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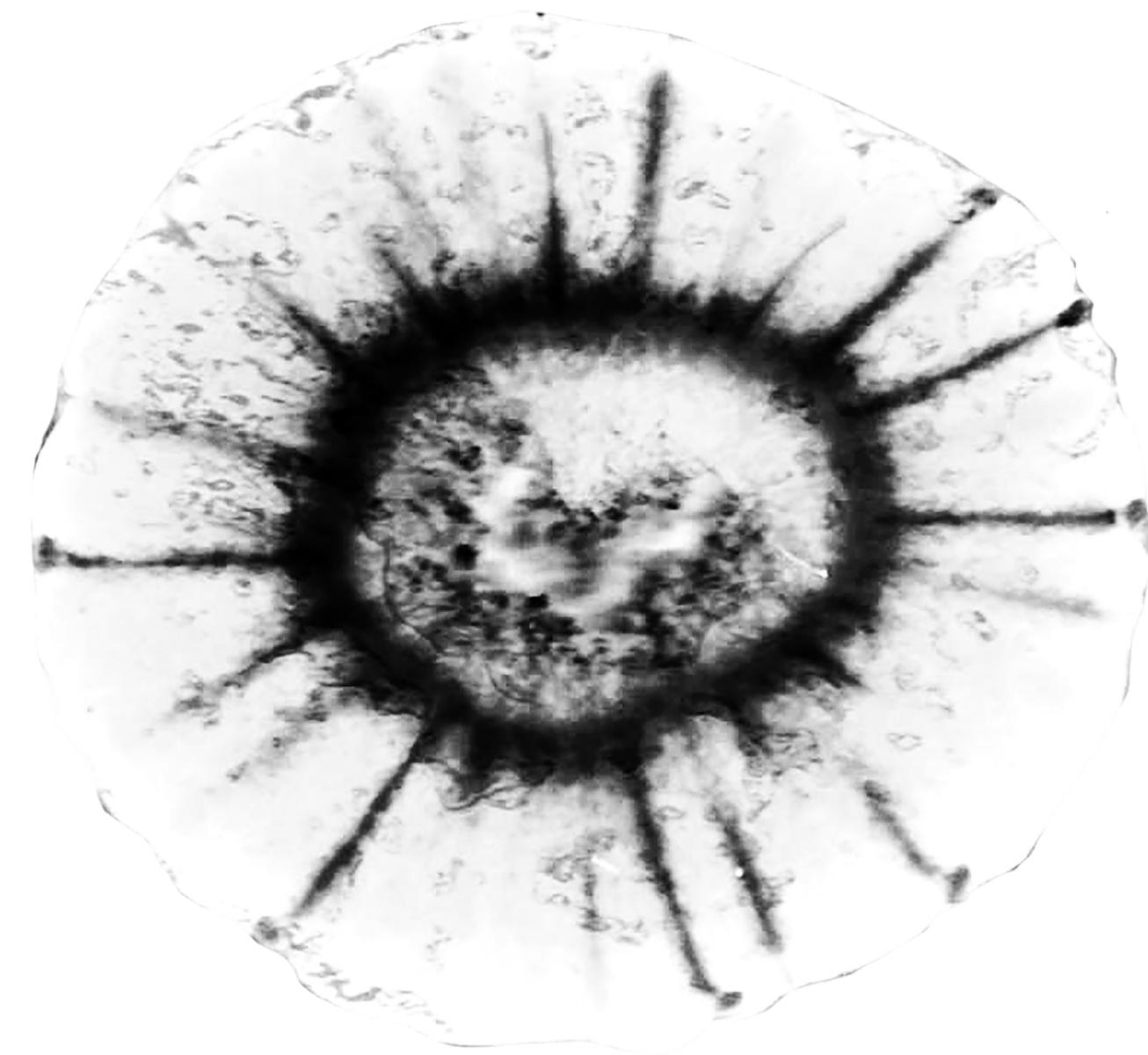
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ZUZANNA CZEBATUL
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2021

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Power Slipping: On the Weight of Zuzanna Czebatul's Sculpture

Kate Brown

Two hands are locked in a promise. Zuzanna Czebatul has been a friend of mine for several years now, but it was through one sculpture—a pair of hands entwined in a pact—that I encountered her first. I had come across the work, a large piece of metal warped into a pinky promise called *Imbrication*, at her first solo exhibition in Berlin 218 in 2014. It was a particular time in the city: the art scene was still enraptured in post-internet art discourse. In the midst of a slow-drip of irony, I felt immediately interested in her cool-headed and playful intellectualism, which I have come to know better in the years since then. Yet the contractual agreement outlined in *Imbrication* felt foundational—it highlighted a liminal space between care and debt. Indeed, it is through the way we bump or squeeze each other's limbs that we're reminded how our bonds to each other are transactional. We owe something to one another and, to extrapolate, we owe something to the world.

To my eyes, Czebatul consistently operates as an artist whose practice and life are indeed imbricated into the world. Beyond her art-making, she moves outside of institutional art circles, instead engaging in queer spaces, rave culture, and activist communities, which inform but do not dictate her work. I met her later through one of these avenues—it is hard to pinpoint which. These have been tiring and transformative years. The late 2010s twisted the knife on any concrete hope left behind for millennial artists in a post-Lehman era; the years have been marked by a surge in anti-cultural sentiment and historical revisionism, too. Trump- and Brexit-era anxieties dawned. Escapism became a way to cope with the derailment of late capitalism while, on the other hand, all these frictions instigated new awarenesses, solidarity, and resistance.

Czebatul situates herself within these tensions. Her works, which range from sculptures to wall pieces to immersive architectural interventions, speak about and embody power. They harness conflicting ideologies and they complicate hegemony as a concept. She borrows from totalitarian aesthetics and classical antiquity, as well as drug and sex culture—in the case of the latter two, one could say that pleasure is a battlespace. Patriarchy and neoliberalism are fodder for her. There are kitsch tropes and ephemera borrowed from consumer-based living, and she takes a long view of art history and wider society, touching on archaeology and spanning centuries of references while discussing humanity's present conditions, which are, we come to forget and learn again, in many ways unchanged throughout the millennia.

We met recently in Berlin, some days after the May 1 demonstrations, which had, despite the pandemic stay-at-home orders, been the largest the city had seen in years. There is a particularly energetic, chaotic lifeblood flowing these past few weeks. Virus restrictions are easing. There is protest after protest after protest: the ongoing normalization of crisis¹ and the Pavlovian response to it is taking place online and in the streets. We unrolled blankets on the parched lawn and sat together in a small area of shade at the former Tempelhof airfield and talked about the art that set the foundation for her interest in scaling up sculpture.

Life partners Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen erected a public sculpture in 1994² in the heart of the banking district in Frankfurt am Main, where Czebatul spent a part of her childhood. She would see it now and again when she passed through downtown—the monumental collar and tie, smashed to the ground upside down as if the DZ Bank building behind it had loosened up its attire and tossed it off its neck at the

¹ Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, Winchester 2009.
² The work *Inverted Collar and Tie* was commissioned by DZ Bank.

³ Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, Winchester 2009.
⁴ Claes Oldenburg: *Spirit of the Monument*, YouTube video, 54:26, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, November 8, 2014.

end of a long day. Death lingered: it could also be read as a post-suicide scene at the foot of this cold blue glass structure, the body gone in a puff of smoke like a Black Thursday jumper.

Some say another financial bubble is looming now, that inflation is about to become unhinged as unrest simmers in every corner of the world. Drugs and death are places that we run to, metaphorically and in the realest sense, when capitalism becomes too tiresome. Mark Fisher described the condition of his students as "depressive hedonia", which he says is not so much an inability to get pleasure so much as an inability to get anything *but* pleasure.³ This is perhaps a pessimistic concept when thought about individually, but pleasure experienced as a community can be seen as a vestige of a self-melting, of a blurring of one's edges, which is quite radical in opposition to the hyper-individuation we live through daily, hourly, minute by minute. Czebatul is currently making a three-meter-wide inflatable ecstasy pill that will be shipped to exhibitions in several cities. Club culture has long been a space of resistance, and on a personal level, a place of refuge for her and many in her community; as such, she expresses its sheer mass.

Her upbringing in a wider scope can offer an entrance to understanding her interest in outsize art and political power plays. Born in Międzyrzecz, a small, picturesque place in Western Poland, her family emigrated after the dissolution of the USSR, illegally arriving in Germany in 1991 when she was five. Works like the poured concrete sculpture series *Their New Power* borrow from the triumphant scale of Soviet-era public art that populates Poland and the East where she spent those early years, where relatives still live, and where she travels to often enough—though in increasing contempt of the reigning government's growing intolerance for progressive views and gay life. Poland, once a satellite state of the USSR, has a landscape of often unambiguous, muscular work, and, other than that, there are lots of towns where there is no art to see at all. Where there is, communist and post-communist aesthetics prevail as "blatant patriotism, war, religion," the artist told me. She appropriates these elements; in her interpretations, these conquering statues are often dismantled into fragments, then crossbred with cartoonish pop cultural elements to turn them into little monsters. Understandably then, Oldenburg and van Bruggen's art pieces would have been an important catalyst for a young Czebatul, juxtaposing that emotionally-driven form of sculpture so successful in the East against its Western-born conceptual iterations—that is, against ambiguity.

Life in Germany was manageable, but she does remember police knocking on her door one night because of issues around their family's visa and residency permit. She recalled gathering signatures at her school to create a petition to allow her to stay in Germany. It is not a victim's narrative; rather, the experience ended up giving her "an early sense of autonomy"—a feeling that would be further explored through rave culture between Frankfurt and Berlin, where she worked for years as a bouncer. ("Techno was the first place where my origins were not a topic of discussion," Czebatul added; she avoids discussing her identity and removes it from bio where possible.) But those origins do explain why a city like Berlin, straddling East and West, a tangled crossroads of divergent populations, a pastiche of political views, might draw someone like her in.

On the ex-Nazi tarmac, now a recreational and tree-anemic park, we talked about Oldenburg and van Bruggen's ability to flip hegemony on its head with their sometimes somber but always funny public gestures. Czebatul's artistic language similarly sees symbolic dominance toppled and rearranged: totalitarian aesthetics were the play pieces in her 2015 show *A Gentleman's Insult/A Gentleman's Apology* at Galerie Gillmeier Rech, where the exhibition space was brazenly stuffed with a large, fabric obelisk on a radioactive yellow linoleum floor (by chance, Oldenburg and van Bruggen somewhat jokingly proposed in one drawing to turn Washington, D.C.'s obelisk into a pair of scissors⁴). The scale of Czebatul's work trumped any kind of authority usually inherent in a white

34. 35

59–61



Diamanda Galás in conversation with Andrea Juno

Angry Women, Re/search Publications, 1991

AJ: The power of your voice produces a very visceral, primal, yet almost healing experience - as though poisons are being forced out. This is not abstract, elitist "New Music"; you provide an emotional bedrock which is intense, political and poetic.

DG: That was always the original nature of woman's voice. From the Greeks onward, this voice has always been a political instrument as well as a vehicle for transmission of occult knowledge or power. It's always been tied to witches and the shamanistic experience - the witch as transvestite/transsexual having the power of both male and female. People ask me, "How do you feel as a woman onstage?" and I say, "A what? Woman, man - I am a fucking n., white person, lesbian, homosexual, witch, snake, vampire - whatever!" I don't think in any one of those terms - that's so limited! But on the other hand: how many men can think like that? [laughs] That's the advantage of being a woman or homosexual.

AJ: You can be more flexible. Whereas a lot of heterosexual males have rigid, ossified gender definitions.

DG: Of their own volition. I have a lot of straight black friends and I've always terrorized the shit out of them. One of them will come over and say, "Oh, baby, let's get it on" and I'll say, "Yeah, you know I've been thinking about you all night" (and he'll be this big guy, 6'6") and I'll continue, "Man - I thought about fucking you last night with this crowbar, and you were screaming, 'Baby, fuck me!'" - and they have this look of absolute horror on their faces! But they love me, because they want a woman to talk to them like that - it's really liberating.

