

**IN THE MAKING:  
ILYA & EMILIA KABAKOV**  
FROM DRAWING TO INSTALLATION  
VON ZEICHNUNG ZU INSTALLATION

17.10.2019 – 23.2.2020



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# Drifting Along the Rhine in 'Medusa: Floating Body'

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Article by Faye Campbell // Sept. 25, 2019

The exhibition 'Medusa: Floating Body' at Galerie Crone centres around a performance piece that Tomas Kleiner and Marco Biermann staged in July, a playful enactment of carefree days in the sun as one of the artists lay on a specially-made raft. A drone follows his meandering journey down the Rhine river from dawn until dusk.



Tomas Kleiner and Marco Biermann: 'Medusa: Floating Body', 2019, Installation view // Photo by Sebastian Schobbert

In the first room of the gallery, visitors are promptly transported from Charlottenburg into the performance itself. On a screen installed in the ceiling, one of the artists drifts above our heads in complete repose, a hand occasionally grazing the water. In order to watch, you also have to mimic the reclined position: it is tempting to lean back in the flotation devices that are scattered across the floor. The sensory elements in the gallery space viscerally enhance the illusion of participation: the smell of plastic from the rafts immediately envelopes you when walking in the door, the sound of lapping waves echoes throughout the gallery space. The installation mirrors romantic river trips in the summer, skin sticking to a slightly-too-hot plastic air mattress on a July afternoon, toes dipping into the water, a suspension of care and responsibility.

This apparent ease and unconcern of a languid body on an air mattress contrasts sharply with the required navigation of governmental regulations. In order to facilitate the performance, it was necessary for the artists to contact and be in dialogue with the city. The facility of the performance is merely an illusion, the navigation of the waterway laws and regulatory requirements and the research for undertaking the piece are revealed more fully in the documents and literary and historical materials in the adjacent rooms.



Tomas Kleiner and Marco Biermann: 'Medusa: Floating Body', 2019, Installation View. // Photo by Sebastian Schobbert

The exhibition is supplemented by materials from the process, as well. The images gesture toward scientific studies and expeditions in the field: polaroid pictures that portray the artists in bright orange life jackets, clambering into a boat or peering out a window as they sit on a train. In a tiny aquarium in the corner, a small jellyfish that had been caught that morning floats gently. Within the main gallery space, a boat sits slightly askew, as if a coy invitation to enter, towels still flung over the side, goggles dropped on the seat. The images and materials serve to reinforce the childlike wonder of exploration. There is a sense that you can just step into a boat and do it yourself.

'Medusa: Floating Body' is a playful reminder of discovery, of putting on a lifejacket and a pair of goggles and play-acting as a scientist. It simultaneously presents the simplicity of just floating downstream with no set schedule or agenda, while also addressing the realities of public space infrastructures.

### Exhibition Info

**GALERIE CRONE** (<http://galeriecrone.com/>)


Tomas Kleiner and Marco Biermann: 'Medusa: Floating Body'


Exhibition: Sept. 07–Nov. 1, 2019

Fasanenstraße 29, 10719 Berlin, [click here for map](#)

(<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Galerie+Crone/@52.5024433,13.31793,15z/data=!4n>)


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