



KELBASSAS

**Kelbassas - On the outer edges of Art
and Nature**

*Alan Dearling takes us on a magic carpet ride to Oberhausen in the Ruhr region of Germany to
meet Corinna Kuhn and Detlef Kelbassa – known collectively as the artistic - Kelbassas*

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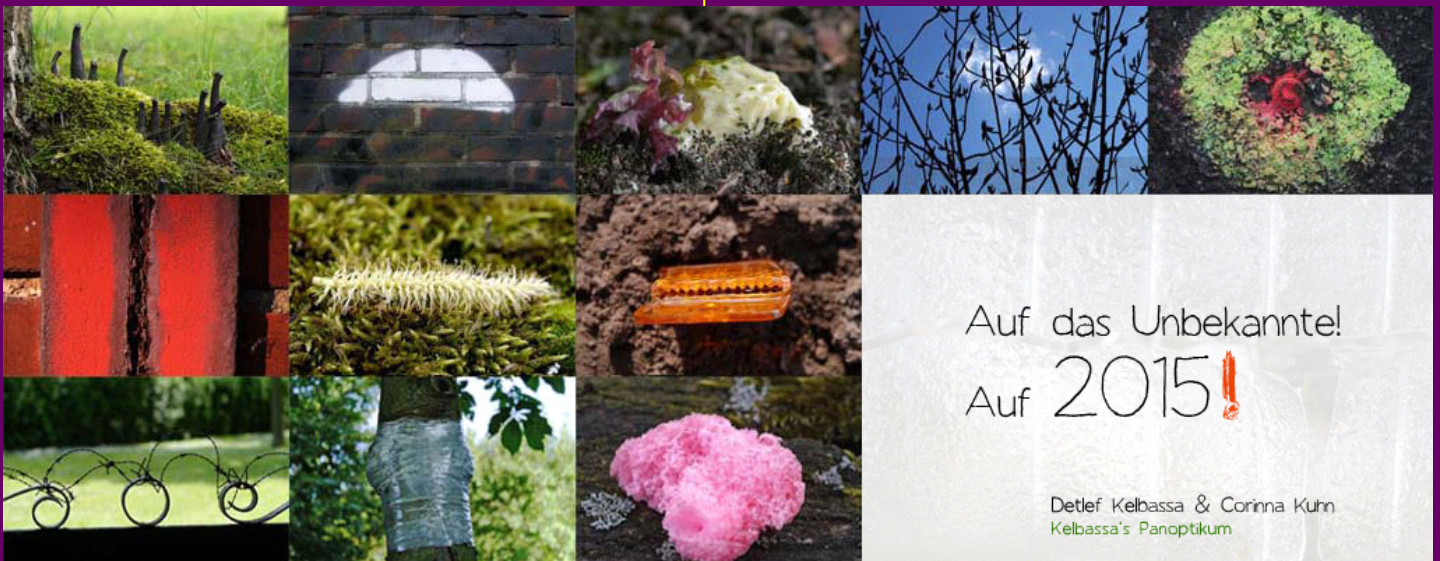


Corinna (left), Detlef (middle) with their artist friend, Marjo Palm.

Oberhausen is something akin to Coventry in the UK. It's a concrete city, rebuilt after the RAF and USAAF bombed it to smithereens in World War Two. And out of the rubble has arisen the phoenix, in the form of the mystical art and creatures from the wonderfully warped imaginations of the

husband and wife team - the Kelbassas. Their cavernous home, which stretches over two floors of an old apartment block, is a world of wonderment. It is the World of Kryptozoology. It is **The Panopticon!**

The Panopticon takes us to the strange



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worlds where nature has warped our realities. Become surreal. More than a little skewed. The Kelbassas' call it, "*a modern cabinet of curiosities - on forgotten back roads of botany.*"

As they told me, it is, "*A game involving distorting perception and knowledge, visiting the boundaries between the real and the possible, between the familiar and the new...*"

www.kelbassas-panoptikum.de/

I thought I'd share some words and images from my visit and from talking to Corinna and Detlef.