I want to fuck a man in the ass (so far I haven't had any volunteers; I always ask them and they get nervous and say no) but I want to, because I feel that's a fundamental part of my relationship with them and to

myself. I don't want to just be fucked - what's that? I want to experience this other thing. Someone said long ago that men should be fucked in the ass first before they fuck a woman, so they can understand what it feels like to be penetrated in their body. And in this area, I'm all too willing to help! That would be my ideal man, definitely.

Oh yes, we can sit on men ("Thank you so much for letting me sit on top of you; I really need a urinary tract infection tonight!") but after a while I want to be paid - as an ex-hooker, I want that. Really, I wanna fuck men in the ass - I want to break their flesh, too - and exorcize my violence on them to show them just how much I love them!

We were talking about the concept of the voice as a political force. I also use the voice in the same liturgical way that the mass has always been used (immediately people say, "Black Mass," because for some reason I'm identified with "Satan.") All masses are the same; all have the ability to conjure up evil or the devil, because all gods, all powers are connected in the world - nothing else makes sense.

Back to the concept of the Greek voice, which is simultaneously this political/shamanistic/homosexual witches' voice. My father's background is Turkish-Greek-Anatolian, and my mother's is Spartan Greek. The Spartan Greeks were known for their incantations: *moirologi*, which are incantations for the Dead. When mourning, Greek women would scream and pull out their hair. (Om Kalsoum has a certain power relating to this.) The Greeks hate Americans because they want to turn Greece into an U.S. Air Force base; this relates to Medea: "I would rather kill my children than let them be part of your ancestry." (Just like Saddam Hussein's stance: "I would rather my country be destroyed, than be turned into an American army base.")

Medea leaves her homeland for her husband's sake. Then her husband becomes interested in a younger woman and leaves her like some old garbage, and here she is, a transplant in this new country. She sends the future bride a beautiful bridal gown, and when the woman puts it on, her skin starts to melt very slowly; she dies in total agony. (Pasolini made a film about this, *Medea*, starring Maria Callas.) The whole family is destroyed; she kills her children with a knife rather than leave her husband any offspring, so he's left with nothing. And in many versions of the story she kills herself as well - that's very traditionally Greek.
[...]

AJ: On this overpopulated planet, the Biblical dictum "Be fruitful and multiply" is suicidal.

DG: New breeding makes no sense at all - there's already too many kids around; you can adopt one. What about protecting the unfortunate children who already exist on this planet? I was talking to Rachel Rosenthal [godmother of performance art] about this. I told her I had my tubes tied and she said I should get a fucking medal for this!

I try and make my life consistent with my political beliefs; I'm not going to say, "I want a family like everyone else, because my children [of course] will be 'terribly special.' Fuck that - I'll get some goldfish and some cats and they'll be 'terribly special'!" Every witch has cats - you never hear of a witch having children!
[...]

AJ: The whole concept of maleness is shaky nowadays. Misogyny still rules, but now it's mixed with a lot of cowardice, impotence and wimpiness.

DG: I pity weak men: they should be dragged out into the middle of the street, beaten, humiliated, degraded and sodomized by my friends and me just for sport. I love seeing weak men cry - my heart races.

I feel sorry for men, but if I could fuck 'em in the ass then it wouldn't matter! [laughs] Actually, I think that eventually I won't be exclusively heterosexual by



AJ: It's those "tricksters" (the artists and Outsiders) who reveal society's illnesses

DG: But those Outsiders are treated like hunted criminals. There have been warrants out for my arrest, and I think, "Oh - society's going to put me in jail." In court, six ACT UP demonstrators pleaded that they didn't enter the cathedral to disrupt Cardinal O'Connors's religious ceremony (which is against the law), but to participate in it by doing a "Die-In." So it depends on the way you look at it.

I mean: what can they do to you? They can put you in jail - but if you see the ability to survive in any context as a mark of your strength, then that's not going to break your spirit. If I ever go to prison and someone says something nasty to me, we'll have a fight and hopefully I can beat her ass. And if I can't beat her ass, then I have to learn how to do it for the next time. **What's the problem?** So I don't get scared, I think: "What are you going to do to me? Are you going to rape me? - I've been raped before. **What** are you going to do? Next."

When I almost got raped for the fifth time in my life, this black guy came up to me while I was opening a door and said (in the dark), "This is a rape!" I said [bored voice], "Oh, really? It's been a long day. Could I ask you a question - do you have a knife?" "No." "Then why don't we just call it off?" And he called it off! It was like: "Darling, I'm terribly bored. I really want to get some sleep and I don't have time for this. You don't have a knife, so let's forget it." And as he walked downstairs with me I said, "Next time you should be careful, because I could have had one." It's like: you can get to the point where you're not afraid - then people see that and **what can they do?**



any means. I might go the way of Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday and become a full-on, fuckin' dyke.

AJ: When heterosexual women get to the point where they possess their independence and soul, and start becoming truly discriminating, it makes for a more difficult task to find men that are.

DG: I think women should have an "ideal": the only people you treat as equals are other women. And when you want subordinates, you can fuck a man in the ass! That basically is probably the future. Some men get angry because they think I view them just as sex objects. But I say, "You don't need to read to me - I can read. And conversation - I can get that from my friends. So you should feel lucky that you at least have this service you can offer me."

There've been a lot of military men in my life - I like them to be fighters, at least on a physical level. There've been ex-cons - I like violent men; I like the idea that I can terrorize them and they can take it. I don't want 'em to knock me across the room unless I hit them first - and can hit 'em back. In the area of violence and sex, I always warn people. For example, if they want to be bitten, I say, "Either you want to be bitten or you don't, because I might lose control - there will be no halfway measures!" [laughs] And this is a domain that people who worry about being politically correct don't address: the realm of exciting, even violent sex between consenting adults. Most people think that sex should be gentle and peaceful. But if sex is merely gentle and peaceful, I'm not even interested. Of course, when I say violence I mean "play violence" (a topic of discussion in itself) - I'm really not interested in ending up with a broken jaw or collarbone.

I like the man I'm seeing now because he'll say, "You filthy fuckin' white whore, that's all you want, you piece o' shit!" and I'll say, "Listen, you black motherfucker, I'm gonna take you by a chain and lead you through the streets!" This is the way we like to talk to each other - any way we damn well please! Not with this wimpy, politically correct "discourse" [sarcastically].
[...]



HELENE HEGEMANN: SCHLACHTENSEE
BOOKCOVER, 10.2 × 20.5 CM

With
Helene Hegemann and Kiepenheuer & Witsch

2022



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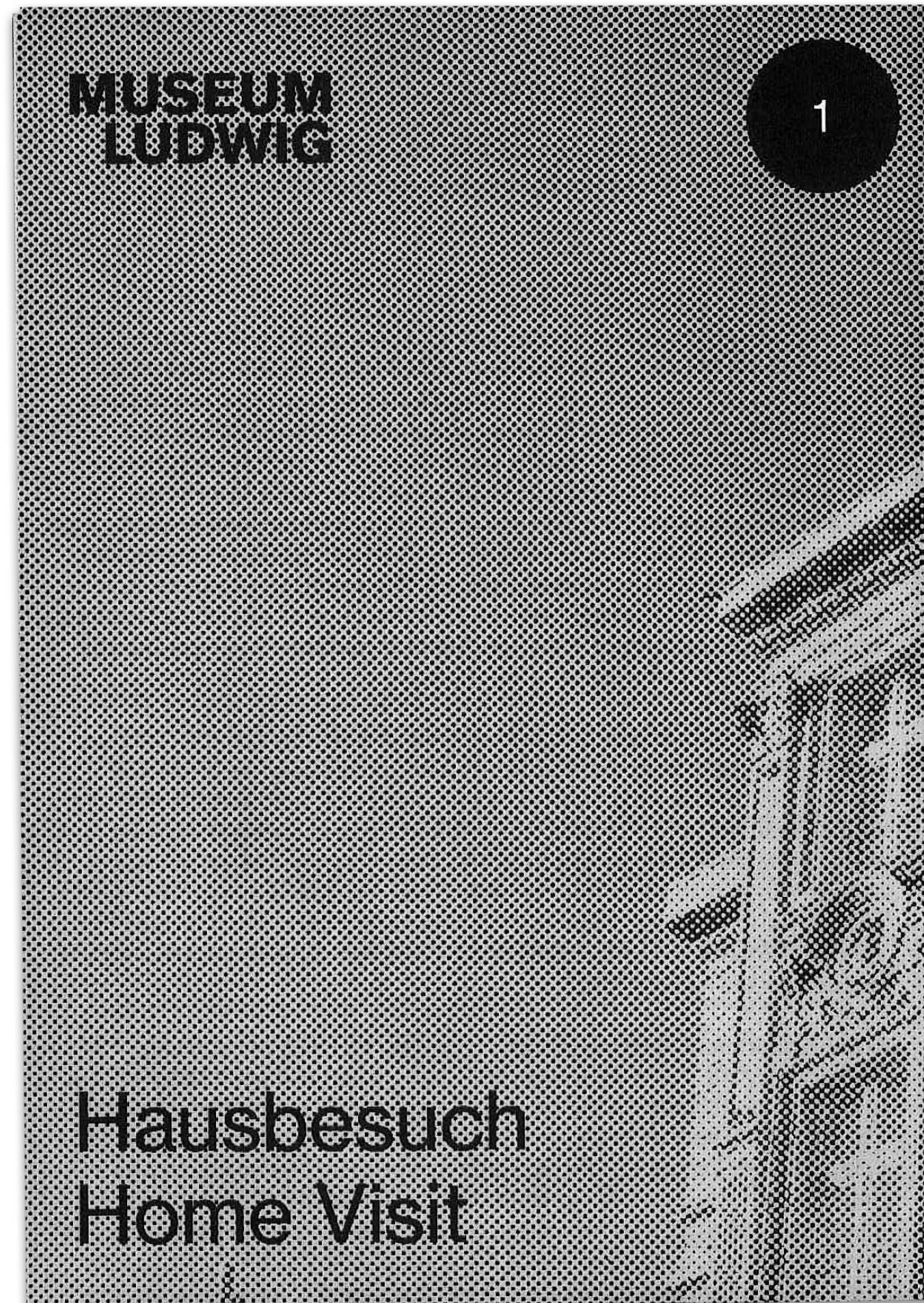
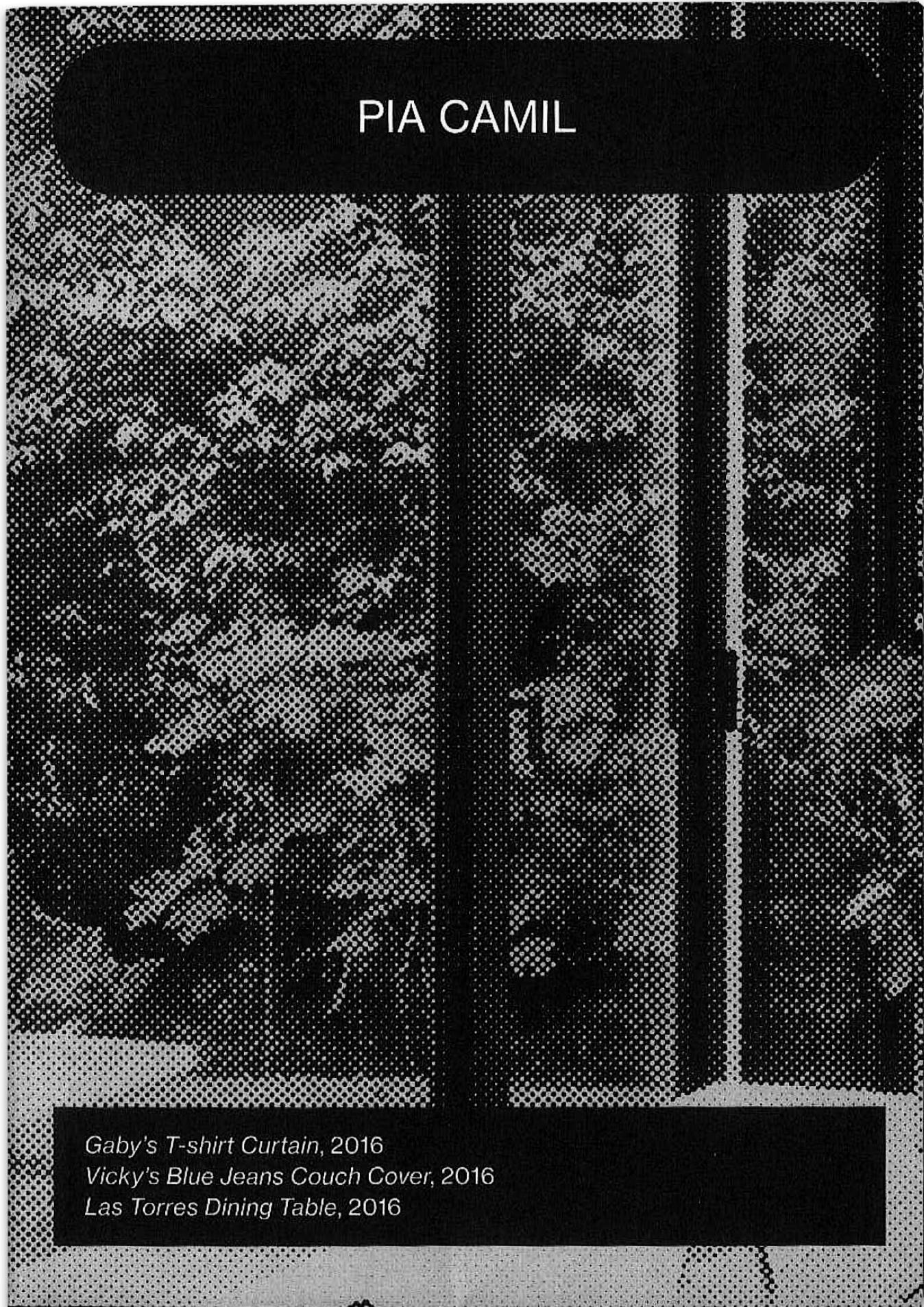
Happy Valley II
1995

