



Yoboseyo! and Kamsa-hamnida!

I am delighted to be able to visit you here in your country and to have the opportunity to communicate an aspect of my art world to you.

Mrs. Yang, Chieu-Kyung is kind enough to translate my presentation for you.

This is a premiere, I've never held a presentation before; I'm a bit nervous.

Please allow me to combine my presentation with a little performance.

Title: **Pink Unpacks**

In German, to "unpack" has two meanings:

To unpack: i.e., a suitcase, a present, etc.

In jargon or slang, however, it also means to tell everything that one knows.

Here I am, with an overcoat and a suitcase.

I made the overcoat especially for the trip to Korea and the opening performance of the Busan International Textile & Fashion Show 2002.

To me, it says: "You are traveling to a far-away country that is still foreign to you, a continent that is new to you, and nevertheless you will remain yourself on your planet, Earth.

Even in foreign countries there are people, animals, and plants; even here the elements are in control: fire, water, earth, and air. You are not at home and yet you're 'home.'"

It symbolizes world-embracing friendship, peace, and freedom.

And as for the suitcase: With it I will attempt to show you various aspects of the world of my work and art – by unpacking!

In the course of the presentation, you may personally look at and "feel" all of the works, I ask you to pass them around the room.

(Open Suitcase) Pink Unpacks!

I was born in Vienna. My parents were in the chorus of the Vienna State Opera. I was already live on stage in my mother's womb! **(Photo/s)**

At the beginning of the **Pinkworld** was the gap between the dream world of the theater with all its wonders; the costumes, materials, colors, smells, and the music.... and the restrictiveness of everyday clothing. My mother sewed me in, so to speak, into her favorite pleated skirts, dresses, dirndl [traditional Austrian dress], with white stockings for little girls like me, (retrospectively) a nightmare.

Once she made me a dress with "wings," that's the name of the pattern with fluted arms (ruching), which are attached at the tops of the sleeves.

I was very excited when trying it on because I thought; with wings of course I will be able to fly.

I tried to fly, which of course didn't work; oh, was I disappointed!

Perhaps this little episode was the start of a long series of experiments to capture freedom in the form of clothing, to express it, and to live!

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My country, Austria, is not very open to this form of art. In my now over 23 years of experience and love/hate relationship with **Art-To-Wear** or **Fashion-Art**, I have run into plenty of walls of incomprehensibility and ignorance.

The beginning was nevertheless exciting and I was allowed to study in a baroque palace – a public school – the **Fashion School Of The City Of Vienna At The Imperial Palace Of Hetzendorf!**

For five years the “**Free Spirits**” taught me to discover the world of fashion, colors, art and to learn to test it, and to try out techniques of painting, graphics, sewing, etc.

Everything was allowed, on warm summer days there were even classes held outdoors. I wouldn't have missed this for anything. In Hetzendorf I gained confidence with colors and design and became certain that nothing that I began to create could ever be wrong, because if the outcome is not what was planned – or dreamed – it wasn't that bad; it would just become something different, another part of my art, my world. This is not to say that I was never criticized!

The conclusion of each school year was crowned with a fashion show that took place at the palace park on a loooong catwalk. The stage of the park and the ambient of the approaching lent the show a fairytale-like character!!!

The show itself was put together entirely by students who made dresses, knitted items, bags, hats, and textile prints.

One part of the show that was created and presented exclusively by the second class was called “**Crepe Paper Show.**”

All of the dresses, wigs, and accessories were crafted from colored crepe paper! And the best part: each student was allowed to present their own piece!

Regardless of how fat, thin, tall, or short!

After this wonderful time came a sobering one, the practice. I realized then that my technical skills were still in swaddling clothes!

But I had a dream!!!

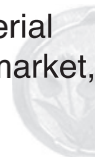
I had no money at this time, so I began to improvise constantly, something that has stayed with me till today. (Improvisation is exciting!!!) The idea of making **Something** out of nothing!

I cut up linens and sewed d'Artagnon shirts and Tarzan pants from them, dyed them, collected fabric swaths and made nets from these. One even became a kind of tailcoat – it is still hard to put it on! Here it is!!!

At this time there was an underground-discotheque called U4 next to the subway station of the same name. There I had my first chance to perform, in the context of the absolute “off” show, at the legendary **U-Mode**, my first fashion show! For free!!!

A fiasco! Problems with the music and light, a model even fell on the audience, but last but not least – it was good!

I expanded the palette of my working materials by acquiring 1950s and brocade draperies and other fabrics I bought, but none of the most fantastic rolls of material could inspire me as much as found materials, whether from the trash, the flea market,





or the street. Presents, textile “finds,” excite me.
I am not greedy, but the desire to make “something” out of nothing gives me these wings that my mother had tried to activate (unintentionally of course!)

After various jobs (selling, decorating, altering clothes at a tailor shop, etc. – ughh!!), I finally decided to take a vacation. I traveled to Greece, to the Cyclades, to the island of **los**, at that time still a hippy island, now the worst kind of party grounds.

