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The magic of projection : augmentation and immersion in media art

Ernst, S.J.G.

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Author: Ernst, Sophie

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Biographical note

Sophie Ernst was trained as an industrial mechanic at BMW, Munich (*Gesellenbrief* 1995) before studying sculpture at the Academie Beeldende Kunsten Maastricht (baccalaureus, 1998). Ernst is a graduate of the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Amsterdam (2000). She lived and worked for four years in Pakistan (2003-2007), where she taught as an Assistant Professor at the Beaconhouse National University.

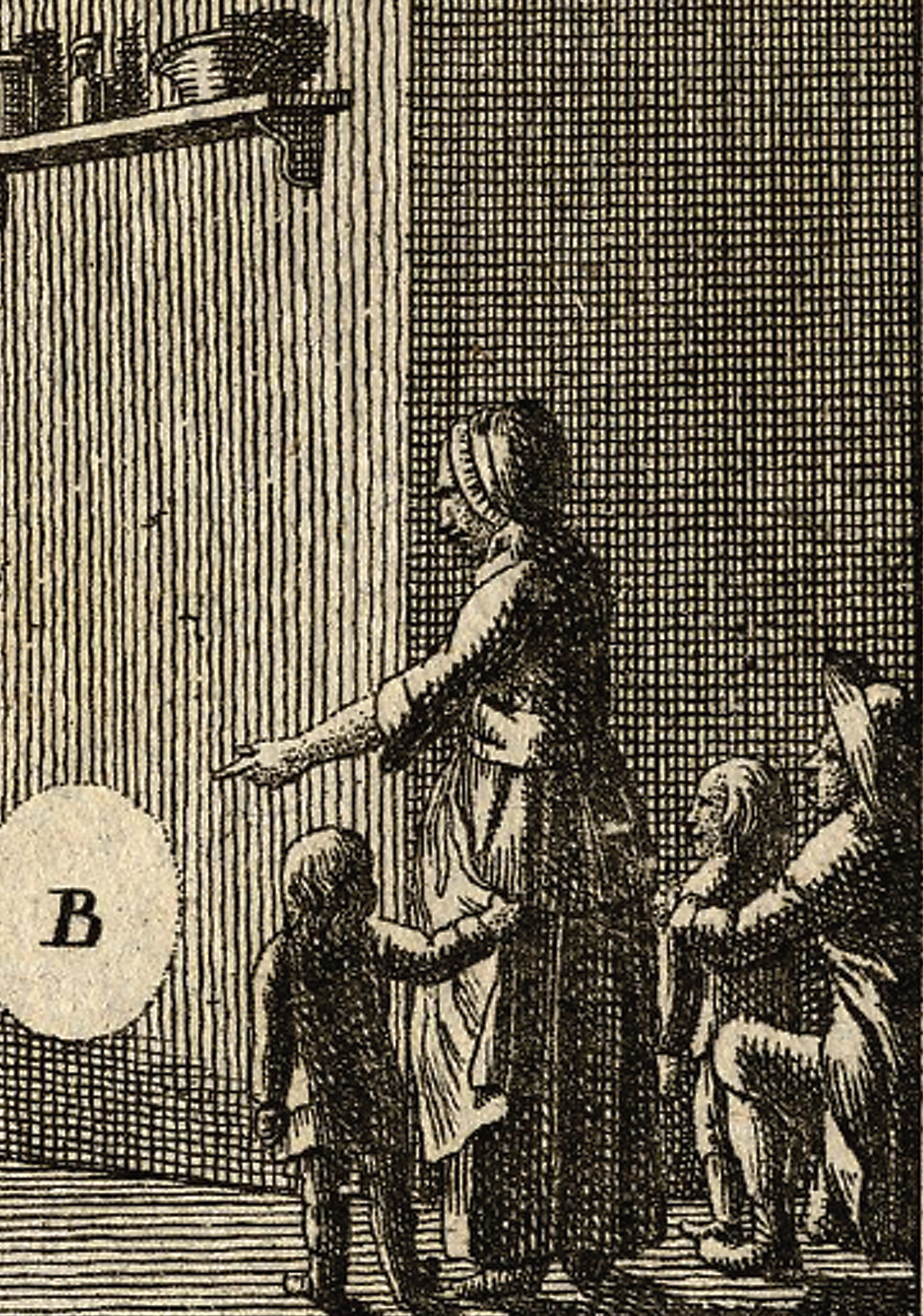
Her work evolves from conversations and interviews and she sees making art as a response to these encounters: “As an artist I am not simply a producer of objects, but I see art as a *speculative tool* for rethinking current social and political conditions.” In her artistic work she has used projection in relation to architecture, memory, culture, historical objects, urban spaces and identity. She has presented her work widely at exhibitions, such as: the 6th Moscow Biennale; 14th Asia Triennial, Manchester; 9th Sharjah Biennial; *Lines of Control*, Johnson Museum (Cornell University) and Nasher Museum (Duke University); *Move on Asia*, ZKM (Karlsruhe); and solo exhibition *HOME*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Recent lectures include: “The HOME project”, Figurer l'exil, Colloque, Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme, Paris; “An intellectual history of the Power-point projection”, Changing Societies?, Conference, Institute for Asian and African Studies, Humboldt University, Berlin; “Idealised Enclosures”, Sites of Construction in Asia, Symposium, Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong.

She published books and articles such as: *Idealized Enclosures in Yishu*, *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, Vol. 13, Nr.2, CN; Ernst, Sophie, *HOME: Architecture of Memory* (West Breton: Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 2012); (Issue editor) *Oeuvre, TAKE on Art*, Vol I, Issue 4, 2011; Side effects, in *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 2011; Ernst, Sophie, *LOVEDOLLS* (München: Museum für Abgüsse Klassischer Bildwerke, 2004)

Sophie Ernst's doctoral thesis is an artist's contribution to media art theory. It focusses on the role of projection as material for sculpture. She considers projections to be either immersive, like a cinematic experience, or augmentative, in the sense of a mixed reality. Immersions, the dominant mode in projection art and large parts of the theoretical discourse, presuppose a *willing suspension of disbelief*. Augmentation, on the other hand, can be seen as 'magical'. It is a technique in art to 'make strange' by creating a distance that can be either pleasant or unsettling. Ernst argues that augmenting projections are persuasive, not because they are materially 'real', but rather since they make visible what we could imagine as real.





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