At the moment one of Detlef's ceramic figures, the Skiapode, is part of an exhibition in Vienna concerning Hieronymus Bosch. It's on until 29th January 2017 and has the suitably screwy title of:

'Nature gone Astray? Hybrids, Gnomes and Monsters - (not only) in the work of Hieronymus Bosch'

Lots of fantastical creatures (<http://www.akademiegalerie.at/media/documents/GG-NATURaufABWEGEN-Folder-EMail.pdf>)

Detlef's 'Skiapode', represents one of the 'monstrous races' that lived, according to medieval tales, right at the outer edge of the known world. It was one of the 'Wonders of the Orient', the Skiapode, or, Shadow Foot. And it was featured in Schedel's 'World Chronicle', published in 1493. It symbolises, what the Kelbassas' call, "*...the strange and unknown, the otherness - a mirror of our own worst fears (very up-to-date).*" Corinna adds, "*For us it is an interesting topic, we always love to explore the relationship between human beings and nature...and everything at the edge...*"

Here's a part of the vast Mikrokosmos pavement they have been gradually creating. Being made up of many hundreds of ceramic tiles, it has been travelling around Europe, with tiles on sale to the public (me included). I bought three tiles back to my home in Scotland.

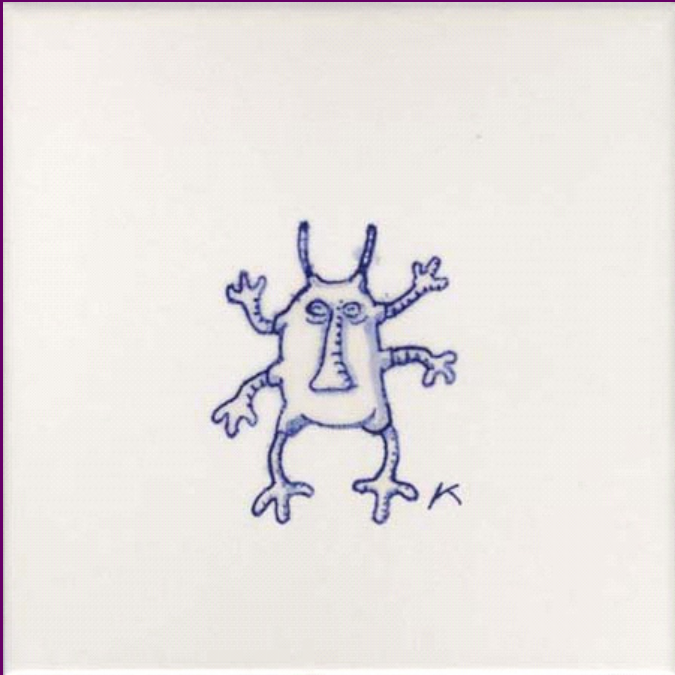


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Then there's their 'Dutch Mystery' series of cobalt blue paintings of mythical and nature images onto tiles. It pays homage to the sophisticated and complicated technology which originated in China and the Middle East. It spread from there to Spain, Italy, on to France and to the Netherlands, where it became Delft blue. Corinna told me, *"The recipes were considered a great Arcanum, a mystery, whose traces we have created into an ongoing journey."*

