

Excerpt:

Julia Dold

on the exhibition "*Spaziergang am Blattrand II*", Galerie Claeys, 2016

“What is the pattern that connects the crab to the lobster and the orchid to the primrose, and all four of them to me? And me to you?”<sup>1</sup> This question, to which the American anthropologist, biologist, social scientist and philosopher Gregory Bateson has spent his entire life searching an answer to, also concerns Detel Aurand as an artist. In doing so, she leaves discipline and genre boundaries behind. As a draftswoman, painter, sculptor, filmmaker (together with her sister Ute Aurand) and as a writer, she employs a wide range of artistic possibilities. Aurand needs this freedom. She does not follow any formal concept. With her particular intensity and perception, she repeatedly takes on an inner aesthetic dialogue with what is unfathomable in nature and the cosmos, with growth and blossoming, becoming and being, beauty and mystery, but also with scientifically worked out laws and thought models and their time-typical modes of representation. Above all she creates drawings, collages, paintings and delicate sculptures that create an atmosphere of life, movement and mystery, mostly combined with a playful lightness and surreal connotation.

In this exhibition we accompany the artist on one of her “Spaziergänge am Blattrand” or “walks along a leaf’s edge”. (...) The shifting of perspective and combination of disparate viewpoints and modes of representation, for example in the combination of the bird's eye view, as is common in ornament and in the art of many non-European cultures, with the central perspective used in Europe since the Renaissance, dominates Aurand's pictorial language. (...) With the double meaning of the word leaf (*Blatt*<sup>2</sup>), in her title she refers to plants and natural phenomena - often either direct or metaphorical impetus for her work, but also to the sheet of paper, the edge of which marks the interface between the designed surface and the space surrounding it. This place between surface and space has been of particular interest to her in recent years: “That brief moment before the before and the after - the in-between, where one thing changes into another, spatially and two-dimensionally, within or outside of time, always changing... Where the static and the dynamic, the geometric and the organic meet, the starting points for my work are found. My interest lies in the pictorial

invention of precisely these interfaces, such as between surface and space, past and present, nature and culture, abstraction and sensuality..."<sup>3</sup>

(.....) In her walks along the edge of the leaf/sheet, Detel Aurand takes us into the depths of her experience and thinking and thus trains our own seeing and our sensitivity to the world, in the spirit of Agnes Martin:

"The underside of the leaf

Cool in shadow

Sublimely unemphatic

Smiling of innocence

The frailest stems

Quivering in the light

Bend and break

In silence

This poem, like the paintings, is not really about nature. It is not what is seen. It is what is known forever in the mind."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gregory Bateson, "Spirit and Nature. A necessary unit", Frankfurt/Main, p.15

<sup>2</sup> The German *Blatt* can refer to a leaf or sheet of paper

<sup>3</sup> Detel Aurand, typescript, 2017, p1

<sup>4</sup> Agnes Martin, in the 1960s, in: "The nature of art. Encounters with nature from the 19th century to the present", edited by Dieter Schwarz, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, 2010, p246