

*Gross-Schneen* (Brooch) from the “*Heimat*” series, 2004  
Silver, canvas, buttons, paper, leather  
Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, acquired  
with the generous support of the Mondriaan Fund.

Eichenberg sees *Gross-Schneen* as a nostalgic representation of her ancestral farmhouse in Germany. Executed while the artist resided in The Netherlands, this multi-layered brooch consists of a bed of small pieces of gray canvas and textile-covered buttons sandwiched between cutouts of two domestic residences. The lower silhouette of a house is distinguished by its gabled roof; the upper one, composed of metal openwork, recalls the traditional German countryside *Fachwerk* (“timbered”) houses. The black stitches holding the entire composition together as well as the buttons reference women’s work as well as the generations of matriarchal role models in the artist’s family.

*Brooch No. 2* from the “New Rooms” series, 2008  
Wood, copper, enamel, brass, cotton thread  
Collection of Catherine Rose, Dallas, Texas.

One of the first works that Eichenberg created at Cranbrook, this brooch was intended to deconstruct the new, foreign environment in which the artist found herself. Mimicking the aerial perspectives of *Duitse Velden*, brooches from the “*Heimat*” series, the embroidered front panel with its uncharacteristically lively, colorful palette, suggests a map of the flat Michigan landscape with its thoroughfares in grid formation. Swatch-like rectangles of synthetic materials as well as the metal findings recall noteworthy designs for interiors by such Academy alumni as Charles and Ray Eames. First exhibited in Europe, the composition’s playfulness and appealing shapes and textures mask the artist’s underlying apprehension.

*Ilse* (Pendant) from the “*Heimat*” series, 2004

Gold, silver, bone

Collection of Ilse Eichenberg.

*Lämmer* (Brooch) from the “*Heimat*” series, 2004

Silver, fur, linen, bone

Courtesy of the artist.

*Duitse Velden* (“*German Fields*”) (Brooch) from the  
“*Heimat*” series, 2004

Silver, fur

Collection of CODA, the Netherlands.

*Duitse Velden* (“*German Fields*”) (Brooch) from the  
“*Heimat*” series, 2004

Silver, thread, fur, wool, horn, Bakelite

Courtesy of the artist.

*Set of Three Brooches and Holder* from the “*Heimat*”  
series, 2004

Metal, thread skeins, cardboard, photograph

The Susan Grant Lewin Collection, Cooper Hewitt,  
Smithsonian Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

*Chatelaine '2007.00.20'* from the “Tenement/Timelines”  
series, 2007

Copper, Bakelite

Collection of Mieke Klein Hofmeijer and Henk Dorlandt.



*Loss* from the "*Heimat*" series (Installation), 2004

Mirrors, video

Courtesy of the artist.

*Pantyhose Mirror* (Object), 2011

Nylons

Courtesy of the artist.

*Untitled* (Wall Insert) from “Setting the Table” series, 2012,

remade 2021

Polymer clay

Courtesy of the artist.

Created within a year of one another, these two works demonstrate the experiential nature of Eichenberg’s work. Both rely on material, mark making, and oval formats to suggest portraits. *Untitled* involves kneading, pounding, and prodding the polymer clay into shape. Eichenberg’s fingerprints record the artist in the act of making. On the other hand, *Pantyhose Mirror*, with its diversity of shades of skin-colored nylons, alludes to a pixelation of distinct colors of skin. Both works provide commentary on self and perceptions of society.

*Real* (Installation), 2015, remade 2021

Steel, wood, mirrored glass, cotton thread, linen, polymer clay, beeswax, sand, cast iron, rice

Courtesy of the artist.

Executed approximately eight years after Eichenberg's move to Cranbrook, the spare, minimalistic aesthetic of *Real* is the closest that Eichenberg has ever come to adopting Saarinen's modernist style. Its basic components are the oval and the stand. While this installation recalls a mantelpiece with objects and portraits placed on and around it, *Real* poses critical questions about perception and reality and, above all, what the viewer can trust as real.

*Brooch*, ca. 1997

Silver, foam, wood

Galerie Rob Koudijs, collection

Koudijs/Schrijver.

*Untitled* (Backpiece) from the “Sense-Mapping” series, 2012

Silver, glass beads, found object, ribbon, plastic

Courtesy of the artist.

*Unavoidable* (Necklace) from the  
“Pink Years Later” series, 2009  
Nylons, mirror, silver, polymer clay  
Courtesy of the artist.β

*Untitled Flower* (Brooch) from the  
“Flowers and Birds of Michigan”  
series, 2010

Silver, polymer clay

Courtesy of the artist.

*Finger, 2013*

Polymer clay

Courtesy of the artist.



*Kein Ort Nirgends* (“*No Place Anywhere*”) (Installation),  
2017

Digital print on archival paper

Courtesy of the artist.

*Kein Ort Nirgends* (“*No Place Anywhere*”) (Installation),  
2017

Wood

Courtesy of the artist.

*Kein Ort Nirgends* (“*No Place Anywhere*”) (Installation),  
2017

Cast iron, steel, rubber

Courtesy of the artist.

