

Museumsquartier #Antarktika 25/10 2018 –17/2 2019

It all began with a brief sketch for a possible motion picture. "The glaciers of Antarctica are moving in our direction at a rate of three millimetres per year", the director Michelangelo Antonioni noted in the 1960s. "Calculate when they'll reach us. Anticipate, in a film, what will happen". Antonioni's Antarctica is a condensed image for a life in which genuine feelings are buried beneath a glacier of rigid convention, a vision of society that was dominant in post-war European film, and continues to inform the work of contemporary filmmakers. Ever sensitive to history's shifting winds and changing social climates, visual art, too, is rife with haunting portraits of the cooling of affect in the age of consumerism.

Alienation is a term often employed to describe this phenomenon. Encapsulating a complicated state of affairs in a single metaphor, it is nonetheless a paradoxical category. The experience of alienation reflects profound historical transformations - from secularisation, industrialisation. and the growing influence of technology to today's radical individualisation. At the same time, it designates a fundamental "cooling" of the subject's relationship with both her/ his environment and her/his self. A salient characteristic of modernity, alienation describes a positively systemic disruption that distorts the relations humans have to the world around them, as well as to their own beliefs and aspirations.

Summed up in a simple formula. alienation denotes a paradoxical state of simultaneous involvement and disinvolvement. The subject increasingly confronts relationships, institutions and work activities as alien entities in which she/ he no longer recognizes herself/himself. That is to say – alienation is a peculiar kind of relation, not a non-relation, but "a relation of unrelatedness". in the words of philosopher Rahel Jaeggi, a kind of separation in the mode of inseparability. Well over a century ago, the works of Édouard Manet, Charles Baudelaire's "painter of modern life", similarly sketched the singularisation of the individual in an ever more fragmented society. Compositionally united in a group, Manet's figures often seem to find themselves suddenly alone. strangely disassociated from what would appear to be familiar settings. In Manet's era of high capitalism, the dominant economic

system of the late nineteenth century, longestablished relationships drifted apart without coming entirely undone. Akin to scenarios of wish fulfilment that remain forever elusive, they continue to haunt our world as the mainsprings of a restless quest for what was probably never real: an immediate union with our environment and our selves.

The exhibition Antarctica gathers art that probes the ramifications of this configuration of simultaneous involvement and disinvolvement, with an emphasis on more recent positions in contemporary art. The works examine the interplay between identity and disidentity, and the disunion of a person and their role prompted by the awareness of self-alienation in modernity, as well as the (ostensible) absence of alienation from today's "new workplaces". Studies of modes of behaviour adapted to the cold contrast with other works that speak to an intense, even overheated, self-absorption - which ultimately marks merely another facet of the contemporary experience of alienation.

Antarctica focuses on photography and film, media of representation that are said to be distinguished by a privileged relation to reality. As it turns out, contemporary portraiture tends to reveal not so much the sitters' individuality as rather the interrelation between the subject and role: the assimilation of prefabricated patterns as a blueprint for social coexistence. Other works in the exhibition illustrate the hallmark of contemporary consumer culture: a digitally perfected normalcy – elaborately staged and yet banal. Conspicuously, blemishes of any kind have been removed. Behind the sometimes almost painfully perfect surface looms the spectral void that opens up when the visualisation and production of a world abandons all mimetic depiction in favour of mere resemblance to the real world.

The exhibition presents a selection of artworks that intuitively shed light on the complex dimensions of what the concept of alienation represents: a fundamental condition of contemporaneity that shapes all aspects of our lives.

Curators

Vanessa Joan Müller Nicolaus Schafhausen





Viltė Bražiūnaitė / Tomas Sinkevičius, Afterwork, 2016, video stills, courtesy of the artists

Viltė Bražiūnaitė Tomas Sinkevičius

*1991 in Vilnius, lives in Vilnius and Vienna *1991 in Birštonas, lives in Berlin

Afterwork, 2016 HD video projection, colour, sound, 6 min. Courtesy of the artists

It's a key motif in the iconography of dystopian science fiction: the heroine finds out that her life has been a lie, constructed solely to subjugate and exploit her. What she perceives as memories – afterimages of real, inalienable experiences – are in fact derived from the database of a computer. Her biography reduced to a bundle of impersonal, interchangeable stock images.

