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**NIGHT OF EXCELLENCE**

**PETAH COYNE +  
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April 12, 2024 / New York, NY  
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*Können und Müssen (Ability and Necessity)*, 2022. Polyurethane elastomer, steel, brass, anatomical model, and cart, 218 x 1016 x 181 cm. Photo: Kati Göttfried, Courtesy Galerie MEYER\*KAINER, Vienna

## Counter Images: A Conversation with Raphaela Vogel

February 15, 2024 by [John Gayer](#)



Raphaela Vogel's practice has evolved like the proverbial rolling snowball. As a student, she became interested in the performative aspects of painting, which led her to video (featuring herself and sometimes her dog as performers), to self-recorded music and what she calls "video sculptures," as well as to large-scale installations combining all of these elements. Her startling juxtapositions of materials, imagery, and subject matter—she has a keen interest in cultural history and the transmission of knowledge—question notions of ownership, query human reproduction and gender, and explore our relationships with technology, animals, and the built environment.

"KRAAAN," Vogel's recent survey exhibition at the De Pont Museum in Tilburg, the Netherlands, provided a concise introduction to her most prominent themes and her unusual ways of approaching them. The title (a mash-up of the Dutch and German words for a construction crane) relates to hubris, as well as to technology—how it is used, what it symbolizes, and how it interacts with living things. Vogel considers this central problem from various perspectives, drawing on art history, literature, and the viewer's imagination to construct obscure and dystopian visions that shock and invigorate while reminding us of the world's inscrutability.

**John Gayer: The first work in "KRAAAN" was the striking *Können und Müssen* (*Ability and Necessity*) (2022), in which a team of giraffes pulls an enormous model of the male genitalia. How did this work develop, and what does it represent?**

**Raphaela Vogel:** I originally produced *Können und Müssen* for "Mit der Vogel kannst Du mich jagen" ("You can hunt me with this bird"), at Galerie Meyer Kainer in Vienna. It is what, in German, we call a *Gegenbild*—a counter image—which is an image that stands in opposition to another image. In this case, the counter image is *Uterusland* (2017/2019), which features a robust stream of milk. Surging out of a greatly oversize breast, that milk turns into a powerful, rearing white horse. The idea came from "Production: Made in Germany Drei (Three)," a group exhibition that I participated in at Kunstverein Hannover. It got me thinking: What about reproduction?

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Kiki Smith  
Eclipse V, 2014  
Bronze  
14-5/8" x 11-7/8" x 3-7/8"  
Prints by Kiki Smith also available

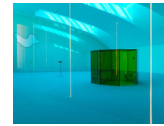
## EDITOR'S CHOICE



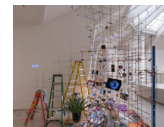
Raphaela Vogel



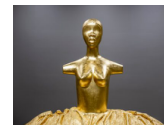
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Daniel Steegmann Mangrané: A Leaf Shapes the Eye



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