

***“Rugged dehisces  
and haptic desire”***

***Andreas Hamacher***



*"Haptikos" Nr. 15-2013, 17 x 12 x 32 cm, steeltube*

***“It seems that perfection is attained not  
when there is nothing more to add,  
but when there is nothing more to remove.”***

*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, french writer, poet and aviator, quote from “Terres des Hommes”, 1939*

# *"Rugged dehisces and haptic desire"*

Steel sculptures by Andreas Hamacher

The work on his lyrically abstract work series „Sprünge“ and „Haptikos“ begins at the scrap yards of the region with its varied technical possibilities. The scrap yards are a sort of outdoor studio for the steel sculptor.

In the course of this, the tension field between the ruggedly repelling and the clearly smooth welcoming of the material is essential to the sculptor.

The sculptures emerge from the search of synthetic forms, textures and surfaces and under inclusion of nature and the human soul and encourage the viewer to touch and comprehend.

A haptic revelation.



*"Dehisces" Nr. 05-2014,  
90 x 42 x 35 cm, steel*

# A N D R E A S



*"Dehisces" Nr. 05-2014, 90 x 42 x 35 cm, steel*

# H A M A C H E R





ANDREAS HAMACHER

Born in Trier / Germany in 1967 and raised in Trierweiler, my creativity was fostered quite early, particularly by my family who is interested in art and by the artists who were in and out of our house. From drawing, I then moved to wood sculpture and also attempted stone in parallel when at the age of 20, the varied possibilities of steel had inspired me so deeply that they continue to fascinate and inspire me to this day.

I had learnt my practical abilities in dealing with metals from my manually skilful father and a befriended master blacksmith. In my autodidactic study of the art history, I had become decisively inspired by the form and surface languages of Constantin Brâncuși and Hans Arp. My education in steel sculpture at the European Academy of Arts Trier with Jörg Oetgen, Christoph Lahl and above all, by Mathias Lanfer, also helped me in composing my own use of form language.

I understand my works as a lyrical abstraction. They are animated through the dialogue between geometry and nature and invite the viewer to feel and explore – to understand – the textures of the material as well the circumscribed space within its own borders and beyond.







*"Haptikos" Nr. 10-2014, 60 x 60 x 20 cm, steel*



*"Haptikos" Nr. 10-2014, 60 x 60 x 20 cm, steel*





"Haptikos" 06-2013, 64 x 53 x 25 cm, steel





"Haptikos" Nr. 02-2015, 23 x 14 x 23 cm, steel





*"Haptikos" Nr. 15-2013, 17 x 12 x 32 cm, steel*





"Haptikos" Nr. 06-2014, 75 x 25 x 42 cm, steel



*"Haptikos" Nr. 14-2014, 120 x 140 x 130 cm, steel*





*"Kondirat" Nr. 08-2014, 20 x 50 x 20 cm, steel*



*"Kondirat" Nr. 07-2014, 25 x 55 x 25 cm, steel*



*"Dehisces" Nr. 02-2014, 20 x 115 x 25 cm, steel on plinth*





*"Dehisces" Nr. 12-2014, 26 x 125 x 24 cm, steel on plinth*







*"Dehisces" Nr. 01-2015, 35 x 95 x 25 cm, steel on plinth*





"Dehisces" Nr. 03-2012, 30 x 190 x 40 cm, steel on plinth





*"Dehisces" Nr. 04-2012, 60 x 180 x 90 cm, steel on plinth*



Exhibition „ruß'n`rost“, September / October 2014, Historischer Bahnhof, Kell am See / Germany



"Dehisces" Nr. 12-2013, 60 x 190 x 30 cm, steel on plinth



"Dehisces" Nr. 08-2013, 50 x 300 x 40 cm, steel on plinth





*"Dehisces" Nr. 01-2013, 60 x 70 x 70 cm, steel on plinth*

Im besten Kundee

TOLLE FARBEN  
IM FLUSS ...

SCHMEICHELNDE  
FORMEN ...

PLASTISCHE BILDER  
UND  
LEBENDIGER

obsas

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de zage  
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darau  
zielgehende Materie  
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Harter Stahl  
Künstlerische Weich  
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Die Ausstellung ist sehr  
da man die Exponate  
aufpassen kann. Beifall  
überlegen, was das Expon  
Mein Favorit ist das P

Ich fühle mich wohl hier  
Die dahinterstehenden Ideen  
mich sofort mitl  
Kunstu

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...



## Observations by Dr. Klaus Reeh

### ruß'n'rost

An éditions trèves exhibition with the works of Andreas Hamacher on "Upcycling, Consumption, Resources".

Art, and I say this in advance quite apodictically, is when it allows for a communication connection.

And because I have come to know the exhibition and have discovered that it has passed my test with bravado, I believe that I can say that the art presented here allows for a great deal of communication connection.

Internal monologues, which should be mentioned, also undoubtedly belong to the communication connection. And for myself, I can say that I have not only spoken with myself about the exhibition since yesterday afternoon, but have done so rather intensely. Since there are things that one would absolutely like to know, and perhaps should also know in order to absorb, before one comes along to view.

