

Daniela Bergschneider

– Text by Sara Kollstrøm Heilevang

What separates the world from itself? What makes it stand out, become different, matter that's distinguishable from other matter? It is no coincidence that the skin is the largest part of the body. A surface stretched out and over, covering the pieces that constitute a form. Different modes of tactility follow shapes, providing an outside to an inside. A diplomatic action between what lies within and what lies without – a shelter and a shield. In Daniela Bergschneider's work a solemn trace of negotiating can always be found. Between movement and stillness, between expansion and contraction. Between shapes that feel familiar, but somehow strange, like a vague memory of something once known, or a premonition of something yet ahead.

Making and repeating small, modular shapes in porcelain, Bergschneider covers them with hand-dyed semi-transparent nylon, tying them into the fabric in order to construct larger forms. Sometimes the porcelain takes shapes reminiscent of small bones, thin and elongated, like skeletons of tiny birds, gathered and collected in nylon-nests. Sometimes the porcelain takes on structures that hint to growth, to something unfolding, building and attaching to itself, making a play on our perception of what it means to be outside and inside. Experiencing Bergschneider's work is an exercise in balance. Forms are repeated – but never too much. One can see through the outer layer to the inner structure – but never completely. They are appealing to the touch – but would they crumble? Her works are fragile but strong – the nylon acts as a protective layer as well as a tool of construction. But within this lies a duality where the nylon always runs the risk of being destroyed from the inside, perforated by the very shapes it helps protect.

I often wonder how she does it. Work with material in a way that has the potential for eternal growth. Modules on modules on modules on modules, always capable of adding on, stretching the nylon surface further and further. How does she know when to stop? Does she speak a hidden, native language? A secret mother tongue only shared by her and the material she works with, that talks of rhythm and repetition, animal genomes and ancient shapes? Somehow her works always seem fully ended, to be at peace with themselves. Eerie and unsettling? Sure, but always elegantly complete, resting within their own skin. Colours balancing on the edge of the familiar, but never too demanding in their reading, always letting other materials and shapes shine through, enhancing rather than dominating. The nylon surface that holds the structures together is often pushed to an extreme – but never so far as to break it. The world separated from itself, but also held together, provided with an opportunity to grow into itself, become comfortable in its own skin.