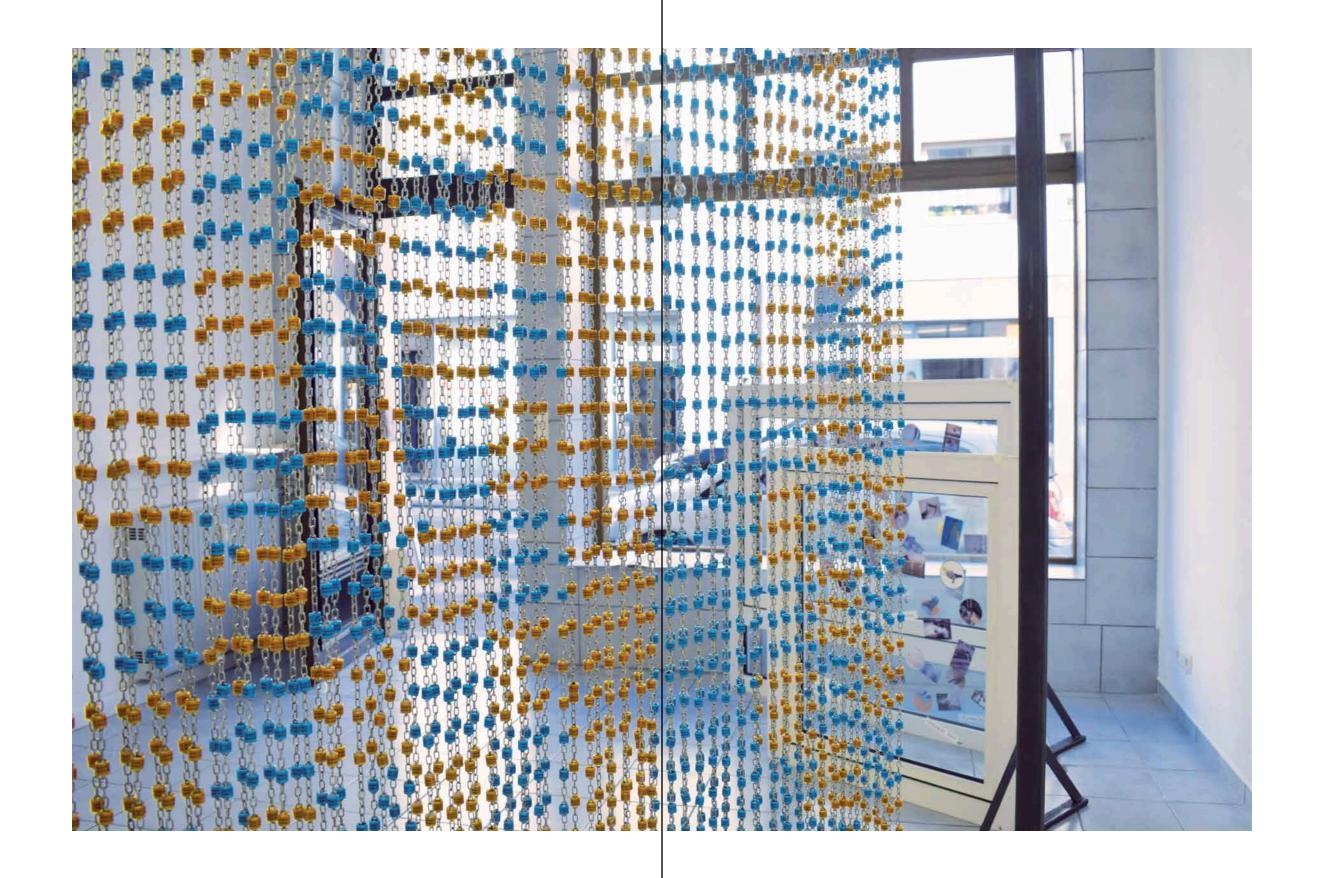
The material tin is used for casting figurines, especially tin soldiers.

