

Sabine Kuehnle

Location: Ochsenmatt Gadä, first floor

What if we could see into the future? Would we change our behavior? In *Völuspá*, the first poem of the *Songs of the Gods* in *The Poetic Edda* even the supreme Norse god Odin is not omniscient. To learn his fate and that of the world, he has to visit a seeress. She tells him about the creation of the earth, its end and its re-creation. She asks repeatedly: “Do you want to know more: and what?”

Since a scholarship in Norway, Sabine Kuehnle has been studying the poetry that was written in Iceland in the Middle Ages. The *Völuspá* is not only a source of identity for all of Scandinavia, it is also a timeless poem about fundamental human conflicts and our embeddedness in nature. *The Seeress* reflects this embeddedness in that Kuehnle treated the canvas with earth colors and exposed it to the elements. The bronze feet placed at the center of the work create an opportunity for the viewer to identify with the titular seeress. And it is her raised bronze finger that towers over the canvas on a hazel stick. The mask and reindeer skin represent an animistic understanding of nature, while the charred logs refer to the World Tree Yggdrasil.

The thirst for knowledge has fallen into disrepute. It is too closely associated with the exploitation of nature and other people. But science also provides models of what our future could look like. “Do you want to know more: and what?” Do we really want to know, and are we willing to draw the consequences? (*ah*)

Sabine Kuehnle, born 1968 in Brackenheim, Germany, lives and works in Frankfurt a. M., Germany. She studied in Mainz and Saarbrücken, Germany, as well as at the Chelsea College of Arts in London, Great Britain, and held several scholarships in Scandinavia. Her works have been shown at Kunstverein Wagenhalle, Stuttgart, Germany (2022), Markgräfler Museum Müllheim, Germany (2021), and Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg, Germany (2018), among others.

Further information: sabinekuehnle.com