*Table, 2019*

Wood, wool

Courtesy of the artist.

*Girlfriends* from the “Blossom” series (Object), 1998  
Wood, wool, found objects, hair, dental material  
Courtesy of the artist.

In the beginning, as Eichenberg defined her direction using references to bodily functions, she first utilized silver and wool yarn, and then, simply, silver. Ultimately, she combined these materials with additional ones drawn from life on her family’s farm. *Girlfriends* from the “Blossoms” series unites organic forms from nature—specifically, human hair and live tree branches sealed with wax—with sagging, knitted, soft pink wool breasts to articulate the bond between the three similar albeit disparately sized figures. Like the work of many Rietveld students of the 1980s, it reflects Eichenberg’s interest in reality and finding beauty in the abject as well as the idyllic.

*Object and Two Brooches* from the “Sunen” series, 2002  
Silver, found object, cotton, wool  
Collection of CODA, the Netherlands.

Eichenberg began this series as an exercise to create works of art from materials of either little or no value.

*Object and Two Brooches* from the “Sunen” series (2002), which can be interpreted as an observation on love and relationships, presents the interaction of two diametrically opposing entities: an industrially fabricated car mirror etched with an archetypal diagram of the human respiratory system and organic forms handsewn with amoeba-like designs.

*Untitled* from the “I Do Not Wish” series, 2017  
Copper, coal, graphite, iron filings  
Courtesy of Jimena Ríos.

Eichenberg’s interest in ex-votos was rekindled by Argentinian colleague and close friend Jimena Ríos during the artist’s 2017 trip to Buenos Aires. Ex-votos are devotional objects left as offerings in gratitude for divine intervention. *Untitled* from the “I Do Not Wish” series is Eichenberg’s response to a wooden hand carved by an unknown Brazilian maker. She envisions the object placed in a protective manner on the chest. The work was created as a rejoinder against criticism leveled against Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential campaign for lacking the warmth and humanity typically associated with women. The position of the third finger and overall dark palette reflects Eichenberg’s indignation over the reproach.

*The Year 2020* (Edition of 365 Medals), 2020 (detail)

Silver, steel, ribbon

Courtesy of the artist.

During the first year of the pandemic, Eichenberg found that medals held particular significance. While commemorating those who survive each day, hers also recall the black ribbons worn by immediate family mourning the recent passing of loved ones. The rows of blank ovals also bring to mind the faceless hundreds of thousands of victims of Covid. Initially, Eichenberg planned to create 365 medals to coincide with each day of the year. Forty are shown here; the remainder have been shared with others.



## *Coarse Kosher Salt, 2021*

24 gold-plated brass, polymer resin, horn, felted wool, thread, coarse kosher salt

Courtesy of the artist.

Addressing the instability of relationships, *Coarse Kosher Salt* consists of a black, quilted, felted wool pouch that can be folded to form a carrying case. Open, it reveals two overlapping circular pieces of horn juxtaposed with 24k gold-plated wedding bands that are precariously suspended from the fabric by thin threads. The sack is reminiscent of the chemically treated storage bags designed to prevent sterling silver flatware from tarnishing. Its interior is filled with tubes, stitched to the black cloth, that are laden with the time-honored food preservative, kosher salt. Here, the salt is intended to maintain and conserve the wedding bands but could erode their fiber bonds.

*Wolleherzen* (“*Wool Hearts*”) (Brooches/installation), 1993–  
2007

Wool

Courtesy of the artist.

*Brooch* from the “Blossom” series, 1998

Wool, silver

Collection of Schmuckmuseum Pforzheim, Inv. No.  
1999/25.

*Two of the Same Kind Keeping Each Other Warm* (Object),  
1998

Felted wool

Galerie Rob Koudijs, collection Koudijs/Schrijver.

*Exophthalmos* (Necklace), 1994

Wool, silver, hair

Galerie Rob Koudijs, collection Koudijs/Schrijver.

*Untitled* from the “Entero” series (also known as  
*“Buttonhole Funnel Brooch”*), ca. 1996

Glazed porcelain, silver

Courtesy of the artist.

*Entero 1* (also known as "*Buttonhole Funnel Brooch*"), ca.  
1996

Glazed porcelain, silver

Courtesy of the artist.

*Brooch* from the “Weiss” series, 2005

Porcelain, silver

Courtesy of the artist.



*Omnivoren 1.6, 2000*

Video

Courtesy of the artist

*Necklace* from the “Strange Birds” series, 2012

Copper, silver

Courtesy of the artist.

*Field, 2022*

Steel, copper, brass, nickel

Courtesy of the artist.

*Untitled* (Necklace) from the “Time/Time Past” series, 2018  
Linen, rose gold staples, steel staples, copper staples  
Courtesy of the artist.

*Object* from the “X” series, 2013

Wood, nails, wool

Courtesy of the artist.

*Wool Hearts Revisited* (Installation), 2020

Wool

Courtesy of the artist.

*Bird and Ex-voto* from the “It is Getting Darker” series, 2019  
Paper, cotton, charcoal, graphite, steel, copper  
Courtesy of the artist.