

INTERVIEW: KATRIN SCHÖß

Itsliquid

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Luca Curci talks with **Katrin Schöß** during **THE BODY LANGUAGE 2021** at **THE ROOM Contemporary Art Space**.

Katrin Schöß was born in **Oldenburg**, Germany, in **1968**, and studied architecture in Berlin. After her graduation, she moved to **Milan** where she began her career as a **freelance architect**. While living in **Italy**, she also worked as a stage designer. After returning to **Germany**, she worked as an architect in **Berlin** and in her hometown. Becoming more and more aware of the limitations of the very technical, strict and rather unemotional process of drawing and designing as an architect, she searched for new ways to express herself and turned to **drawing freehand** and working with (mostly) nude models. The focus of her work is on the **human body**. More recently, she has been exploring working together with **musicians** and **performers** in a new format in which she attempts to capture the artists' **movements and gestures** in real-time during live concerts or dance theater performances. The gallerist and artist **Anna-Maria Nordiek**, who hosted her drawings in September **2020**, called her work: "Images full of humanity".



Luca Curci – What is your background? What is the experience that has influenced your work the most?

Katrin SchöB – I use drawing to take a closer look at a space or a situation, or to express myself and my ideas. I first started life drawing when I studied architecture in the Nineties. Not so long ago I experimented working with moving models and dancers for the first time. It was a completely new and unexpected experience. If you try to capture movements, the figures turn into something abstract.

LC – What are your thoughts while you paint? Do you have any habits or rituals while you work?

KS – I always ask the models I work with to choose the position or gestures themselves, so there is no preconception or expectation from my side, and I have to react immediately and decide on the spot how to translate what I see into lines and colors on my paper. I think in terms like composition, perspective, light. When I start sketching it is like doing sports: I push myself for a good result I don't know yet. And it's always a surprise for me and for the model to look at the finished drawing as we both have only our own imagination of what the outcome could be.

Image courtesy of Katrin SchöB

LC – Did your style change over the years? In which way?

KS – It definitely changed, or perhaps better put: it evolved. It has been quite a process to learn to trust my own eyes and my experiences to express the uniqueness and the soul of a particular moment. I even started to work with wax for figure and portrait sculpting for a deeper understanding of proportions and movements. I was always afraid of drawing portraits, so during the first lockdown in the spring of 2020, I forced myself to practice portrait sketching every evening after dinner with my daughter at the kitchen table. Now I'm not afraid of drawing faces anymore!

LC – Which themes do you pursue? What is your preferred subject, if there is any?

KS – It clearly is the human body, but I also love to draw landscapes. In fact, the human body is like a landscape, and portraits are landscapes of our souls. Performing dancers or musicians create shapes and forms that I try to capture as some sort of narrative of a particular moment. It is all about opening myself to that briefest of moments and then reporting quickly what I see and feel. Every drawing is like a very personal entry in a diary, something that cannot be repeated.

LC – How do you choose your subjects? Is it a reasoned or an instinctive process?

KS – I'd say it's both. There are infinite possibilities. I always look for the 'plot', for the story behind a movement, a pose, whether it is the intimacy of a gesture, the haunting expressiveness of dark eyes, the arch of a bent leg or back. Once I have made the decision what the focal point and with it the starting point will be, it's all about composition, proportions, shadow, light, etc.