HAUSBESUCH
EPHEMERA FOR THE ENTIRE PROJECT

With
Museum Ludwig & Thomas Spallek

Artists
Marwa Arsanios, åyr, Neïl Beloufa, Pia Camil,
Calla Henkel & Max Pitegoff, Mélanie Matranga

2018



PIA CAMIL
*1980 und lebt in Mexiko-Stadt

Gaby's T-shirt Curtain, 2016
Second-Hand-T-Shirts (vom Markt in Iztapalapa)

Vicky's Blue Jeans Couch Cover, 2016
Second-Hand-Jeans (vom Markt in Iztapalapa), Füllwatte

Las Torres Dining Table, 2016
Sperrholz, Stoffflächen, gestiftete Second-Hand-Stoffe und -Kleidung

Die Vorbereitung der Ausstellung mit der mexikanischen Künstlerin Pia Camil begann mit der Suche nach dem Wohnraum einer berufstätigen Mutter, deren Zuhause zugleich ihre Arbeitsstätte ist. Dies führte zu der Begegnung mit der Textildesignerin Daniela Corneille, die zusammen mit ihrem Mann, einem Architekten, und ihrer Tochter in einem eingeschossigen 1950er-Jahre-Bau im Kölner Stadtteil Hahnwald lebt. In einem gläsernen Anbau, der sich nach stilistischem Vorbild moderner Architektur perfekt an das historische Gebäude anstückt, befindet sich ihr Büro.

Das modernistisch gestaltete Haus richtet Camil mit semifunktionalen Objekten aus Second-Hand-Ware ein, die sie stapelweise auf dem Markt Las Torres in Iztapalapa, einem sozial schwachen und dicht besiedelten Bezirk im Osten von Mexiko-Stadt gekauft hat. Im gläsernen Büro installiert sie einen Vorhang aus zusammengenähten T-Shirts, während sie zwei der Mid-Century-Design-Sofas im Wohnzimmer mit Überwürfen aus getragenen und ausgestopften Jeans ummantelt. Über Esszimmer und Terrasse erstreckt sich ein Tisch, der Außen und Innen verbindet und den niedrigen Markttischen in Iztapalapa nachempfunden ist. Dabei arbeitete die Künstlerin nicht nur mit lokalen Materialien, sondern auch mit den Menschen vor Ort. Während sie die Stoffarbeiten zusammen mit mexikanischen Schneiderinnen in Mexiko-Stadt realisierte, ist der Tisch in der Schreinerei des Museum Ludwig entstanden. Darauf liegen große Stoffballen, gefüllt mit Altkleidern und Textilien der Gastgeber. In der Ausstellungslaufzeit wird das Möbelstück von der Familie ebenso als Essplatz genutzt. Wie eine zweite Haut und doch mit einer beeindruckenden körperlichen Präsenz der mexikanischen Straßen fühgen sich die Objekte in den ansonsten sehr klar und stilischer eingerichteten Privatraum ein.

Am Ausstellungsort entzünden sich Fragen zu Gender- und Sozialgeschichte, zu den Ansprüchen und Wirklichkeiten moderner Architektur, aber auch danach, wie sich Beruf und Privatleben im häuslichen Kontext überlagern – und was dies für die Bewohner(in) bedeutet. Inwiefern bezieht ein Paar, dessen berufliche Praxis auf die Gestaltung von Räumen ausgerichtet ist, das Außen mit ein in die Entscheidungen, wie sie wohnen wollen? Lassen sich dabei die Grenzen zwischen Innen und Außen überhaupt klar bestimmen? Und was passiert, wenn so unterschiedliche soziale und ökonomische Welten wie die des gut situierten Viertels Hahnwald und die des Marktes in Iztapalapa aufeinandertreffen?

Pia Camil arbeitet in unterschiedlichen Medien, darunter Skulptur, Installation und Performance, wobei sie häufig Materialien aus dem öffentlichen Raum in Mexiko wiederverwendet, um sie in häusliche Objekte zu transferieren. Die materiellen Grundlagen massenproduzierter Waren werden in ihren Arbeiten auf ihren ökonomischen und persönlichen Wert geprüft und finden ihren Weg über die handwerkliche Arbeit zurück zu einem intimen Charakter. Zudem lassen viele ihrer Werke sowohl Ästhetisch als auch inhaltlich vielfältige Rückbezüge auf die moderne Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte zu und eröffnen imaginative Räume hinter den Bildern. Camils Arbeiten waren zuletzt in Einzelausstellungen im New Museum in New York (2016), im Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2016), im Artium Basque Centre-Museum of Contemporary Art in Vitoria-Gasteiz (2013), in Galerieausstellungen bei Blum & Poe in New York (2016), OMR in Mexiko-Stadt (2014) und der Galerie Sultana in Paris (2013) wie auch im Rahmen der Frieze Projects, New York (2015) und der Biennial of the Americas in Denver Colorado (2013) zu sehen.

PIA CAMIL
*1980 in Mexico City, lives in Mexico City

Gaby's T-shirt Curtain, 2016
Second-hand t-shirts (from the market in Iztapalapa)

Vicky's Blue Jeans Couch Cover, 2016
Second-hand blue jeans (from the market in Iztapalapa), fiberfill

Las Torres Dining Table, 2016
Plywood, sheets, donated second-hand objects and clothes

The preparations for the exhibition with the Mexican artist Pia Camil began with a search for the domestic space of a working mother whose home is also her workplace. This led to an encounter with the textile designer Daniela Corneille, who lives with her husband, an architect, and her daughter in a one-story building from the 1950s in the Hahnwald district of Cologne. Her office is located in a glass cube annex that fits in perfectly with the modern architecture of the original building.

Camil has furnished the modernist interiors with semi-functional objects made of second-hand goods that she bought in bulk at the Las Torres market in Iztapalapa, a low-income and densely populated district in the east of Mexico City. In the glass office she has installed a curtain made of sewn-together T-shirts, while in the living room she has covered two of the mid-century modern sofas with throws made of worn and stuffed jeans. A table that connects the exterior with the interior and is modeled after the low market tables in Iztapalapa extends across the dining room and the terrace. The artist not only worked with local materials but also with people on site. While she realized the fabric works along with Mexican seamstresses in Mexico City, the table was created at the Museum Ludwig workshop. Large bundles of cloth filled with old clothing and textiles from the hosts are placed on it. During the exhibition, the table will also be used by the family as a dining table. Like a second skin and yet with an impressive physical presence of the streets of Mexico, the objects fit into this otherwise very clearly and stylishly decorated private space.

The exhibition site sparks questions about gender and social history, the demands and realities of modern architecture, as well as how work and personal life overlap in the domestic context – and what this means for the residents. To what extent does a couple whose professional practice is devoted to designing rooms take the world outside into account in their decisions about how they want to live? Can clear boundaries even be drawn between inside and outside? And what happens when such different social and economic worlds as the affluent district of Hahnwald meets that of the market in Iztapalapa?

Pia Camil works in various media, including sculpture, installations, and performance, and often reuses materials from public spaces in Mexico in order to transform them into domestic objects. The material foundations of mass-produced goods are examined for their economic and personal value and regain their intimate quality through craftsmanship. Moreover, many of her works allow for a variety of references to modern art and cultural history both aesthetically and conceptually and open up imaginative spaces behind the pictures. Camil's works have recently been featured in solo exhibitions at the New Museum in New York (2016), the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati (2016), the Artium Basque Centre-Museum of Contemporary Art in Vitoria-Gasteiz (2013), in gallery exhibitions at Blum & Poe in New York (2016), OMR in Mexico City (2014), and Galerie Sultana in Paris (2013), as well as at Frieze Projects in New York (2015) and the Biennial of the Americas in Denver, Colorado (2013).

MUSEUM
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4

PIA CAMIL

Hausbesuch Home Visit

Gaby's T-shirt Curtain, 2016
Vicky's Blue Jeans Couch Cover, 2016
Las Torres Dining Table, 2016

Daniela, Yves & Parker Corneille
Am Zehnpfennighof 6
50996 Köln (Hahnwald)

MARY-AUDREY RAMIREZ
BOOK, 20 × 30 CM, 128 PAGES, SOFTCOVER

With
Overbeck Gesellschaft, Distanz

Artist
Mary-Audrey Ramirez

2020

MARY-AUDREY
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MENSCHEN, DIE AUF TIERE STARREN

Tiere werden geboren, sie sind fühlende und sterbliche Wesen. Darin gleichen sie dem Menschen. Sie unterscheiden sich vom Menschen weniger in ihrer grundsätzlichen als in ihrer sichtbaren Anatomie – in ihren Gewohnheiten, ihrer Zeit, ihren physischen Fähigkeiten. Sie sind sowohl gleich als auch ungleich.¹

Im Jahr 1850 erschien in Deutschland das erste *Handbuch der Hygiene*, das den Stand der öffentlichen und privaten Gesundheitspflege in Frankreich und Großbritannien auch hierzulande bekannt machte. Der Herausgeber, der Internist Friedrich Oesterlen sprach darin von der „wissenschaftlichen“ und „künstlerisch-praktischen Seite“ seines Fachgebiets. Als Wissenschaft“ hat die Hygiene „die Bedingungen des Gesundseyns und Gesundbleibens sowohl des einzelnen Menschen als auch der Menschen im Verein, als Gesellschaft und Volk zu erörtern. Als Kunst gibt sie Mittel und Wege an die Hand, durch deren Einhalten jene Gesundheit, das körperliche und sogar das geistig-sittliche Wohlbefinden des Einzelnen wie der Menschen in Gesellschaft, als ganzer Bevölkerung erhalten werden kann.“²

