

‘Poppy’ – (baking and building)

Since 1987 I have been interested in the architectural measures of the National Socialists in Berlin, particularly in the plans to redesign the city to the capital city ‘Germania’.

The focal point of planning was the so-called ‘Große Halle (Grand Hall)’, a gigantic domed structure to which access and parade avenues in the shape of an axis were to lead.

On a decoration suggestion for a holiday table from a 1930s cookbook I saw structurally the same: the central ‘sculpture’ of a ring-shaped pound cake from which decorative ribbons ran axially to the corners of the table at the ends of which small crowns were fastened.

To me, this scene appeared as the copy of Albrecht Speer’s architectural model.

I treated a large photocopy of this motif with ink and resin varnish.

During a trip to Oswiecim, I found in the local archive a photo of Carl Clauberg, the concentration camp physician in Auschwitz, standing in a garden with a pound cake.

I was shocked by this combination and it revealed to me mental, unconscious interrelations.

I subsequently expanded the work, which led to the complete ensemble of six additional pictures. With the other picture motifs I wanted to add references and associations in order to visualise what, for me, constitutes an irreversible transition, or rather perversion, of simple things.

Both in miniature and in large it’s the same: magnified, puffed-up proportions.

The formal canon of the bourgeois milieu is applied in its conventional rigidity and enigmatic ambivalence. For example, the tin can on the table of the person plaiting a loaf has great similarity with the cyanide B tin cans in the museum in Auschwitz. This is also underlined by the text from Albert Speer’s *Erinnerungen (Reminiscences)*, which gives an account of his last meeting with Hitler in the Führer’s bunker at Potsdamer Platz in 1945. He tells of the furniture in the rooms and Eva Braun offering him cake, confectionary and sparkling wine. Even the brand of the sparkling wine is mentioned – the attempt to create an upper-class ambience under the ground.