

Sophia Kalkau (b. 1960)

Egyptian Egg, 2016

Black granite

Eggs are a beginning. Whether it is indeed the original shape, the first shape, whether gods or basic organisms precede the egg, they are the start of something living. Or they are containers for possible life that never gets to live. A real egg is a fragile little thing, translucent and bright. The artificial is huge and immovable and dark like drama. Sophia Kalkau laid this egg here, a 17-ton pearl in the string of sculptures she has laid and erected in public space. They are usually large in scale, minimal in expression, often rounded like eggs or suns. Occasionally they balance on something that looks like the threshold of movement. Egyptian Egg seems almost to hover, and never hatch. For a long time, probably a very long time, it will sit here, get old, and look like a big beginning. Look like a beautiful grave from where rebirth and non-earthly life can seep up. Look like a piece of geometry and a piece of stone that has been processed in the way that sculptors process heavy materials. They can possess it, make it seem chaste and unintelligible like silk—or a modified egg.

A leveled, hard surface is somehow the opposite of an egg. Real eggs are rounded and complete, or else they're broken. Black is somehow the opposite of an egg. It is where everything lifeless ends up—in a blackening.

And then there are the potentials of blackness. One can stand in front of this egg darkness, in front of the white exhibition halls, below a steel-gray rainfall, and stare all the way into the black depths of the stone. One can actually sense, though not comprehend, that every color and no colors are in there. That the egg is an image of vitality, but also an emblem of lives that will never occur. Broad and eternal symbolism is glued to the egg like fate. It is the ideal cycle container: something can grow in there, hatch from it, live, die, repeat. As a small temple and a large seed, Egyptian Egg is an encrypted granite message about lowering something. It could be one's tempo or one's voice. An egg does not require any devoutness. It is common beyond measure. And so, a monumental egg is both difficult and easy to notice.

And why not let the eyes linger, try to awaken the gaze that can sense where the egg and the darkness will end.