I slept on the beach, earned my living by painting signs advertising “**Ice-Cream**,” “**Camping-Place**,” etc.

That’s where I met Ranja Cave, from Greece, a boutique owner. She admired the summer rags that I had sewn and made me **The Offer**: Come and work for my shop!

That’s just what I did. I picked up my sewing machine in Vienna and spent another two months on my “witches island,” **los**.

A new work quality presented itself; holiday fashion.

Indian scarves, saris, Bali prints, etc., became simple rags for the tourists’ two weeks of freedom during their holidays and were paid promptly in cash when the goods were delivered!

Besides this, I was busy making graphics, designs, and sketches for the entry exam at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. When I wasn’t dancing the night away, hanging out at the beach, loving the sea, or sewing. (Studying for exams should always be so diverse and free!!!)

Back to Vienna – having passed the entrance exam with the starry skies of Greece still in my mind – I detected the dust that had become embedded in the fashion industry. I became rebellious.

Vienna and its people seemed gray, but I wanted all of the colors in the world!!!

By a stroke of luck, I became involved with a TV production by Andre Heller, I could design and work on costumes.

The menu offered clothes for a fish, an Aquarius, and even for a globe!!!

I learned a great deal there and had a lot of fun for a month!

At the same time I was a student.

My professor Karl Lagerfeld unfortunately was never able to attend and I thought about leaving the university, out of protest.

Then there was a change of professors: Jil Sander. I thought she was even paler than gray, but quite soon she proved to be a very cooperative person. Instead of resigning herself to working with the white, beige, and gray cashmere and even fur materials that she was supposed to use, she encouraged me to continue to experiment with my newly designed “underwater collection.”

I was working in a kind of layering technique, to represent and express the depths of the sea. The basis was – as was common for me – colored linens, but now they were painted and embroidered with sequins, street stones, and neon-colored polyester tulle, etc. Over this were layers of batik cotton tulle, worked into dresses, skirts, tops, etc.

This technique indeed created a slight depth-effect, but the iridescent effect was even more beautiful!

I’ve brought a very old piece of this work here for you!





Tulle was the most interesting fabric for me during this time. Cotton tulle, because I could dye it and because it falls soft and fine and does not scratch. Polyester tulle, because it shines in black light and therefore lends the most unbelievable effects!!!

This was a hit at the next U-Mode at U4!

Abstract lines sewed onto a black base – like lightening flashes.

A street with automobiles, or fish in the deep sea, buried in plush. Everyone was impressed, I exchanged ideas with artist colleagues.

In 1986, I met my partner for life, Johannes. With him a new dynamic came into my wild, loner existence. He supported me in various projects with his admiration, love, and criticism. When it got tight, when I had deadlines to meet, he cooked for me and he paid attention to the times I needed rest, [A Real Treasure](#).

My kind of life fascinated him and he asked me to teach him the basics of the “art of sewing.” Thus we put our sewing machines together and sewed whatever the machines could take!

(Here is his first work; the fish pillow!)

His “label” is [Yak](#)!

[Yak](#) is a German citizen. We traveled widely around his county and through this we made new contacts. In Berlin, we exhibited at wild fashion shows (factory houses, streetcar depots, etc.).

In Hamburg at the fish auction hall, in Dresden at the Japanese Palace, etc. ... In Germany we met Rolando Rasmussen in 1994, whom I thank for this opportunity to be here with you in Korea!

[Yak](#) also made it possible that my work was, after this point in time, documented regularly, something which I had always neglected to do on my own and thus lost track of many works that were very important to me or I forgot that I had ever created them!

My working methods also changed during this time. In the beginning my clothing designs were simply too “sloppy” for the “better” sales market.

I was forced to adapt, or at least in terms of my technique.

That really irritated me. I didn’t understand why people praised my work superficially; wanted to know the process from the inside and yet have it covered with lining.

Disruptive as I am, I chose a new method of expression. Dolls – Soft Sculptures.

Otto Jekel later gave them the name [Syssyppypys](#). They were the true beings that trusted in my fantasies without any personal opinions that lived with me as they did with themselves: wild, fresh, and exotic!

None of them has ever complained about even one of my extravagances. In reality this would be impossible, but that is not really the point!!! I found my balance again – that’s it.

Good, I thought, then they should get lining. But that is exactly what halted my spontaneity and my love for the actual work, because I dreaded having to constantly think during the creative process about the final design or finishing.





But since I am tough I took on more and more complicated works. Finely made velvet jackets became my specialty; they emerged from a technique similar to patchwork or collage, faces, animals, plants, covered the simple pattern design (a kimono).

Suddenly I became interested in 3-dimensionality and this led me to produce the bull, crow, and elephant. Jackets and vests from which animal heads emerged, a dirndl girdle with a mountain silhouette and alpine cabin, etc., individualistic works that required many hours of experimentation and “sewing around” and suddenly my work was fun again!