Die Bedingungen des Gesundseins und -bleibens zu erörtern ist ein Gedanke, der wie ein Schlüsselmoment am Beginn von Mary-Audrey Ramirez' plastischen und installativen Arbeiten stand. Was wäre, wenn wir in einer parallelen Welt nicht nur ein Badezimmer hätten, das der körperlichen Hygiene dient, sondern auch einen Raum für die mentale Hygiene, für die Pflege und Reinigung der Psyche? Wie könnte die Architektur dieses fiktiven Ortes aussehen, und wie könnte seine Gestaltung sich auf unser Verhalten auswirken? An die Stelle von Badewanne, Waschbecken und Toilette tritt in Ramirez' Werk eine Trias von Skulpturen: *Erinnye/Furye* (2015), ein dreiteiliges, an der Wand befestigtes Polster, an dem man seine Wut und Aggression durch Schläge rauslassen kann; *Boxes/Silence* (2016), eine Art Liege aus geschweißtem Metall, auf der man den Kopf in einen schallschluckenden Kasten stecken kann, um sich alle denkbaren Emotionen von der Seele zu schreien oder einfach nur zur Ruhe zu kommen; und *Gequetscht/Squeezed or a hug* (2015), ein weiteres Polster, das den Oberkörper von hinten umschließt und ganz fest drückt, ihn umarmt. Dass feste Umarmungen eine beruhigende Wirkung haben, erfahren wir von Kind an, doch autistische Menschen können diese menschlichen Berührungen nicht ertragen. Die Lösung: eine „Umarmungsmaschine“, wie sie auch in der kommerziellen Tierhaltung zum Einsatz kommt, wenn Rinder geimpft

1 John Berger, „Warum sehen wir Tiere an?“, *Das Leben der Bilder oder die Kunst des Sehens*, Berlin 2003 (1981), S.13

2 Friedrich Oesterlen, *Handbuch der Hygiene*, Tübingen 1851, zit. nach Wolfgang U. Eckart, *Illustrierte Geschichte der Medizin*, Heidelberg 2011, S. 115

3 Diese Squeeze Machine ist eine Erfindung der US-amerikanischen Tierwissenschaftlerin Temple Grandin, selbst Autistin, Spezialistin für den Entwurf von Anlagen für die kommerzielle Tierhaltung. Ausgehend von ihrer eigenen Erfahrung konstruierte sie die Hug Machine, in der sie die Reizüberflutung der Umwelt ausblenden kann.



56

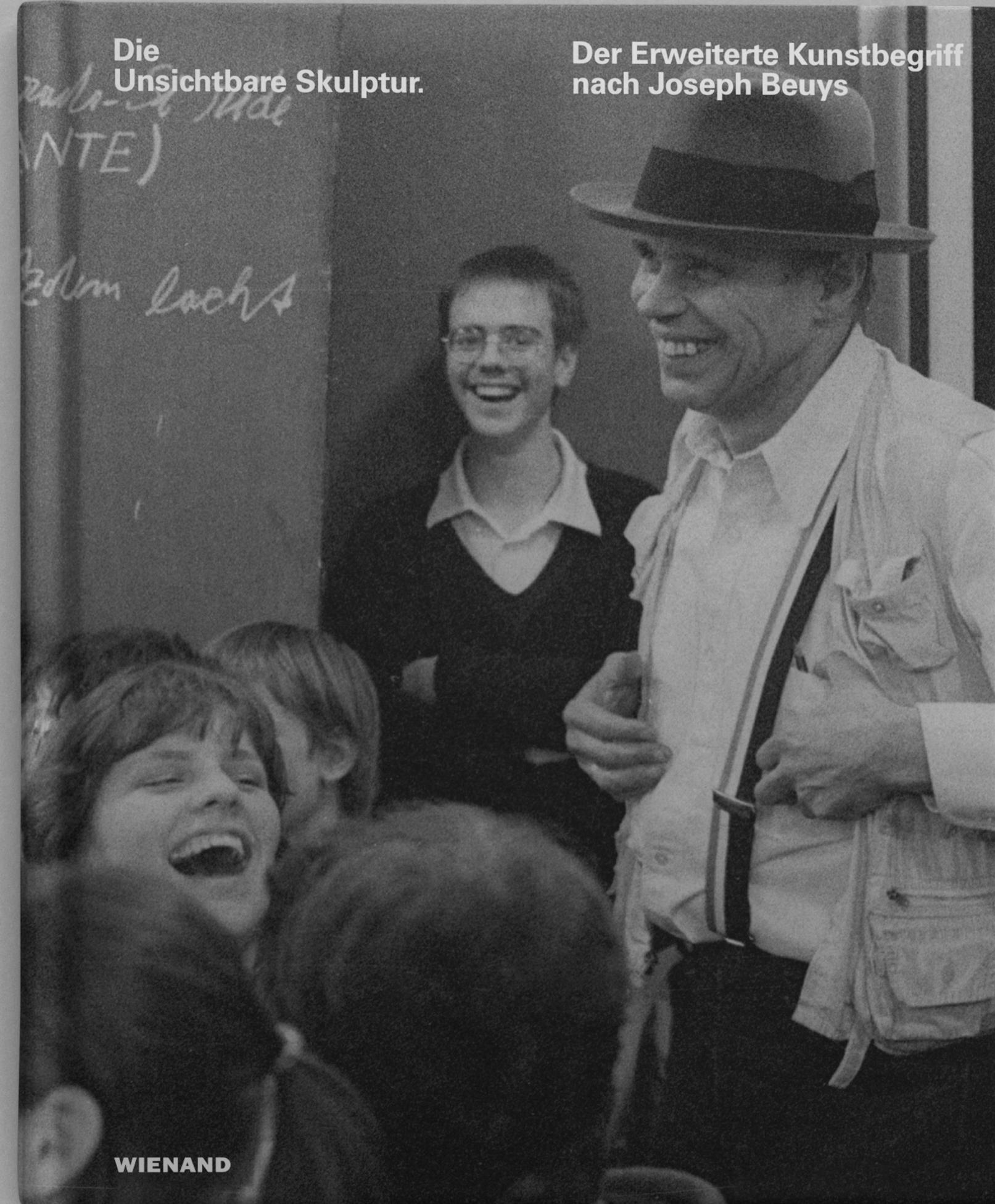


57

DIE UNSICHTBARE SKULPTUR.
DER ERWEITERTE KUNSTBEGRIFF NACH JOSPEH BEUYS
Book, 30 x 24 CM, 296 PAGES

With
Ruhr Museum, Zollverein, Wienand Verlag
& Thomas Spallek

2021



als Dreh- und Angelpunkt der zu erlangenden Selbstbestimmung der Italiener*innen begriff, ging es beispielsweise in der Diskussion „Rinascita dell’Agricoltura“ am 12. Februar 1978 in Pescara. Daraus ging das gleichnamige Institut hervor, ein Arbeitskollektiv der FIU, das sich mit der Weiterentwicklung der Landwirtschaft beschäftigte.

1980 erhielt Beuys 15 Hektar Land in Bolognano, auf dem er sein Pflanzvorhaben beginnen konnte. Parallel zu den 7000 Eichen in Kassel wurden hier über mehrere Jahre 7000 Bäume und Pflanzen angesiedelt, die durch ökologische oder wirtschaftliche Gründe vom Aussterben bedroht waren. Abb. 3 Als Beuys am 13. Mai 1984 zum Ehrenbürger der Stadt Bolognano ernannt wurde, sagte er: „Die Funktion dieser freien Universität¹⁹ ist es, die aktuellen politischen Systeme im Osten wie im Westen durch die Regeneration der Natur und des Menschen als soziologischem Wesen zu überwinden. Unsere Arbeit besteht im Schaffen von Modellen, nicht in praktischen Resultaten, und da ich in Kassel 7000 Eichen pflanzen werde, habe ich beschlossen, hier in Bolognano 7000 Bäume verschiedener Arten zu pflanzen. Ich möchte in Bolognano ein kleines Paradies erschaffen, die vom Aussterben bedrohten Pflanzen erforschen und, mit der Kooperation Lucrezia und Buby Durinis eine ökologische Datenbank schaffen, in der die bedrohten Arten geschützt und gepflegt [...] werden. Aber diese Aktion darf nicht in Bolognano enden“ – ein Wunsch, der in Erfüllung ging.

„Alles was ich hier gemacht habe, steht in Beziehung zur Idee der Katastrophe, die im Süden als permanenter Zustand vorhanden ist.“²⁰

Das Erdbeben Terremoto dell’Irpina, das am 23. November 1980 in den Regionen Kampanien und Basilicata wütete, hatte Ausmaße, wie Italien es in seiner Geschichte noch nicht erlebt hatte.²¹ Mehr als 2700 Menschen verloren ihr Leben unter den Trümmern, 9000 wurden verletzt, 390.000 Menschen hatten kein Zuhause mehr. Lucio Amelio rief Künstler wie Tony Cragg, Anselm Kiefer, Robert Mapplethorpe, Gerhard Richter und Andy Warhol auf, je ein Kunstwerk zu stiften, die in der Sammlung *Terrae Motus* zusammenkamen.²² Joseph Beuys traf im Februar 1981 als einer der ersten Künstler in Neapel ein. Die in den Trümmern von ihm gesammelten Gegenstände einstiger Bewohner*innen flossen in das Werk *Terremoto in Palazzo* ein, das er am 17. April 1981 in Amelios Galerie zeigte. Abb. 4a, 4b Die Objekte, zwei Tische, eine Werkbank, ein Schemel, Tontöpfen und Gläser wurden zu einer fragilen Raumkomposition, die die existenzielle Gefährdung zum Thema mache.²³ In der Installation, die durch die kleinste Bewegung zum Zusammenbruch verurteilt war, führte Beuys vor Publikum eine Aktion durch: Unter einem der Tische sitzend, skizzierte er über Stunden seismografisch anmutende Zeichnungen auf ein durchlaufendes Papier – Zeichnungen, die heute unter dem Titel *Diagramma Terremoto* bekannt sind.

Beuys’ Erfahrungen in Italien, die seine Forderung nach einer grundlegenden Änderung der Lebens- und Weltanschauung noch verstärkten, mündeten in einen Aufruf, den er im April 1981 für die neapolitanische Zeitung „Il Mattino“ schrieb. „Il Mattino“ hat den Text aufgrund seiner Radikalität nie veröffentlicht. Denn Beuys forderte für Italien den Bruch mit Rom und die Selbstverwaltung des Mezzogiorno.²⁴ Auch die Kritik an



Abb. 4a



Abb. 4b

19 Gemeint sind hier die vier italienischen FIU-Zweigstellen in Turin, Pescara, Rom und Palermo.
20 Lucio Amelio, zit. nach: ders., „Eine fünfzehnjährige Liebe“, in: Ausstellungskatalog Beuys zu Ehren, hrsg. von Armin Zweite, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, München 1986, S. 50.

21 Vgl. Italien: *Armes, unglückseliges Vaterland*, in: „Der Spiegel“, Nr. 50, 1980, 08.12.1980, auf: <https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14334606.html> (letzter Zugriff 13.01.2021).

22 Vgl. Rita E. Täuber, *Levitazione in Italia – Joseph Beuys. Stationen in Italien*, in: Ausstellungskatalog Joseph Beuys und Italien. L’arte è una zanzara dalle mille ali o Die Kunst ist eine Stechmücke mit tausend Flügeln, hrsg. von Marc Grundel, Rita E. Täuber, Städtische Museen Heilbronn, Kunsthalle Vogelmann, Bielefeld 2016, S. 61.

23 Vgl. ebd.

24 Vgl. Joseph Beuys in: *Terrae Motus*, hrsg. von Michele Bonuoma, Diego Cortez, Fondazione Amelio, Neapel 1984, S. 24.



Abb. 5

25 Joseph Beuys in: *Terrae Motus*, hrsg. von Michele Bonuoma, Diego Cortez, Fondazione Amelio, Neapel 1984, S. 24–26.

26 Karl-Werner Brand, *Umweltbewegung (inkl. Tierschutz)*, Unter Mitarbeit von Henrik Stover, in: Roland Roth, Dieter Rucht (Hg.), *Die Sozialen Bewegungen in Deutschland seit 1945. Ein Handbuch*, Frankfurt a. M. 2008, S. 226. Auf: https://dspace.ub.uni-siegen.de/bitstream/ubsi/14221/1/Masterarbeit_Katrin_Hedemann.pdf (letzter Zugriff 13.01.2021).