So first, what one should know and may also want to know.

Not only the pieces of art, but also the artistic creative processes are very important; knowledge about the processes often allows us to see the pieces of art in a different light and this is likewise the case with the works of Andreas Hamacher.

It is clear that immense forces are mobilised in the process, that which is pressed and cut by him with machine force, but perhaps we can also think of it as polished and patinated with human strength that is also machine supported.

The material procurement is significant.

It is actually even a central component of his artistic objectives: The subtitle of the exhibition resounds this.

And nevertheless, scrap metal is not the same scrap metal and steel is not the same steel, so when working with various materials, he must decide and must select.

This is why the material procurement is also significant.

Andreas Hamacher has his scrap metal traders who even allow to him to use the scrap yard with its shears and presses as a sort of open-air studio.

In certain sense, Andreas Hamacher is similar in his work to the stone sculptors who work with spolia because each of them create pieces of art that do not render the "former life" of the material unrecognisable, but rather it is of use as a creation element. And also in a certain sense, he extends the "former life" of his material as a result.

The experiment, the unusual treatments are important.

The opening and closing, bending and cutting, the interaction between the often contradicting treatments and sometimes also patiently waiting for the inspiration of a promising, already preformed object.

And another small footnote in this context.

Andreas Hamacher is not a steel sculptor (who will usually add something), but rather belongs among the rare species of steel sculptors who will instead take something away in order to reveal something new in their material.

And finally, many expect an answer to a question posed by them: What does the artist want to say to us?

It is this one question that is frequently posed and is even more frequently answered at every opportunity. Not by me; I have no intention of reaping something from the works presented here. His choice of material could bring on one inspiration or another and likewise with his treatment processes, but I will nevertheless leave that to him.

Since at the end, he has said that with his work, what we think we have understood and when we, as the viewers, sufficiently think we have understood similarly, it is then possible to come close to what it is that he is trying to convey to us..... or we have all run aground on an enormous misconception.

Now then, something to be paid attention to!

Get very close, move back far, the former can provide surprising impressions because it is then clear that in a sense, the works are multi-dimensionally perceptible, not only in terms of the tactile perception that many of the works possess, no, they want to be touched.

With contemporary sculpture and statuary art, every change in perspective delivers a new impression and the more variously, the better, as is also the case here with Andreas Hamacher.

And so, I close my observations with this and would be pleased to have an exchange with Andreas Hamacher regarding our observations and also still pose open questions to him, even if they remain open, or must or should even remain open in the end.

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**New artistic life**

**Andreas Hamacher, who utilises the by-products of steel and scrap metal as a material, is presenting his works at the éditions trèves Exhibition.**

**In the day to day, the Trier enterpriser looks after the well-being of his guests. In his spare time, Andreas Hamacher creates new, highly imaginative forms and objects from already scrapped metals. He has been passionately connected to sculpting since his late youth. After his first experiences with other materials, the artist had turned to steel as a material. Now his sculptures that have been wrought with great commitment and diligence can be viewed at the Trier Tufa. „The variety of the formative possibilities excites me,“ Hamacher said regarding his working material that is primarily drawn from a Trier scrap yard. The ageing process that is visible in the rust is likewise compelling to Hamacher. The sculptor symbolically utilises the surface creation as an expression of transitoriness and change.**

**Hamacher frequently contrasts the rusty surfaces with polished edges. The most interesting works within the show stem from the „Haptikos“ work group, where the Greek word for „sense of touch“ is in the title. The evidently catchy steel sculptures resemble crumpled cushions. What is steel-hard in reality appears to be handled as a smooth, arbitrarily malleable mass.**

# The ease of steel – Exhibition in the TUFA

Stefanie Braun | 09.10.2013

The annual exhibition of the „éditions trèves“ association in the Tufa has been available to admire since September 20th. Included this year are local and international artists such as Ursula Dahm, Rita Gierens, Hanna Trampert, Katharina Worrying and Andre Thil as well as Andreas Hamacher, who 5vier.de met for a conversation.

This is his first year as a member of „éditions trèves“ and he is already providing for a sensation at the current annual exhibition with his impressive steel sculptures. He is now presenting three work series within the exhibition: Haptikos (Haptic), Sprünge (Dehisces) and Gradzahlen (Degrees). Hidden behind these titles are large and small sculptures that not only allow for a view beyond their own horizon, but also polarise: “There are people who receive very negative feelings when they see my sculptures. They respond quite strongly,” said Hamacher and with this, he particularly means the man-high works within his Sprünge series. “I think that it also depends on the surroundings and in a space such as here in the Tufa, they have a different effect than in an open, natural environment. Space-dominating.” Some of the rust-coated sculptures are 100 years old, or at least their original material is since the steel beams that had come from demolished buildings had laid in the scrap yard as „garbage“ until Andreas Hamacher had collected and bent them into their new form with heat and brawn and thus lent them a new meaning.

“In a comforting, melancholic way, rust often reminds me of the cycle of origination, decay and reformation that we as people are also subject to. The sculptures are intended as a reminder of this.” Indeed, they should not only be a reminder, but also render a perceptibility: “My preferred sense is not necessarily sight, but rather, the feeling. It is a matter of creating a new comprehension.”

