

Art in crisis – "My work has become more intuitive and calm"  
Painter Leonie Specht misses exhibitions

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Artist Leonie Specht works more intuitively in the pandemic. Photo.: Peter Wolff

By Tim Müller

Heidelberg. Leonie Specht is studying art at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Offenbach. The 27-year-old has been painting since she was a child. Three years ago, her hobby became a profession.

Leonie, how did you experience the past Corona year?

It was a completely new situation. Over time, however, I got used to the unfamiliar routines quite well. Compared to friends who are in the music scene, for example, I was able to come to terms with the pandemic somewhat more easily due to the different way of working.

How has Corona influenced your art?

I was already very interested in the human body before. That's why my art often deals with the themes of health and illness. Corona is a related subject, of course. The virus has influenced me in the way I approach my paintings. However, I must add that I am still at the very beginning in terms of coming to terms with all the impressions of this pandemic.

How does this manifest itself concretely in your way of working?

I paint at home now. Before, I worked in a studio, but I terminated it. It is a slower way of working, not as focused. I draw more with charcoal and graphite now. I also don't approach the canvas quite as spontaneously anymore. Overall, my work has become more intuitive and calm.

How did things look last year in terms of your financial situation?

Fortunately, I still have a job besides art, which I can continue - despite the pandemic. That's why I'm not in the situation of having to sell art all the time. But even without this pressure, I miss real exhibitions and the contact with visitors.

So it's pushing you out of isolation again?

Regardless of whether you create art or consume it, I find it enriching when you can stand in front of a work of art and experience it with all your senses - even digital solutions can't completely replace this experience. In addition, when you exchange ideas with others, you often find inspiration, which is sometimes lacking at the moment. That's why I'm looking forward to meeting more people again at some point. But there were also some good experiences in the lockdown: For example, I discovered completely new perspectives when I went for a walk or searched for old books on the Internet.

What's next for you now?

I have many ideas. An exhibition in the summer would be nice - depending on hygiene regulations, maybe even outdoors. In terms of content, however, I will not dedicate an exhibition to Corona alone.