27 Vgl. Rhea Thönnes-Stringaris, *Etwas Gesundes neben dem Baum. Die Steine der 7000 Eichen*, in: *Stiftung 7000 Eichen. 30 Jahre Joseph Beuys 7000 Eichen*, Köln 2012, S. 63–64.

28 Vgl. Joseph Beuys im Interview mit dem Hessischen Rundfunk am 15.12.1981, documenta Archiv, AA, d07, Mappe 40.
29 Vgl. ebd.

den Zerstörungen durch den Materialismus und der Appell zur Selbstbestimmung des Menschen sowie die Forderung nach einem Programm zur Befreiung von Bildung und Gesellschaft finden in diesem Aufruf Platz. Beuys verlangte eine ökologische Kreislaufwirtschaft, die durch die Vergesellschaftung von Unternehmen, Selbstverwaltung der Arbeiter*innen, demokratische Einigung, Volksabstimmungen, solidarischen Handel, ein demokratisches Währungs- und Bankensystem und ein Grundeinkommen realisiert werden und in einer nicht-staatlich geführten Gesellschaft münden sollte. Der Text wurde schließlich 1984 im Katalog *Terrae Motus* abgedruckt.²⁵

Stadtverwaltung statt Stadtverwaltung

In den 1980er Jahren erhielten ökologische Bewegungen erneut Auftrieb, Themen wie das Waldsterben bestimmten nun die öffentlichen Debatten.²⁶ 1982 stellte Beuys 7000 Eichen. *Stadtverwaltung statt Stadtverwaltung*, seine größte Skulptur als Beitrag zur documenta 7 vor. Abb. 5 7000 Basaltsteine aus einem Steinbruch nahe Kassel wurden auf dem Friedrichsplatz vor dem Friedericianum in Form eines Dreiecks deponiert – für viele Kasseler*innen ein Dorn im Auge. Über einen Zeitraum von fünf Jahren wurde der Steinhaufen abgetragen. Jedem neu gepflanzten Baum, durch eine Spende von 500 DM finanziert, wurde ein Stein an seine Seite gestellt. Dadurch wurde der Baum nicht nur als Teil des Kunstwerks ausgewiesen: Dem lebenden Baum, dem Organischen, wurde etwas Totes, Kristallines, hinzugegeben, das über die Zeit an den Boden Mineralien abgibt, die wiederum dem Baum zugute kommen.²⁷ Beuys ging es dabei um das Verbinden von Gegensätzlichem, in diesem Fall von Stillstand (Stein) und Wachstum (Baum), das an der sich ständig verändernden Proportion beider Teile zueinander ablesbar wird.²⁸ Diese Verbindung wird auch in dem Stempel der 7000 Eichen deutlich, in dem die Wurzeln des Baumes eine direkte Verbindung zur Basaltstele eingehen. Beuys erweitert sein Material wie schon bei den zur gleichen Zeit in Italien vorgenommenen Pflanzungen. Sein Werkstoff ist jetzt das Organische, das nicht mehr Gegenständliche, das Unsichtbare, das zur Sozialen Plastik wird, in der „die menschliche Arbeit beleuchtet“ wird „als Kunst“.²⁹

Die Bürger*innen wurden nicht nur durch Spenden und die Mithilfe beim Pflanzen, sondern auch durch Standortvorschläge, die sie zahlreich abgaben, beteiligt. Die Standorte waren Beuys sehr wichtig: Die Bäume sollten an besonders schwierigen, mit Beton verschandelten Plätzen der Stadt angepflanzt werden, um damit auf die Probleme hinzuweisen, die den Bewohnern in solchen Architekturen erwachsen.

Die dauerhaft das Gesicht der Stadt Kassel prägende Plastik wurde durch die FIU Baumkoordination unter Mithilfe der Stadt Kassel, des ansässigen Umweltamts und der documenta 7 ermöglicht. Die Finanzierung konnte trotz vieler Baumspenden nur durch unermüdlichen Einsatz von Beuys und seinem Umfeld realisiert werden. So sorgte die New Yorker Dia Art Foundation für eine Vorfinanzierung und die Übernahme eines wesentlichen Teils der Gesamtkosten, zudem flossen private und institutionelle Spenden ein. Auch Aktionen halfen bei der Finanzierung: eine Kopie der Zarenkrone Iwans IV. wurde 1982 in Kassel öffentlich eingeschmolzen und als Friedenhase verkauft, Abb. 6 Beuys trat in einem Werbespot für den japanischen Whisky Nikka auf, und für eine

MANIFESTA 2026
APPLICATION-CONCEPT BOOKLET, 21 × 29,7 CM, 40 PAGES

With
Markus Ambach, Inke Arns, Peter Gorschlüter, Theodor Grütter, Stefan Hilterhaus,
Olaf Kröck, Stephan Muschick, Hans-Peter Noll, Britta Peters, Stefanie Reichart
& Thomas Spallek

Artist
All illustrations by Zuzanna Czebatul

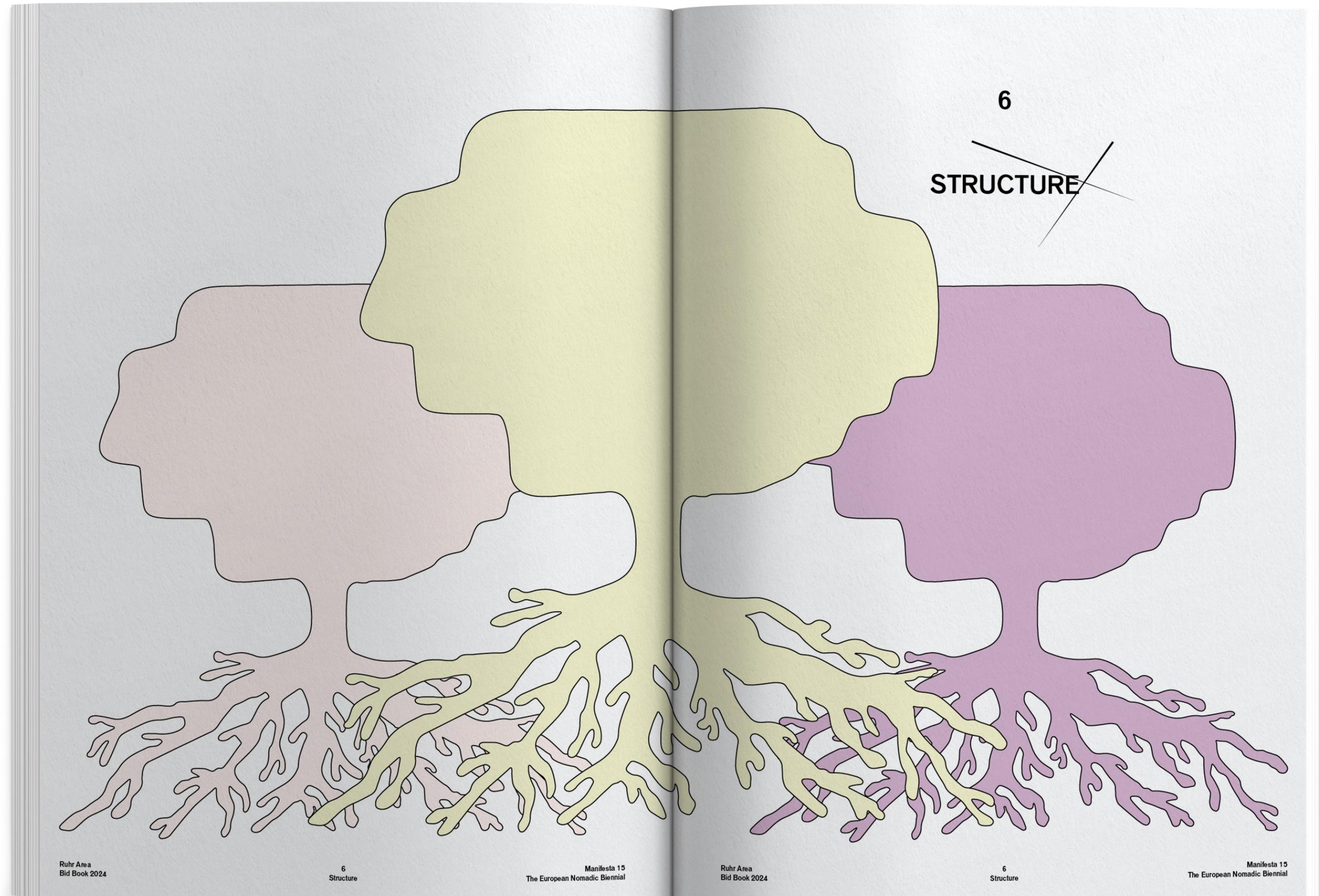
2021

MANIFESTA 15

BID BOOK
RUHR AREA



NOMADIC THE EUROPEAN
THE BIENNIAL



THIRD PLACES AND PUBLIC SPACES

The potential of the region lies in every respect in its diversity and self-will, which has created little oases where ideas can be lived out. Such a structure is attractive for international artists and cultural workers, since it is based very naturally on the fact that open spaces can be used in different ways. In this respect, the Ruhr Area still has plenty of space. Manifesta 15 supports this development through a clear commitment to regional and at the same time open structures which benefit from each other. In the sense of the regional focus and the claim to potentially enable access to art for everyone through the exhibition project, the so-called third places, such as libraries, adult education centers and associations, are decisive. And, of course, within the framework of Manifesta 15, new temporary spaces are also to be created. In addition to public places, vacant shops and churches – over 150 in the diocese of Essen alone – are particularly suitable for this purpose.

But also peripheral and informal places such as streets and parking lots, wastelands and gardens, clubs and shopping malls, which are the center of current everyday cultural activities of the population, will become places of context-specific project work. It is precisely in these not fully determined spaces that tactics of re-appropriation and alternative life practice become apparent. Precisely those spaces are in a state of constant transformation and also reflect geopolitically relevant themes in an exemplary fashion.

Other projects may arise as new site-specific productions at symbolic and thematically charged locations in the region. Examples include the PHOENIX Lake in Dortmund, which was built on the site of the former *Hermannshütte* in Dortmund-Hörde, or the *Kaiserstuhl* coking plant in Dortmund's Nordstadt, which was shut down in 2003. The colonial-style officials' settlement of the Krupp Steelworks in Duisburg's *Logport* would also be such a highly symbolic place.



Ruhr Area
Bid Book 2024

5.3
Places and their networks

Manifesta 15
The European Nomadic Biennial



DIGITAL ROOMS

Similar to urban areas, digital areas are also increasingly being privatized. What was once the open, free Internet is now increasingly being replaced by so-called "social media" – privately operated commercial platforms that finance themselves via Big Data-driven advertising revenues. We live in a platform capitalism which, according to Shoshanna Zuboff, is also a "surveillance capitalism"⁴: personal data is the oil of the 21st century. (Media-) artists have already dealt with this reality in many different ways. For Manifesta 15, projects are to be commissioned which deal in particular with (digital) logistics and new distribution channels. One example of an artistic work would be the interactive web project *A Business With No End* (2018) by Jenny Odell, which takes us on a surreal trip into the eerie labyrinth of global e-commerce.⁵

4 Shoshanna Zuboff, *Das Zeitalter des Überwachungskapitalismus*, Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2018
5 <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/27/style/what-is-inside-this-internet-rabbit-hole.html>

Ruhr Area
Bid Book 2024

5.4
Places and their networks

Manifesta 15
The European Nomadic Biennial

ARTS OF THE WORKING CLASS
STREETPAPER, 35 × 25,5 CM, 80 PAGES

With
Alina Kolar, María Inés Plaza Lazo, Paweł Sochacki
& Thomas Spallek

2021



A l'heure d'une recrudescence de la déforestation du poumon vert amazonien orchestrée par le président brésilien Bolsonaro, si brutale qu'elle inquiète même les participants du G7 à Biarritz, l'histoire de l'anthropologue Alfred Métraux frappe par sa justesse et son tragique. En 1963, dix jours après son suicide par absorption de barbituriques, son corps est retrouvé dans une forêt de la vallée de Chevreuse au sud-ouest de Paris. Nouvellement retraité de ses fonctions à l'UNESCO, celui qui souffrait d'une « nostalgie du néolithique » avait parcouru le monde afin de préserver la mémoire de civilisations fragiles, privées d'avenir dans l'histoire des dominants.