My interest in politics and the environmental movement grew and I thought about how I could deal with my fears, opinions, and demands, etc., in my own personal way, how to express them and put them to use. I began to sew written “messages” into my collage technique. I produced colorful, punk, and provocative “message clothing.”

- Stop Starwars (against the American missile defense system in space)
- Der Fluss ist tot / The river is dead (against polluting the waterways and the environment)
- Danger (against war in the general sense)

Just for the Fun of it? (against the fur industry)

I exhibited this collection at the U-Mode in 1987 for the first time at the Vienna exhibition palace, the Messepalast, and was awarded the prize for creativity. The sponsor of this prize shook his mustache in disgust at the signing of the check. The U-Mode exhibition of Vienna, as it was renamed, had been put in the hands of new organizers, the Wiener Messe AG, and was therefore no longer a free event and instead rather strongly commercialized.

Two years later the event died mercilessly.

Since then there has not been such an exciting, free, and wild event in Vienna with such strong public support, where birds of paradise can let their ideas fly freely. It's a shame!!

My studies trudged boringly on, much too influenced by what was happening in the great, illusive world of fashion-glitz. During this time I tried to appease the elements with custom-designed magic coats, with which I wanted to call out to people: “Honor fire, water, earth, and air!!!”

Instead, a blue letter from my university reminded me that I was using my studies for **Myself** and not for the school. Too many exams were pending which, had I made the effort – I certainly could have completed. But I couldn't care less – or, as we say in Vienna, “das war mir wurscht,” – and so I left the school.

Thus I achieved the status of **Nothing**.

Therefore, I packed my suitcase (a box; sewn, lined, and covered with a fragment consisting of the rest of the coat called “the lovers”) with drawings, paintings, sketches, the Syssypyppys dolls, clothes, and my soul and I submitted this to the “Künstlerkommission“ (Commission of the arts) at the Federal Ministry for Education, Sports, and the Arts. The content – meaning I – was examined and was found to be acceptable. Since then I am permitted by high offices to call myself an artist

Yeah!

And I am “**Something!!!**”





It was 1992.

Yak And Pink moved to the countryside.

Beyond the hectic of the city of Vienna (which is famous for its supposed comforts), we dreamed in the country. We planted flowers and vegetables; in marketing, we were a bit slower. My works became earthier and more natural in their modes of expression; not least through the quietude of the surroundings (here it is always Sunday). We still live here, and I still think I have all the time in the world. The existence of time only becomes apparent when I think of the tight deadlines I had to meet for various exhibitions in Germany between 1992 – 1999 and for participation in the Kwang-Ju Biennial in South Korea in 1997.

In our form of expression – **the Art-To-Wear** – as in every other form of art, time is a great factor. Turning dreams into reality is often the path from conception to birth, or sometimes like the path to the next room, but at times it can be as energy draining as the creation of the world!

The vices of impatience and greed have crept up onto our planet! When managers calculate on paper that they can produce 1,000 dresses a day for tiny sums of money, why do people like us take so much time to produce **One** piece?

Our creations are priceless, because we feel out our “product” with **Our Souls**. Our Fantasy (here I can only speak for myself) survives without being primarily profit-driven. Only the recognition of What We Create is an appropriate measure of the spectrum of the world’s art lobby.

I have always tried to use the abilities available to me as a communicator of my world of thoughts and feelings. I have always been and still am a good chameleon; if one attempt does not work, I try the next. But the never-ending conflict between more and more testing, more tentative attempts, and at the same time the necessity of constantly adapting (not conforming!!!!), exhausted me. I became deathly ill. I had an emergency operation and I **Survived**. I became intimately acquainted with what I feared the most: hospitals, operations, pain.

As soon as I could think again for myself as **Me**, I asked myself: You are alive, now what do you want?

My answer was: I would like to live from my work!

That was in the magic year of 2000, in the month of August.

Until July 2001 I struggled with the rehabilitation of my physical strength. In November I exhibited in Berlin, still on somewhat shaky legs, and drove myself there and back. The exhibition itself was a little dull, but I knew: I’m back again!!!

Then the request came from Sven Jannsen, the organizer of Quasi Moda in Aachen (where I had participated twice): Sissy Pink, we would like to present you in Kwang-ju, South Korea. I said, hey-yeah, for once I will be presented quite nicely! Shortly thereafter I received the official invitation from Professor Yang, Chieu-Kyung, to show my art here in South Korea!! I was proud and happy and I still feel this way!!!

Now that I am coming to the end of my presentation, I see that I have perhaps told you more about myself than about my art world. But the “history” of the person, or the personality, that creates the art certainly tells more than any description of even the most unbelievable techniques could reveal! You always have to begin with yourself; no one can tell you how you should design your art world.





It's the same with life and death; you must go your own **Way**, alone!
And that is good, because each person is their own universe!

Concluding this presentation, you are offered a short video collage that documents the most important points in image and sound.

I wish you much love and enjoyment!

Good-bye!!!!

Translation: **Dream Coordination Office -
Charlotte Eckler / Lisa Rosenblatt**

