

"Caring is anxious—to be full of care, to be careful, is to take care of things by becoming anxious about their future, where the future is embodied in the fragility of an object whose persistence matters."

Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 2010

Rice pudding, ice cream, and lettuce: Food and eating habits are closely linked to social, geographic, historical, and cultural aspects and circumstances. What and how we eat can depend on where and how we live. In this way, food can create inclusions and exclusions – for instance, when it is only available to certain social classes. At the same time, food can shape identity and point to people's political or religious attitudes, as well as their lifestyles. The preparation of food – cooking – is also a social activity. In most cultures, at least in private spaces and family households, this role is allocated to the wife or mother.

One core idea in Lisa Holzer's exhibition *You Make Me Very Hungry* is the thematisation of the social dimension of food. Side dishes and desserts are aestheticised, formed, and arranged – sometimes almost in an alienated manner – in oversized, designed photographs. Together with the installation work *The Lap of the Gallery/Mother (small site-specificity)*, and the text *The Fun in the Figure of the Mother* (reminiscent of the visitor's map on the wall of a museum), the works refer to and reflect upon the mother's role as carer. Through this, it is not only food that is engaged by Holzer, but also care work. This economic and labour sphere exists in opposition to the conventionally-defined sphere of "production", and thereby is often undertaken as voluntary reproductive labour, especially inside private households. It is a type of labour that is not commonly understood or acknowledged – remaining invisible, and therefore attaining low social recognition. Through this, Holzer's approach also involves inquiring as to the nature of work more generally, its definitions and accepted forms, and where it takes place.

Even today, activities of caring (cooking, caring, educating, etc.) are socially linked to womanhood, and are predominantly performed by women.¹ Lisa Holzer's work connects this

¹ Unpaid family care is provided by about two-thirds of women. According to a report for the BMFSFJ's *Zweiten Gleichstellungsbericht* (Second Gender Equality Report, 2017), women in Germany do 52 percent more of this unpaid work than men. This is 87 minutes per day for free - referred to as the Gender Care Gap.

fact with the figure of the mother, before redefining it. The remains of vanilla ice cream, and the haphazard and not-fully-varnished frames. Posters that are crooked, and stick out from edges. Such elements point not just towards the conventional 'caring mother' – but broaden this image. Holzer's mother-figure is humorous, funny, playful and cheerful. The role of mother constantly resonates with the role of the child – suggesting that it is the child, ultimately, who created the mother in the first place. Furthermore, *You Make Me Very Hungry* departs from the conventions of hanging art – they are not displayed at eye-level, but are instead arranged to the sightlines of children. The theme and hanging system allow the supposedly infantile and playful to double back on one another, simultaneously allowing for a more pronounced visual immersion for adults as well.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the last movement of Paul Thomas Anderson's *Phantom Thread* (2017). In the film, the protagonist Alma poisons her lover's tea with dried mushrooms out of jealousy, whereupon she devotedly nurses him back to health – only to poison him once again in the end.

Through this, not only the process of care, but also ephemerality becomes a theme in the exhibition. Chrysanthemums that signify death, and reminiscent of the 1960s with their rich red. Salads in sepia tones wither, resembling photographs of flowers from the beginning of the 20th century. Ice that melts and loses its shape, and soot that will not stick to the glass forever. After the exhibition, some of the works will have to be torn from the wall. These works, too, are photographically captured, creating a bridge between the past, the present and the future – when the child may perhaps become a funny and/or caring mother herself.

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