

“red-red-red”

Installation art by Vera Staub

August 10th – October 20th, 2024, 8 am – 8 pm

Church of Wassen, Switzerland

A red object sometimes indicates a looming danger, in any case the color is used to attract our attention. The artist Vera Staub combines it with a material inviting human touch, however: the textile surfaces of three of her works («**Joseph’s coat**» (entry), «**Rahab’s cord**» (church tower, outside), and «**spirited**» (floor)) seem to promote a hands-on approach to grappling with questions of faith.

The fourth one (“**mirrored**”, side wall) consists of several mirrors, which invite visitors to reflect on their own presence inside the church. Through this quite literal depiction of each person’s unique point of view, the artist connects her work to the specific church she chose for her project. For despite being a rather small building in a rural area, the church of Wassen is known to most people in Switzerland – at least from the outside: because of the spiral tunnels of the trans-alpine Gotthard railway line (opened in 1882), train passengers can see it three times as they travel from north to south or vice versa, each time from a different angle.

The little church on a hill has long come to symbolize the ingenuity of modern engineering, but for Staub it also serves as a metaphor for her artistic approach. The artist has in the past used different materials and artistic styles to explore multiple dimensions of a topic, thus circling a question without ever reaching a definitive answer. In particular, she likes to re-use the material of past projects and integrate contributions by observers. In the neighboring town of Göschenen, the “KunstHaus Vera Staub” functions both as workplace and an exhibition space for Staub, enabling her to interact with visitors on a regular basis.

In “red-red-red”, Vera Staub alludes to two characters from the Old Testament, Rahab and Joseph (Gen 37-50 and Jos 2,6, resp.). Yet her installations blur the line between abstract and representational art, forcing no specific interpretation on the observer. Even though the red color of Staub’s work sets them apart from the bright interior, their shape and placement make them blend into the baroque church design almost seamlessly. Accordingly, “red-red-red” is also an invitation for travelers to get to know the church of Wassen from the inside.

“Red-red-red” is co-sponsored by the “Schweizerische St. Lukasgesellschaft für Kunst und Kirche” SSL (‘Swiss Society of Saint Luke for Art and Churches’). Celebrating its 100-year anniversary in 2024, the SSL has initiated more than thirty art exhibitions and artistic interventions in churches in Switzerland. The full program of its anniversary festivities can be found at www.lukasgesellschaft.ch/jubilaem.

For more information on the artist go to www.verastaub.ch

