VAN DER GRINTEN GALERIE



# Leiko Ikemura, Joseph Beuys

## Beuys + Girls + Ikemura

*03.09.2021–30.10.2021*

As an auspicious start to the Cologne gallery season, we are pleased to present 'Beuys + Girls + Ikemura', an exhibition-installation realized by internationally acclaimed artist Leiko Ikemura in collaboration with the Van der Grinten Galerie.

The exhibition is a dialogue with Joseph Beuys, whom Ikemura met in person in the early 80s, on the invitation of Dieter Koepplin, then-director of the Kupferstichkabinett (print gallery) at the Kunstmuseum Basel. This single memorable encounter made a lasting impression and brought commonalities to the fore, distilled in the terms: Transavantguardia, Eurasia, intuition, the shamanic nature of animals, wordplay and poetry, and even Eastern philosophy, primarily Taoism. But the main thing the two artists have in common is the human female as a recurring motif. In the case of Leiko Ikemura in the form of her now iconic "girl beings", which first appeared as a key motif in 90s, and found in the Beuys oeuvre mainly in the drawings from the 50s, in which female figures dominated entire work series.

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In addition to several ceramic pieces and a brand new little glass sculpture, Leiko Ikemura here shows mainly works on paper: girls, girl-like hybrid beings, heads, heads with text and text images with a palimpsest character. She positions these works in immediate dialogical proximity to the drawings and watercolors of Joseph Beuys, a selection of extraordinary pictures that pursue the thematic thread of the "actress" (as shaman, artiste and female faun), of cosmologies, and animate beings of our world, such as plants and animals. All of these works are from the 50s.

The catalogue/book 'Leiko Ikemura/Joseph Beuys: Beuys + Girls + Ikemura' appears in conjunction with the exhibition in a limited single-printing edition. The book includes plates of all the works displayed in the show and a comprehensive interview with Leiko Ikemura from August 2021, in which gallerist Franz van der Grinten explores with the artist the genesis of the exhibition.

The Van der Grinten Galerie has also published a special limited luxury edition of the book in a linen-bound slipcase, which includes an original Leiko Ikemura drawing from 2021 (ed. of 10).

The book will be presented in the gallery on Sunday, 19 September 2021 on the occasion of Friedhelm Mennekes' artist talk with Leiko Ikemura.

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