La violence du rouleau compresseur du progrès universel, une violence à laquelle Métraux ne put lui-même se soustraire, eut sans doute raison de lui. Peu avant sa mort, il avait publié dans *Le Courier de l'UNESCO* un article intitulé « La vie finit-elle à soixante ans ? ». Outre son abattement face à la fureur productiviste, les raisons de son désespoir sont le fruit de nombreuses années de pratique ethnographique habitées du souhait – avorté – d'une participation de la science à une « modernisation » raisonnée et respectueuse des pratiques ancestrales.

Dans son journal, l'anthropologue n'aura cessé d'exprimer ses doutes. Il se sent non seulement étranger face aux peuples et aux cultures qu'il désire comprendre et dont il documente les pratiques, les croyances et les mythes, mais il ressent aussi l'impression d'être étranger à sa propre culture. C'est dans le roman d'Aldous Huxley *Point Counter Point* (1928) qu'il avait trouvé la meilleure description de lui-même dans le personnage de Philip Quares. Dans une lettre à Yvonne Oddon du 25 mai 1932, il disait déjà y reconnaître son sosie. *Point Counter Point* pose la question de l'identité à travers un protagoniste dont la sensation de soi comme des autres ne cesse de lui filer entre les doigts.

Cette mélancolie viscérale traverse toute une génération d'anthropologues dont le témoignage le plus célèbre reste encore aujourd'hui *Tristes tropiques* (1955) de Claude Lévi-Strauss. Métraux l'a bien connu et le fit venir aux États-Unis pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Lévi-Strauss confia un jour en 1988 à Didier Eribon que la vie de Métraux fut au fond une longue « acclimatation » à son suicide. L'anthropologue suisse officia au Brésil, mais aussi sur l'île de Pâques où il effectua des recherches de terrain en 1934 (*Ethnologie de l'île de Pâques*, 1935) ou en Haïti en 1941 (*Le Vaudou haïtien*, 1958). Si ses travaux sur le vaudou et la possession comme comédie rituelle l'ont rendu célèbre, Métraux a rassemblé un matériel ethnographique de première importance dans plusieurs régions d'Amérique du Sud, notamment dans la région des Andes, en Argentine et au Paraguay (*Mythes et contes des Indiens Matako*, 1939; *Les Incas*, 1962). Ainsi que Lévi-Strauss le rappelle à Eribon, Métraux fut conscient toute sa vie du destin de l'anthropologie inexorablement lié à celui de la colonisation et souffrit de cette ambivalence assassine.

Né à Lausanne en 1902, il connaissait bien l'Argentine où il avait vécu jusqu'à l'âge de dix ans, car son père y exerçait comme chirurgien, avant de rentrer à Lausanne pour ses études secondaires. Étudiant à l'école nationale des Chartes à Paris qui forme des historiens, des archivistes, des paléographes et des conservateurs, Métraux fait la connaissance de Georges Bataille. Sa rencontre avec Michel Leiris le rapproche du « moment surréaliste » qui participe d'une exaltation collective pour les arts dits premiers d'Afrique, d'Amérique précolombienne, d'Océanie et d'Asie, sans oublier les folklores eu-



MIRIAM CAHN, FREMD/SCHMERZ (24.12.14+3.10.16)

ALFRED MÉTRAUX

ou la « nostalgie du néolithique »

by CLARA PACQUET

ropéens. Métraux connaît sa première étude de terrain en 1922, lors d'une excursion dans la région des lacs de Guanacache où il rencontre les derniers descendants des Huarpes. Il part en Suède compléter sa formation au musée d'ethnographie de Göteborg auprès de l'anthropologue et archéologue diffusionniste Erland Nordenskiöld, le premier à étudier systématiquement les Indiens Chulupi.

Élève de Marcel Mauss et de Paul Rivet à la Sorbonne, Métraux soutient en 1928 une thèse sur les Tupinambas (tribus tupis du Brésil) et crée en Argentine, la même année, l'Institut d'ethnologie de l'université nationale de Tucumán qu'il dirige jusqu'en 1934. Il enseigne à Berkeley puis à Yale, travaille pour l'UNESCO et l'ONU à partir de 1946. Si les frontières et la propriété font naître des guerres, couler le sang, massacrer – sciemment – des peuples entiers que l'on s'empresse de qualifier « d'arrière », la volonté « d'éduquer » des sociétés considérées comme méprisables à l'aune des techniques « modernes » n'en est pas moins dévastatrice. Bien que des organismes internationaux comparables

à l'UNESCO aient été créés pour représenter la pensée humaniste, des idées toxiques ont continué d'agir au travers de plans économiques de rentabilisation des terres et des ressources censées apporter croissance, abondance et connaissance. Métraux s'est régulièrement senti – notamment lors de ses missions auprès de paysans haïtiens – impuissant face à une volonté d'aider certaines populations à sortir de la pauvreté grâce à des actions dont les conséquences sont néfastes sur les hommes et les paysages. Quand cela a été possible, il a néanmoins toujours essayé d'associer les « premiers concernés » à la production d'un savoir sur eux-mêmes et ainsi minorer le déniement et l'oubli de soi auxquels le monde moderne les contraignait.

Au fil des expériences, Métraux développe un regard critique sur l'École française d'ethnologie – tout particulièrement celle représentée par Marcel Griaule et le Musée de l'homme qu'il considère comme trop hermétique aux avancées de l'anthropologie sociale et liée à une posture colonialiste. Toute sa carrière, Métraux sera avec Lévi-Strauss un véritable passeur entre l'anthropologie américaine et la tradition française, notamment à l'École pratique des hautes études à Paris où il dirige la Ve section à partir de 1959.

Parmi ses plus fameux élèves, on compte Pierre Clastres, connu pour ses travaux d'anthropologie politique. D'abord influencé par le marxisme antistalinien de Socialisme ou Barbarie et le Discours de la servitude volontaire d'Étienne de La Boétie, ses recherches prennent ensuite un tournant libertaire et participent d'un renouveau de l'anthropologie politique en plaçant au centre non pas l'Etat comme finalité suprême, mais la capacité à créer un système qui sache empêcher l'apparition d'un appareil d'Etat détenteur d'une violence légitime dont il abuserait.

Dans son ouvrage posthume *Mythologie des Indiens Chulupi*, publié en 1992, Clastres rend un hommage à son maître dans lequel il décrit le désespoir de ce dernier et sa décision de se donner la mort : « Métraux se trouvait confronté, au plus profond de lui-même, à une certaine faillite de notre civilisation, à une certaine difficulté de se maintenir dans ce monde-là. » Dans le même livre, Clastres raconte une belle histoire.

En 1932-1935, Métraux travaillait sur les Indiens Mataco et Toba dans la région du Gran Chaco argentin alors que sévissait la guerre entre la Bolivie et le Paraguay qui se disputaient le territoire de cette même région à cheval sur plusieurs pays. À proximité de soldats argentins, Métraux les entendit un soir parler de leur projet de traverser à l'aube le fleuve Pilcomayo pour massacrer la tribu des Indiens Chulupi qui vivaient dans le Chaco paraguayen, de l'autre côté de la frontière. Le lendemain, Métraux décida de traverser le fleuve à la nage pour prévenir le campement Chulupi.

Par prudence, les Indiens quittèrent le camp : les guetteurs restés à proximité vinrent effectivement débarquer les troupes. Alors qu'il menait une enquête de terrain, Clastres entendit cette histoire pour la première fois de la bouche des Chulupi qui lui firent le récit d'un « soldat argentin » leur ayant sauvé la vie. Ce n'est que beaucoup plus tard que Clastres comprit qu'il s'agissait de Métraux lorsque ce dernier lui rapporta l'anecdote quelques semaines seulement avant sa mort. Métraux n'avait pas étudié les Chulupi afin de préserver leur mémoire, mais il leur sauva la vie ce jour-là au péril de la sienne, traversant un fleuve où pullulaient les piranhas et sans craindre les flèches des Indiens qui l'avaient pris pour un soldat argentin.

CLARA PACQUET est philosophe. Elle vit et travaille à Berlin et enseigne l'histoire et la théorie des arts à l'École Supérieure d'Art Pays Basque.

CC: MAGAZINE, ISSUE 2

MAGAZINE, 22 × 28 CM, 48 PAGES

With

Akademie der Künste der Welt

2020

CC: CC: This is not just another year, but a phenomenon. CC: Was wir machen, ist eine hochpolitische Arbeit, und das wird mir immer bewusster. CC: Wenn ich an deinen Tod denke, dann habe ich ein naives Bild im Kopf. CC: Just cause Van Gogh suffered doesn't mean I have to. CC: The current present seems to have no beginning and no end in itself; the pandemic might be here to stay with us. CC: But this merry pageantry of machines hides an eery reality. CC: Es ist also die Geschichtsschreibung selbst, die den Blick auf Frauen in Bezug auf Arbeit verstellt. CC: Why do they feel threatened by culture?

CC: The members of the Akademie der Künste der Welt – national and international artists, curators, authors and cultural scientists – act as think tanks and provide the framework for the ADKDW's artistic program. In the Members' Corner, one of them gives an insight into their respective current project: this time Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz. He is a Bolivian-German cultural critic and curator. From 2019 to 2020 he was Director of the National Museum of Art in La Paz, Bolivia. He has been a member of the Akademie der Künste der Welt since 2018.

Culture? What for? On the Shutdown of the Ministry of Cultures in Bolivia

Text: Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz

What we had in Bolivia as a Ministry of Cultures was really something special. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia the organizational structure of the Ministry of Cultures and Tourism was built on two main pillars: the Vice-Ministry of Diversity, and the Vice-Ministry of Decolonization. The Depatriarchalization Unit formed part of the latter. For us Bolivians, the foundation of this Ministry was part of a cultural revolution, because culture itself had become a political right. A right for everyone.

Contrary to the idea that culture does not have anything to do with politics, there has always been a political side to the history of culture. In fact, the most effective projects of political usurpation in global history have always been carried out on at least two different levels: a project of intervention and domination, such as violent military domination, and of the colonization of 'souls', the government of the ideological, the conquest of sentiments and feelings.

When the Spaniards arrived in America, for example, they demolished the local temples in order to build churches on top of them. Here they subjected the native populations to make them feel fear, feel guilt, feel inferior. The Nazis in Germany stoked hatred and racism, provoked resentment and instigated civil violence and contempt for those that were Jewish, disabled or homosexual. With that same discourse they set fire to the Reichstag, the most important symbol of the Weimar Republic's young democracy.

On the other hand, revolutions that have

aspired to equality also valued affective work, feelings and the perception of the senses. For example, the bourgeois revolutions in Europe at the end of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century were accompanied by an ethical-cultural project whose objective was, among other things, the liberation of judgment, the liberation of taste and the liberation of aesthetic experience. This idealistic proposal consisted of nothing less than the equality of everyone before the law and before beauty. For the German bourgeoisie of that period, the very concept of 'Kultur' was already revolutionary. The Russian Revolution, too, initially included a project of cultural revolution, which envisaged a complete change in habits in the organization of everyday life, revolutionary art and even a project of sexual emancipation and gender equality.

