

Johanna Lena Dobruskin

Location: Pfisterhuesli, first floor

Everyday knowledge about the importance and effects of plants is getting lost. We rarely trust in the healing power of flowers and herbs. We would rather go to the pharmacy or drugstore than search for medicinal plants in meadows and forests. Do you know the pimpernut, for example? It is said to have an aphrodisiac effect. It was even found in the graves of our Stone Age ancestors, because they were supposed to have a good time in the realm of the dead.

On our first tour of Engelberg together, Johanna Lena Dobruskin was immediately fascinated by the mystics who, as we know, had come here since the Middle Ages. As the artist is very interested in the creative power of nature, her research led her to the pimpernut. In early cultures, this shrub was believed to have an ominous effect. The hard nuts in the bush's capsules were threaded into protective amulet necklaces and also used to make rosaries. In Bavaria, the pimpernut is therefore popularly known as the rosary bead bush.

For the Pfisterhuesli, Dobruskin has created a rosary nearly two meters high. She has designed the individual wax elements like enlarged votive offerings: plant and body parts, as well as everyday objects, including smartphones. With her work, Dobruskin wants to raise awareness of the fact that we are experiencing less and less interpersonal communication due to increasing digitalization, and that people are longing for new myths—for connection and belonging, for happiness and confidence. The work also tells of the connection with nature that still lies dormant within us and needs to be rediscovered. *(ds)*

Johanna Lena Dobruskin, Switzerland, completed her master's degree in Eco-Social Design at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts and is currently studying ethnobotany and ethnomedicine at the University of Zurich. As an artist, she positions herself between art and the creative question of responsibility for nature and our habitat