

# BASS MY TRESPASS

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## 24.1. – 1.3.2025

Julia Znoj

*"There is a time that is rhythmic rather than linear; a time that stresses return, repetition, breaks, openings and closings and not endless progression or progression to an end"* (Jamieson Webster, *Disorganization & Sex*. 2022)

I'm lying in bed, feeling orange. It smells of metal, the clock is ticking, something beeps once an hour - is it the fire alarm? A Geiger counter? A cuckoo clock? Has a whole hour really passed? The day is approaching, the sun is rising orange.

Before the clinical thermometer was invented, different types of fever were not differentiated as "higher" or "lower", but only in terms of their quality. Sometimes the condition could even have a synaesthetic quality: Fever could be red, for example, yellow, and sometimes, in combination with nausea, green. Bright fever or dull fever, sweet fever or bitter fever, sticky, porous, soft or hard fever. I feel orange and metallic, almost magnetic. Copper-colored - like rust, like dried traces of blood after washing clothes.

When the measuring device was invented, interest was suddenly focused on the deflection of the quicksilver on the scale - away from the patient and towards the device, towards scalability, comparability and liability. *Higher and lower* replaced the colors, the quality, the characteristics, the poetics of the fever. No one is now interested in the exact hallucinations, the meandering quality of half-sleep, the hauntings, the voices and images, the doctors only want to know how often they occur. *Is the vertigo spinning or swaying?* they ask and stick the clinical thermometer into one of the body orifices or into all the holes, alternately. Chemistry and alchemy are sometimes on the same scale.

In the dry, things can get wet, whereas if they are already wet, they can hardly get "even wetter". Wet, dry or moist - also terms that are intended for measuring, for categorizing. But who is interested in the characteristics of the water itself? Is it hazy or clear? Is it soft or hard? Sometimes you see the nature of water less by looking at the element itself than by looking at the materials that have been touched by it: Your own hair, for example. In Berlin, people have dull hair because they have been touched by "hard" water, while Swiss water makes the hair shine.

The vessel is shaped by its contents, just as the contents are shaped by what surrounds them. In its inverted form, it balances its imaginary contents, the air, like a mold

used to build architecture in the sand. The castle protects itself with thick walls against attacks from outside. Minimal Art, especially Land Art, is structural imperialism - the marking of territory, says Marcel Broodthaers, wearing a little hat on his head that says "Museum" while he builds architectures on the beach with a shovel and molds - just waiting to be caught by a wave.

Evenly distributing objects on a surface: a balancing act. Do you know the game where a group of people have to spread out in space so that the floor, if it were a moving surface, would never lose its balance? Rarely have I seen people so attentive to each other's presence. They look at the floor, downwards, and are radically immediate - anticipating each other's movements, like clairvoyants. A swarm.

The bird's-eye view, just like the result of the measuring device, is always a construction: which bird looks down to the ground, believing it can keep an overview? Birds are constantly on the move, swifts even sleep in the air, switching off one half of their brain while the other remains awake. After a few hours, they do not change position, as we humans do, but replace one half of the brain with the other, like a night nurse taking a temperature in hospital. They never have a so-called "bird's eye view", nor is their fever measured, at least not on a scale set in motion by quicksilver. The swifts' fever is orange, green or yellow - and so is their view of the earth. Radical with-ness from above. The ground is mobile, it evaporates, you can never grasp it as a whole.

I'll never forget what it was like to sit for hours in a Faraday cage, an express train on which the high-voltage power line had fallen because lightning had struck it - we got increasing electric shocks, at first only when we bumped our noses against the window pane of the train, later also when we bumped our noses against each other.

*What is energy?* I once asked a physicist friend of mine and he answered, both enigmatically and soberingly: *Stored work.*

A lightning rod only works with a literal double bottom. (Just like psychoanalysis). A lightning rod looks like a weapon - like so many things designed to protect people from the forces of nature. It is said that disasters are created by the same technologies that diagnose them. Scalability is authority, is intrusion, is violence.

Text by Olga Hohmann

Julia Znoj (\*1990 Bern, Switzerland) works and lives in Vienna and Thun. Julia Znoj completed a BFA at the Zurich University of Arts and graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in the class textual sculpture of Heimo Zobernig. Between 2016 and 2020, she co-ran the exhibition space *Gärtnergasse* in Vienna. Recent solo and duo exhibitions include: *Joy Street* (2024), WAF Galerie, Vienna (AT); *Zone 1*, Vienna Contemporary with Windhager von Kaenel (2023); *Unhinged* (2023), Sharp Projects, Copenhagen (DK); *She is in it not not at all* (2022), Kunstraum Schwaz (AT); *aquadrome bubblepad* (2021), Unanimous Consent, Zurich (CH). Her work has been shown in the following group exhibitions: Swiss Art Awards, Messe Basel (CH); *Ghost Decider*, Swiss Institute, New York City (US); *Metal Machine Music*, Louis Reed, New York City (US); *Bridging the Gap*, Kiefer Hablützel Göhner Prize, Swiss Art Awards, Kunsthhaus Langenthal (CH); *Light at Eight*, Loggia, Vienna (AT); *Stoffe im Raum*, Heiligen Kreuzerhof, among others.

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Vernissage

Fr, 24.1.2025, 18:00

20:30 Reading Olga Hohmann

## FRONTROOM

Julia Znoj

### 1. *A still Medusa with mild milky brows*, 2025

Steel, glass, paper, glue, paint  
84 x 44 x 50 cm

### 2. *Untitled (a lab in the world)*, 2025

Buckets, steel, water, print, water  
64 x 90 x 44 cm

### 3. *Dissipation Loop*, 2025

Steel, copper wire, found objects  
54 x 40 x 166 cm

### 4. *Derive and Replenish*, 2025

Steel, aluminum, found objects,  
70 x 34 x 228 cm

### 5. *Night bird struck again*, 2025

Steel, found objects, rust converter  
140 x 52 x 108 cm

### 6. *Setup (Direct Current)*, 2025

Laboratory power supply, zinc electrolyte, water, paint, steel, aluminum, paper, glue, glass, wire, found objects  
Size variable

### 7. *twixt six and now*, 2025

Steel, magnets, 200 x 100 x 10 cm