This sculpture is a decorative trophy being a combination of a historical statue and a toy element with its flying and awaiting LEGO® pigeons.

The hybridization and overlay of history and the significance of culture is unified in this work and the mundane yet sacred title believer & breeder is like a hint to the recurring relation between power and nature.











再见伙伴 (Adieu Partner)
Videoloop, no audio, 120 min, special for Frank Dommert's DJ Set at the closing event

The working stay and research in China was supported by



(*1) Titels of magazines translated from Chinese and Taiwanese into English: "Sound of the Pigeon", 1980; "Pigeon Racing file", 2017; "Ace-Pigeon Magazine", 1985; "Top Collections International", various editions.

(*2) Andrew Beer (b. 1894, d.1954)

Triumph (+ Young aristocrat; 2 works) "Triumph" a racing pigeon, "Young Artistocrat" a racing pigeon signed ,Andrew Beer' (lower right and left respectively) and both with inscriptions relating to their record flights oil on canvas

12 x 16 in. (30.5 x 40.6 cm.)

a pair (2)

Contact Client Service info@christies.com

(Anrew Beer can be found in the Collection of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Pontypridd Museum and the Radstock, Midsomer Norton & District Museum Society)

(*3.1) animālis, e (anima), l) out of air, air like, airy, natura, Cic.: corporum levium concursio, Cic.: duae partes, una ignea, altera animalis, Cic. – ll) for breathing, vena, Scrib. 84. – lll) belonging to life, 1) act., inheriting and giving life (Ggstz. inanimus, inanimalis), cibus, life air, Cic.: intellegentia, spiritual life power, Cic.: spiritus, life spirits.

Karl Ernst Georges: Ausführliches lateinisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch. Hannover 81913 (reproduction Darmstadt 1998), Band 1, Sp. 437-438

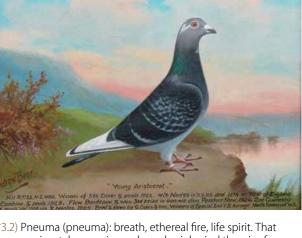
(*4) John Maynard Keynes, British economist, The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money

"Apart from the instability that arises from speculation, instability also arises from human nature. Because of it, a large part of our positive activities, be they moral or hedonistic or economic, are rather dependent on spontaneous optimism than mathematical calculations. Probably most of the positive decisions whose impacts an be experienced in future times, can be traced back to life spirits – on a sudden impulse to action rather than inaction and the weighted average of quantitative benefits multiplied by quantitative probabilities."

(*5) George A. Akerlof, Co-Winner of the 2001 Nobel Prize in Economics Robert J. Shiller, Co-Winner of the 2013 Nobel Prize in Economics

Animal Spirits, 2009: How Human Psychology Drives the Economy, and Why It Matters for Global Capitalism

(*6) Anthony Bolton (b. 1894, d.2011)



(*3.2) Pneuma (pneuma): breath, ethereal fire, life spirit. That the organism takes on air, used on physiological theories from HIPPOKRATES. According to ARISTOTELES, in blood lies an air like substance (anathymiasis), in arteries lies a pneuma as carrier of impulses of emotion and movement. The pneuma in the organism gets distributed by the veins and causes pulse and breathing. The Stoics call pneuma the god-nature of their powerful and all permeating being.

Eisler, Rudolf: Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe, Band 2 (Dictionary of Philosophical Terms, Volume 2). Berlin 1904, S. 123-124.

The global financial crisis has made it painfully clear that powerful psychological forces are imperiling the wealth of nations today. From blind faith in ever-rising housing prices to plummeting confidence in capital markets, "animal spirits" are driving financial events worldwide. In this book, acclaimed economists George Akerlof and Robert Shiller challenge the economic wisdom that got us into this mess, and put forward a bold new vision that will transform economics and restore prosperity. (Princeton University Press)

