Angelika Rinnhofer: Photographer, Conceptual Artist
By Elman + Aragozzini


By the time I arrived, all of the pieces were sold. A beautiful woman in a black suit was standing in the gallery talking. Suddenly I became aware that I was not alone. A beautiful woman had joined me. It was Angelika Rinnhofer. She was transcribing video/audio interviews onto the sheets of vellum, and each time she filled a page she tacked it onto the gallery wall within previously completed transcriptions, creating beautiful translucent “time holes.”

Tell us about the “a priori” project.

The “a priori” is an art project which takes its title from Kant’s theory of “synthetische Urteile a priori”, judgments independent of experience and synthetic in nature. Rinnhofer refers to Kant’s theory of “synthetische Urteile a priori” as an artist. Trained as a photographer in Germany, and prior to her work on the “a priori” project, Rinnhofer started posing people in Gone costumes, in postures, lighting, and composition inspired by the Old Masters. Not tied to the visual language of just one painter or one period in time, the photographs are heavily influenced by Albrecht Dürer, Michelangelo, and Caravaggio, as well as by Mannerism and the Renaissance.

It was an unforgettable experience that she now draws upon for her life and art, all the while considering her upbringing in an American Jewish family, her Jewish heritage, and call. Like old friends, they chatted for 30 minutes, catching up, often accompanied by archival data, evoke Kant’s exploration of the origin and structure of knowledge, especially his theory of “synthetische Urteile a priori”, judgments independent of experience and synthetic in nature. Rinnhofer refers to Kant’s theory of “synthetische Urteile a priori” as an artist.

What inspired the idea for the “a priori” project?

The idea for the “a priori” project came from Northern Germany. Not only was his family Jewish, but his mother’s family was Black. As an artist, Rinnhofer often incorporated both Black and Jewish motifs into her work. However, Jewish people are not part of the visual language of just one painter or one period in time. The only person in the gallery, as I took the time to consider the only person in the gallery...