It is from this latter context that we have inherited the claim for a political right to culture here in Bolivia; over the last twenty years we have been living a real – and above all our own – cultural revolution in our country. While palaces did not burn, souls were set alight and the ideological foundations of racism and sexism were shaken, which had sustained the feeling of false superiority of the few over the many for five hundred years. It is in this sense that we can speak of a revolution, a turn, a change in how things are going and how they are narrated: the dignification of the indigenous populations, of women, and their validation in the foundational narratives of our country and of our cultures.

However, a cultural revolution is not a

theatrical performance or a ticket bought at the box office. It is an arduous, long-term effort that requires its own form of militancy. And there is still much ground to be gained: the self-determination of pleasure and of the female body, for example, or protecting the dignity of nature are points that indeed need to be emphasized more in this process. And, as we have seen recently, the resentment and hate speech of the white supremacist minority, who publicly burn indigenous symbols and – using the exact words of the Spanish colonizers centuries ago – speak of the 'extirpation' of indigenous deities while holding the Bible in their hands, remain a constant threat to the Bolivian populations and their constitutional right to live in dignity and equality.

Constituted as a Plurinational State since 2009, the Bolivian constitution recognizes 36 Indigenous, Originary, peasant, intercultural and Afro-Bolivian communities as equal nations and as part of a secular state. This seems appropriate in a country in which, according to the 2001 population census, 62% – almost two-thirds of the population – define themselves as indigenous. But the Originary roots of the population are not only to be found in the countryside, in rural areas, on mountain tops or in the jungle. On the contrary, they are also present in the urban centers, in contemporary cultural expressions, in the arts, in music, in the media and in all sorts of popular and official festivities. However, Bolivian society is deeply segregated: racism and sexism still mark almost all social spheres, both public and private. Like other

countries in Latin America, Bolivia is a place where the consequences of colonial history can be felt every day, in every moment of life: from buying bread to politics, from the courtroom to the bedroom.

This is why the Ministry of Cultures was so important to the foundation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia: the political right to culture necessarily means the renegotiation of what is considered 'culture' in itself, the negotiation of what is possible to say, how it is possible to say it, in which language it is possible to say it, and who has the right to speak about what culture itself is in the first place. Because it is evident that within colonial logic, culture is either something that you 'have' or you don't. Within that same colonial logic, 'having' culture defines your position within a social hierarchy. But, in contrast, the political right to culture means to take the term 'political' literally, in its original Greek sense: 'πολιτικά', – the things that are of everyone's concern. From the point of view of the political right to culture, then, the renegotiation of what

is naturalized as norms of culture and of cultural belonging also means a struggle for the redistribution of those who participate and those who do not participate in this 'property'. But what happened to the Ministry of Cultures in Bolivia? The transitory government under Jeanine Añez, which came to power after an irregular, military-backed interruption of the democratically elected government of Evo Morales, had assumed office in November 2019 with the sole assignment to organize elections within a period of 90 days. But after

postponing the elections several times, on June 4, almost eight months later, the transitory President announced the closure of the Ministry of Cultures, together with two other ministries and two embassies. This procedure is not an exception. Other far-right governments in the region, like in Brazil, also chose to close down their Ministries of Culture soon after coming into power. Why are these authoritarian extreme right-wing governments, like those we have in Bolivia and Brazil today, so afraid of culture? Why do they feel threatened by culture? Because culture has one crucial quality, and one unique power: culture

has the power to create and to guarantee equality. And it does so differently to a Ministry of Justice, where everyone is equal before the law. But culture is different. Culture has the ability to create equality through difference. Culture strengthens everyone's unconditional right to be considered equal while simultaneously celebrating everyone's unnegotiable right to be different and to live in difference.

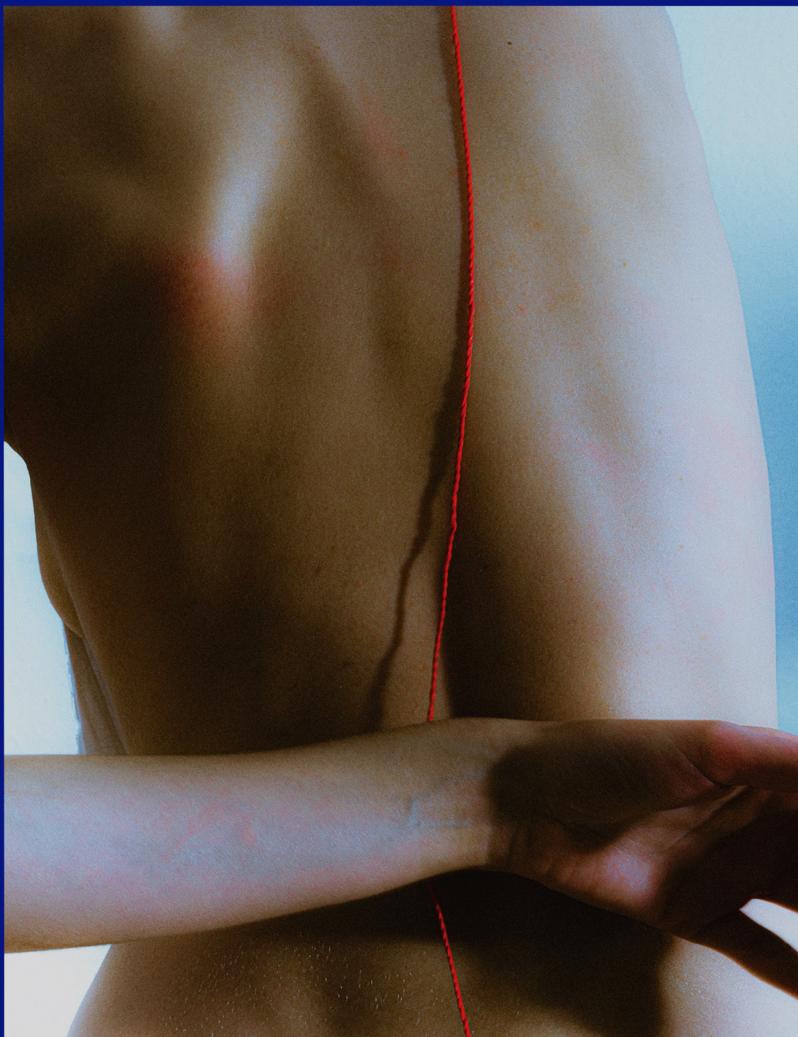
This is why culture is targeted by openly racist and sexist regimes like those in Bolivia and Brazil. And this is also why it is the duty and the ethical responsibility of any free and democratic society to preserve its cultural institutions, and thus to celebrate culture as a fundamental and political right. A right for everyone.

THE TORSO TAPES
LP COVER, BACKCOVER, INLAY, SPOTIFY TRAILER, MERCH

With
Baal & Mortimer, ITALIC

Artist
(Alexandra Gruebler)
Baal & Mortimer

2021



The Torso Tapes



Baal & Mortimer

All Sons of Adam

suit the action to your word
Couronnement
seeking out her may
leaving everything that skulls would say
onto her temples black dew drips
behind the hill
winter has come
cold metale upon my brows
ancient legends dripping from my mouth
upon the hill where she lied down
gods eyes open

Regie Lilt

one blemished being
brought to a sudden halt
congealed like a head on a stick
revealed like a head on a stick
we can see for miles here
alive and with fiery breath
between two heavens
where the skin is the faster than the word
it has hit you in all places
between time and process
don't hold your breath
don't hold your breath
you'll loose it
now
will it be grave?
they said so in every time and state

The Wave

one young ruin
made of men that mean well
in aerially shaped days
is this the holy thing to see?
then quit
the layers to be seen
your life becomes louder
like foam of an adult sea
eating itselv back in
as I bleach
as I bleed
it's your chest on the chest of the sea
it's my chest on the chest of sea

Vials

all those bodies
painted and confirmed
in the drawing of a child
counting
what I call past
all those loves
layers
that don't speak
your capsules in the end
is what I'm trying to forget
I can't believe how much I'm not you
how much growing up I had to do
I feel this chain is too long
nobody asked you to complete
make those inscriptions count
erased from what seemed
I feel this chain is too long
nobody asked you to complete
make those prescriptions count
erased from what seemed late for me



CURATING THE IMAGE
NOTEBOOK FOR A VISUAL JOURNEY
Book, 22 × 27 CM, 208 PAGES

With
Alfredo Cramerotti, DISTANZ Verlag

2020

Curating the Image Notebook for a Visual Journey

Alfredo Cramerotti

DISTANZ

'useful' (or helpful) and discard or ignore the 'useless' (or noise) in order to shape an informed opinion or deliver a meaningful deed. Among the manifold increased possibilities presented to us daily, we progressively adjust the criteria for selection to suit our worldview, ambitions, or necessities. In the timeframe vaguely corresponding to my gathering of images, you and I have had to learn how to relate to our respective living contexts in what can be called, 'a mode of selection'. Could this be described as 'curation'? And what of aesthetics? In certain circumstances they are dismissed as, if not non-essential, at least secondary to a functional society and individual existence. I argue instead that aesthetics are of crucial importance. This has always been evident in certain areas of human culture - obviously art itself - but also in religious movements, sporting events, or cooking. But we also see that, historically, aesthetics has played a major, if not 'the' role, in sectors of the economy like industrial design, publishing, media and communication, wellbeing, and even the medical and pharmaceutical sectors. The aestheticization of life is all-encompassing. In parallel to the above 'mode of selection', what we now choose, act upon and give form to in our day-to-day living is no longer rooted in a purpose-oriented mode, but relates primarily to the realm of aesthetics. This is not to claim that art has taken over the world; far from it. But, rather interestingly, images have. We are mainly preoccupied with the business of interpretation. Long ago we abandoned any idea of unequivocal truth, for better or worse. We must now interpret every image. This is not merely welcomed but actively encouraged, 'taught' (mainly through peer pressure) and sustained. It is our most tangible form of freedom. As a curator, I can only relish such a development. When large swathes of the population can not only consume or 'absorb' images, but proactively put them in motion, creating new systems of relationships between disparate elements (visual or otherwise), casting them in a new light, and help shifting perspective every time something is put in circulation, it means a more mature disposition towards visual language. That is why I think that 'curating' is not just a technical term within the world of art. And a 'curator's book' no longer pertains to the theory and practice of exhibition making. The bird has left the nest, and it may not return to it, just make quick visits passing. There is no consensus, indeed sometimes conflict, about what a "curatorial native" approach to life might mean. Is it, ultimately, about problem-solving? Or is it an implicit attempt to mark our territory, so that we can navigate contemporary life with some parameters in mind? Does it indicate a generational shift in knowledge organization that by-passes specialist expertise? Well, this is for another time, another book. Which I am writing. With no images. For now, I want to focus on my personal, noiseless, curatorial 'visual feed' that kept me going, nurtured and sustained over the last two decades. I sketch here below the five categories of images and my thoughts about why these had particular appeal for me. It's about sharing a slice of personal history rather than making a statement of intent. I am exploring how these images became a sort of device for the crystallization of ideas, drives, moments, encounters

Curating the Image

Alfredo Cramerotti

and situations that helped to form what is me, now. What I call "alpine aesthetics" is anything that suggests, or defines, an idea of mountain or an actual alpine scenario with meadows, trees, peaks, snowcaps, skies - either populated or empty of humans and/or other animals. I know where this comes from. I was born in the Alps of Northern Italy, and although I never considered myself a mountaineer or an alpine freak, in time I have had to admit that I have embodied the latter. I just cannot let go an alpine scene,

whether on paper or screen or IRL, without getting lost in it for a moment. Back in 2009/10, I even started to put online some 'findings', posting them on a Tumblr feed at <https://alpine-aesthetics.tumblr.com>. It is still going, a sort of 'online sketchpad' for what ended up in this book (though the images are not the same).

The "design approach" section comprises visuals that suggest, advise or present a certain design-led attitude in whatever discipline or activity. It is interesting to see how something not commonly associated with design, actually uses it as part of its communication codes. Examples are things such as a landscape, a driving lesson, a cooking recipe, a printed office memo or a shopping list, or the packaging of a household item. I figured out that all the above signposts for activities or environments stem from a society in which design holds a central tenet: architecture (both urban and rural), mobility, culture, work protocols, commerce, education and so on.

