

Renata Rara Kaminska

Location: Ochsenmatt Gadä, ground floor

What could also have been made from this material: stylish furniture of high quality craftsmanship or musical instruments. The thin sheets of wood that Renata Rara Kaminska has joined and intertwined into long strips in her installation Indoor Forest are veneer. The way the strips touch the floor and move lightly in the breeze, they seem to be completely in the here and now. But Kaminska's art has a historical memory. The Polish artist, who lives in Berlin, prefers to work with existing material that has a history of its own.

Veneer wood has been around in Europe for a very long time. It was imported from the colonies on a large scale from the 17th century onwards. The thin sheets in Indoor Forest were among the last to arrive in Hamburg from Africa before the First World War. They were never processed. They were stored for over a hundred years until Renata Kaminska discovered them in a garage and bought them. If history had a material weight, Indoor Forest would be as heavy as lead. Colonialism is not only about exploiting people, it also changes ecosystems. The colonialists plundered nature. For a politically minded artist like Kaminska, colonialism is not a thing of the past. It shapes our present, our politics, our economy, our daily lives. Indoor Forest is read differently in different places, depending on whether you belong to the colonialists or the colonized. If art participates in political and democratic processes, this is a reason for optimism.

Renata Rara Kaminska, born in 1974 in Zamość, Poland, lives and works in Berlin, Germany, and Zamość. Kaminska is a co-founder of the Polish party Lewica Razem. Her works have been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions, for example at the Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany (2023), Museum Op enheim, Wrocław, Poland (2023), Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf, Switzerland (2023), Artbat Art Festival in Almaty, Kazakhstan (2023), Haus des Papiers, Berlin (2023), Kunstraum Aarau, Switzerland (2020).

Further information: renatakaminska.de