He holds himself to the word with his Haptikos series: These works are intended just for that: To be felt. Art for touching since it is indeed still steel. No one needs to be afraid of “breaking it”. At most, the fear would be of rust-dirty fingers. The works from the Sprünge series are likewise not pieces of art that one must keep a distance from and the artist himself can carelessly lean against them. The third series in which Hamacher deals with spirals and pipes is called is Gradzahlen: “Something new can be discovered within the construction over and over again. New points of view, new forms.” But also new perceptions of the steel material.

## **The smooth sides**

In his latest projects, Hamacher also wants to present the smooth (-est) sides of the steel: “In doing so, for me it is a matter of the ease of the steel and of showing that it can also be smooth. Even so visually smooth that it could pass for a worry stone.” He came upon his working material by chance: “My father is a big nature lover and if he was driving by car and saw garbage at the curb of the street, he would frequently collect and dispose of it.” Once as a young man of 20, Andreas Hamacher was travelling in the car with his father when along the way, they had found pieces of steel on the curb of a street and had collected them. In the course of this, Hamacher had discovered a piece that immediately fascinated him and the idea was born. He soon began to form things from steel: Initially common utensils such as an ashtray, candlesticks and lamps. Then came the figures and natural forms that had ultimately become increasingly more abstract.” This is, I think, quite a normal process of developing from the confinement of figures into abstraction, from the physical to the emotional.”

By the way, he no longer has the piece that he had found at the curb of the street on that occasion: “I had given away a great deal of what I had made at that time.” But his mother had kept all that she would sometimes receive from him. “Since mothers are like that, you can see all of the stages of development.” It is not that he is „ashamed“ of his actions in youth. “I made those pieces at that time because they wanted to be made. They are good as they are in their own way and maybe I would make them differently today, but they were right at that time.

It was not only his mother, who is an art therapist herself, who had brought him close to art at an early age: “My grandfather lived on the same country estate as us and I spent a great deal of time with him as a child. He, himself, was a writer and thinker and often had other artists visit. I have had the fortune that a great deal

of what I had made as a child had attracted attention and recognition within these circles.” But there was also development here as he had began with painting that then moved further on to sculpture until he had ended up with steel.

However, the end of this period is still nowhere in sight. “I always notice this when I go to the scrap yard to find new pieces.” He finds an inspiration that means an invitation to get cracking in the studio. A motto coined by Buddha applies in this: “What is good, goes easily. If it is a little too bulky or is rushed along, it simply does not work. Neither for me nor for others. It is often helpful here when a matter is initially left to rest. Sometimes there is something else that is also missing.” As with three older works by him that simply did not wish to become good. Until he united them into one single piece of art. “It is often a matter of time or the right timing. Also while heating up the steel, if it is heated too briefly, you can muster as much strength as you want, but nothing happens. If too much heat is applied for too long, then the material is burned.” It is likewise an exercise in patience for the artist their self.” Actually, I am a very impatient person who will quite happily work very quickly. Mostly on several pieces at the same time.”

With the steel, it is a little bit as is in life: “It is actually all a question of the time, whether it is while working with steel or while waiting for the bus, so if one is too early, they are not able to get on the bus as quickly as they would like, but if they arrive too late, then perhaps they will only see the rear lights driving away.” Everything is just a question of the timing.

## **ruß‘n‘rost reloaded**

### **Origination, decay and reformation**

**Andreas Hamacher uses clearly unutilised by-products such as steel and scrap metal and creates art from them. “We are the generation that uses the most resources. But everything is subject to a cycle. And in today’s era, this origination, decay and reformation is becoming increasingly faster. In a subtle way, i want to draw attention to the fact that not everything that appears to be rubbish is actually rubbish,” said Hamacher. He reduce their material to the minimum. “As the French author, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, had once said, “Perfection does not originate when there is nothing more to add, but rather when nothing more can be taken away.” And i orientate my art according to this. With how little one can bring in order to generate the maximum expression,” Hamacher tells us.**

### **Experience with all senses**

All senses are demanded here because the sign with the label “Please, do not touch” that is to be found in so many museums would be out of place with Hamacher. The sculptures should even be touched because the textures, scratches, edges and finishings are what make them so interesting and unique. His work series „Sprünge“ and „Haptikos“ includes peaceful still lifes that have a smooth and charming effect as well as wild sculptures that demonstrate the vulnerable, dangerous side of the steel and the sheer force involved in its preparation.

It is also interesting that all works are provided without a title because the imagination of the visitors should be stimulated and the viewing should be a sort of meditation. “I always ask the people to have a look for themselves to see what they can discover in the works. What they see within them can never be wrong. And this is very exciting for me because most of what they see stands in connection with their personal experiences and memories in their life,” said Hamacher.

## ***“Rugged dehisces and haptic desire”***

*Andreas Hamacher, Jakob-Schwarzkopf-Str. 19, 54296 Trier/Germany*

*Atelier im alten Milchhof*

*Tel.: +49 1 75 / 125 18 40*

*info@andreas-hamacher.eu, www.andreas-hamacher.eu*