The "gaze" is probably the most instantly recognizable as a visual interest. As it is for many others - I am in good company here - the attraction to faces, eyes, looks, close-ups, portraits and 'seeing ourselves in others' features is undoubtedly rooted in our, and other animals', genetic make-up, let alone being one of the cultural drives par excellence. The major appeal for me is when the gaze is not related to anything artistic, but it 'casually' comes across for some other reason. I enjoy immensely decoding the lure and magnetism of a look which is subtly (or not) meant to induce some thought or action. Every time I spot one, it reminds me why I work in the arts.

Which brings me to the "houseplants" section of the book. Now, we know why we like houseplants, we care and tend to them, we grow them like immovable but sensitive children, part and parcel of our household and lives, complete with joy, disaster, tantrum, satisfaction, pride and desperation. I don't have to tell you how much I love plants and greenery, because I know you do too, deep inside. Even if you don't have any in your life. But it is simply impossible to be immune to their tenacity to strive and 'make it', to grow no matter what environment we put them in, to try hard adapting - resiliently adapting - to change, ineptitude, disturbance and turbulence. Sometimes they can't survive. But not without a tremendous good fight.

Last but not least, the "leadership" section. This is mainly populated by a combination of financial and management cutouts with my personal notes and plans, some of them very revealing; it is, in hindsight, a form of 'outing' which I did not think I was capable of pulling off, until I did. This is serious matter, bear in mind. Leadership is not merely about work and colleagues and career progression; it is about how we tackle our problems and difficulties in life,



18



19



4



5

JUMPING DEAD LEAFS?
LP COVER & BACKCOVER

With
Toulouse Low Trax, Bureau B
& Manuel Graf

2020

TSIX

jumping
dead
Leafs?



EIN DÖRFLICHER TREFFPUNKT war es in die 30er Jahre jähren der Haushaltswarenladen an der Ecke bei der Schlossstraße. Heute steht dort ein Neupan, der die Schlossstraße-People bewirbt. Rechts: Duis Hicch





BB346
LP 195701

jumping *dead* leafs?



Inverted Sea Berrytone Souvenir The Incomprehensible Image
Jumping Dead Leaf? Milk In Water Dawn Is Temporal Pulse Skit Sales Pitch
Thanks & Goodbye Düsseldorf
Recording & Mixing Detlef Weinrich & Lucas Croon at Spumante Studio Düsseldorf
Mastering by Detlef Funder at Paraschall Düsseldorf
Artwork & Layout by Manuel Graf / Graphic Design by Laura Catania

TOLOOUSE
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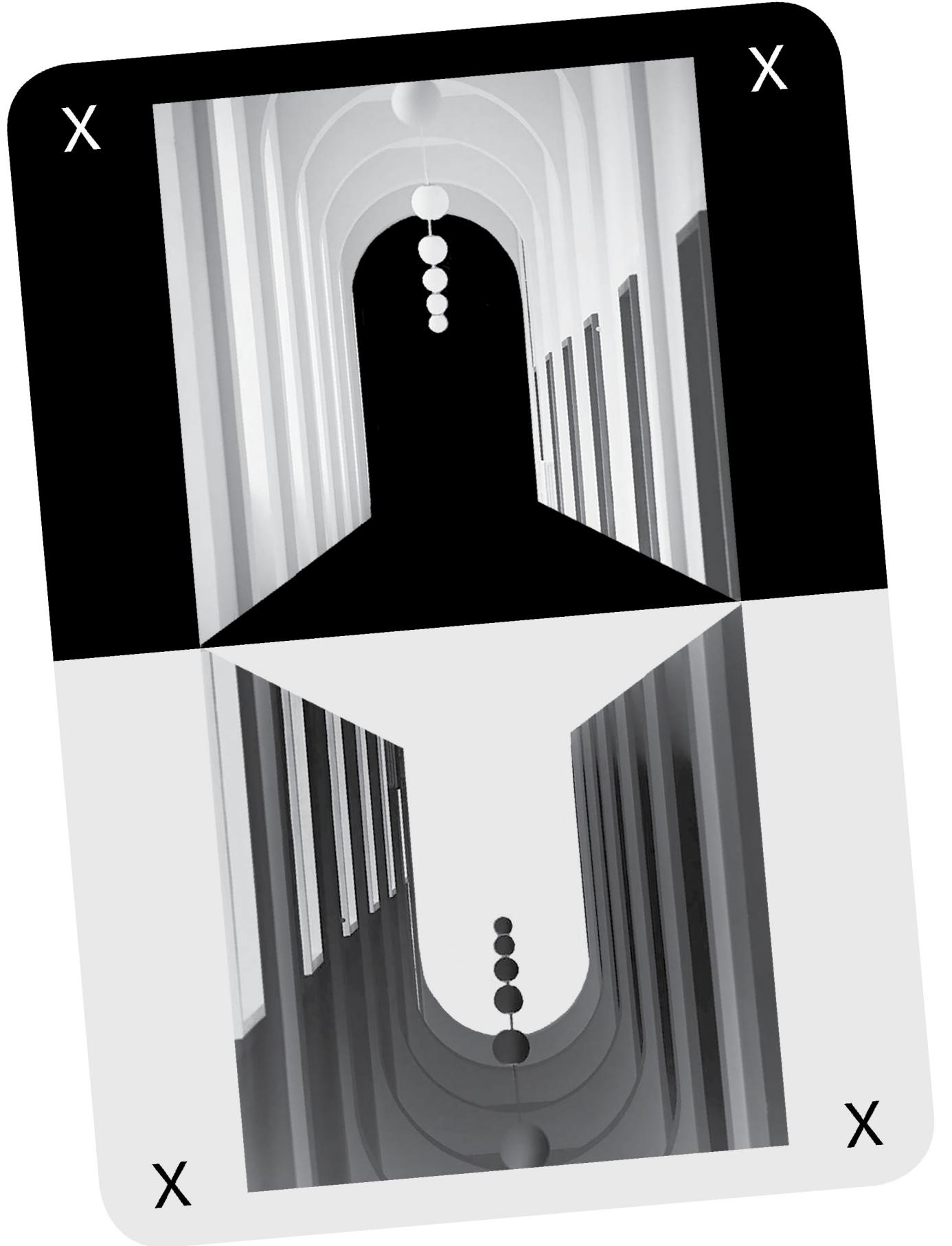
4 015698 395846

THE JESTER X
INVITATION CARD, 14,8 × 21 CM

With
Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, Rundgang 2019

Artist
Eliza Ballesteros

2019



THE JESTER X
ELIZA BALLESTEROS
GRADUATION SHOW
8. - 14. JULI 2019
KUNSTAKADEMIE
DÜSSELDORF
DUSSERDOOR
KUNSTAKADEMIE
GRADUATION SHOW
8. - 14. JULI 2019
THE JESTER X

PHILARA COLLECTION

With
Philara Collection

2016



Oklahoma

FOR YOU
EXHIBITION

With
KIT – Kunst im Tunnel,
Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

Artists
Arjan Jarry, Laura Catania, Fabian Heitzhausen & Aaron Bobrow,
Lukas Langguth, Phantom Kinoballett

2017/18



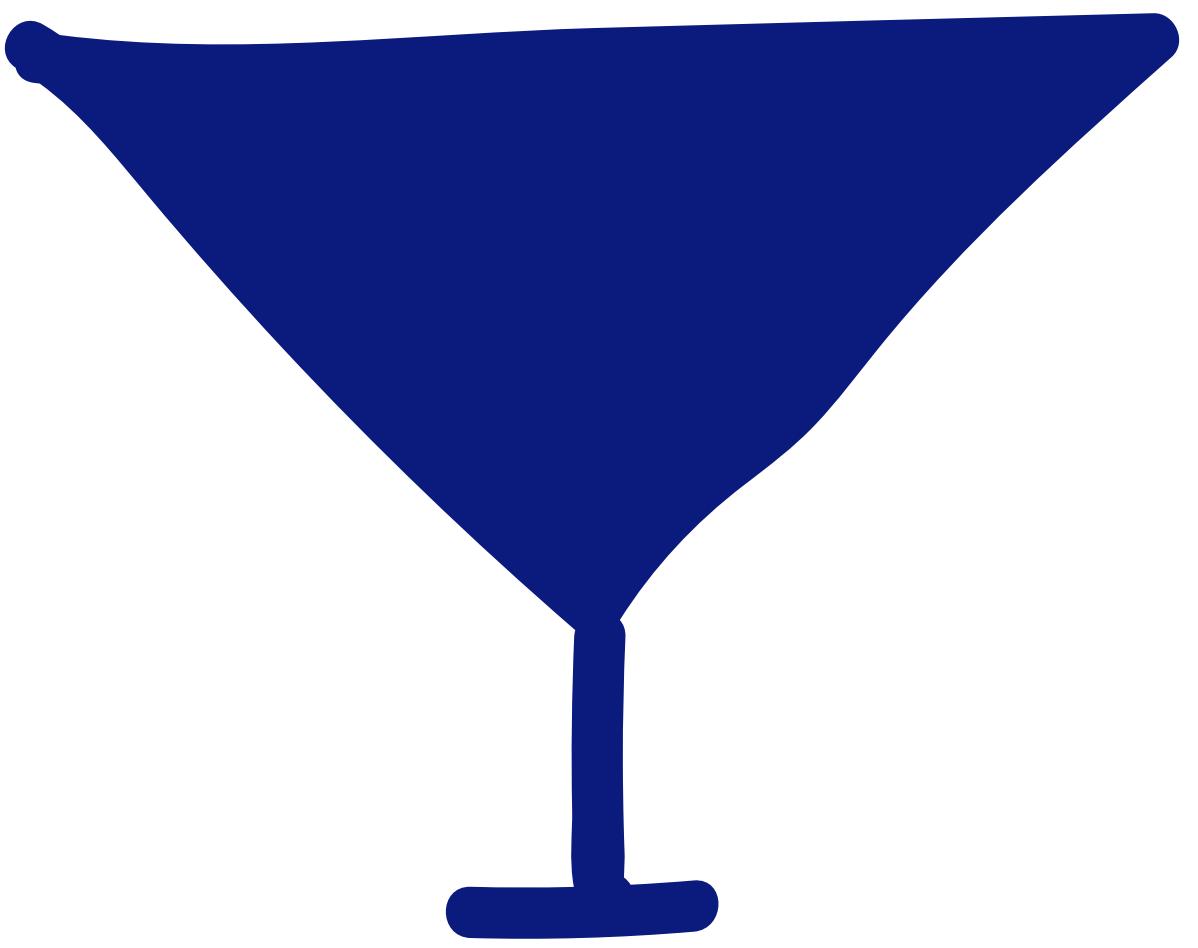
PROJECTS

BAR PALERMO

With
various artists at Salon des Amateurs

since 2020

Under the title *Bar Palermo* Catania is organizing a series of concerts at Salon des Amateurs. The series aims to give musicians and artists the opportunity to strengthen networks between musicians and artists. The aim is to create a platform that discovers and promotes new talents and artists, a place outside all places where the real places within the culture are represented, contested and turned at the same time.





HEAVEN

With
Thomas Saplek

since 2017

The record label *Heaven* arose from the wish to support female artists,
who create music emerging out of a cross media approach.



COLLABORATORS

Akademie der Künste der Welt
Art Cologne
Arts of the Working Class
Bundeskunsthalle Bonn
Boros Collection
Zuzanna Czebatul
Andreas Gursky
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Galerie Hans Mayer
Max Mayer Galerie
Moholy-Nagy Foundation
Museum Ludwig
Operndorf Afrika
Philara Collection
Ruhr Museum
Schinkel Pavillon
Mary-Audrey Ramirez
Salon des Amateurs
Tomorrow Is Another Day
Zeche Zollverein
& others

GET IN TOUCH

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