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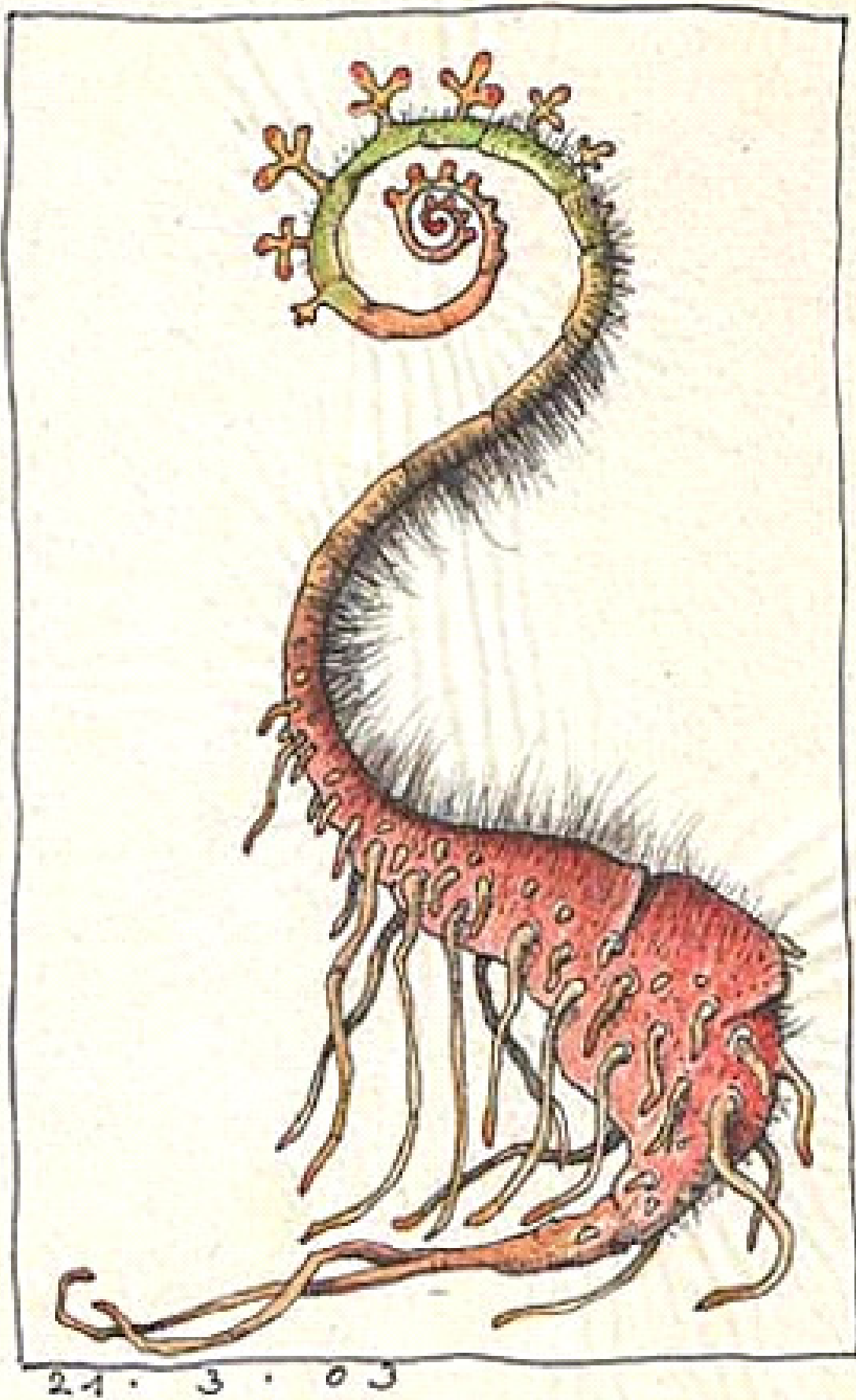


And finally, here are another couple of examples from Kelbassa Kryptozoological Panopticon. The Blue Dogs are based on Chinese mythical animals. They say that they are, *"The Qi-lin, a male-female shape of the unicorn, symbol of peace and prosperity."*

And one of the sources of their inspirational biomorphic art, an illustration from what they describe as a hundred year old, zoobotanical diary. Corinna and Detlef describe it as, *"A fat old, book, partially threadbare cover with paper-thin translucent paper. A total of almost 1000 pages."*

"...fairytale formations to admire, strange figures, which are also the wildest Einbildungen... an unexpectedly deep insight into the mysterious workshop of nature and a wealth of bizarre creatures watch you... Every day it brings new surprises, and always fresh joys of discovery." (Quote based on the thoughts of Floericke, writing in 1925).

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GONZO

We talk to Doug Harr about his exciting new book about **Los Angeles rock concerts**, Alan meets **Kelbassas**, John remembers the **Human Be In**, Roy looks forward to another year with **That Legendary Wooden Lion**, our old friend **Kev Rowland** returns with more reviews, and **The Famous Five** give up the **Booze** plus **Hawkwind** news, **The Gardening Club** and gum boots full of more...



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DOUG'S ANGELIC TOME