In Vilte Bražiūnaitė and Tomas Sinkevičius's film Afterwork stock imagery constitutes the visual frame. Instead of the artists' "very own" view of the world, we see a series of ready-made images, primarily produced for advertising purposes, whose connection with reality is purely instrumental. Whatever whets the customer's appetite is image-worthy. The rest is history. Literally.

While glossy impressions of car bonnets, animals, and fields in the evening sun dazzle us. a voiceover muses about homesickness, wanderlust, nomadism, and alienation. The subject we hear is not a homogenous entity. Tweet and chat boxes from social media groups supplied the content for the strangely disparate, somnambulistic off-camera commentary in Afterwork; a pool of multifarious expectations, dreams, and desires tenaciously seeking fulfilment in the expanses of the digital world. The real work begins after work: distributing likes, tweaking profiles, adding friends, expanding networks, the list goes on. In other words: the construction of a public sphere, in which the self is - perhaps - momentarily reflected and can perceive itself as part of a social whole, a link in a chain, no matter how ephemeral, fragmentary, and deceptive this entity might be.

The yearning for connection and solidarity is symbolised by a necklace, which glides sluggishly through an image space devoid of references; the testimony

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of a subjectivity which has lost its chains but has not been rewarded with a new world in return – or has it? "I wouldn't dare to sacrifice the life I've built here", is the conclusion of the monologue in the video work. Instead of real life – the science fiction promise – all that awaits behind the dream images in *Afterwork* is nothingness.





Burak Delier, Crisis & Control, 2013, video still, courtesy of the artist Burak Delier, The Bell: Scenes from a Coming School, 2018, video still, courtesy of the artist

Burak Delier

*1977 in Adapazarı, lives in Istanbul

Crisis & Control, 2013 Video, colour, sound, 14:10 min.

The Bell: Scenes from a Coming School, 2018 Video, colour, sound, 14:55 min. Print on Aludibond, 150 x 94.48 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Yoga and the performance principle: this seemingly irreconcilable contrast - on the one hand, the invitation for relaxation and serenity, on the other hand, the imperative of unlimited productivity - has become increasingly popular over the past decades in almost all segments of the "new working world". In western societies yoga has long been considered as a means to counterbalance the daily stress of work. Today, however, the focus seems to have shifted from mere regeneration to an optimisation of the workforce. Equanimity, concentration, and flexibility, the paradoxical ability of being "at one with oneself" while constantly going beyond one's limits, are fundamental virtues of both yoga and neoliberalism.

In his video work Crisis & Control Burak Delier explores the ideological complicities between yoga and the performance principle. A situation that is usually given a privileged space in the supposedly workfree sphere of the studio, a zone of "complete tranquillity", has been transferred to the workspace: organised relaxation in the open office. In the voice-over the artist's performers - real office workers and hobby yogis - talk about their careers, successes and difficulties in their daily business lives, the tensions between the demands and the reality of work. This constellation seems predestined for moralism and pessimistic reflections on culture, since those who claim to be authentic and at-one-with-themselves tend to provoke the suspicion of conformity and alienation. Delier, however, does not pass hasty judgements. He listens. He leaves it up to the audience to decide whether the protagonists are deluded or enlightened.

The entrance into a life of work and rewarding activities initially seals the division of the self into a private and performance-

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oriented subject. However, this development starts at a much earlier point – at a place where work might feature as a topic in the "educational plan" at best; at school, During the twentieth century, school as an institution became the object of strong criticism. Michel Foucault classed it alongside the prison and the barracks as the paradigmatic institution of modern disciplining, the preparation of every individual as a useful element within the social body. From the static order of the seats in the classroom, to the watchful eve of the recess supervisor, to the school bell as a means of meticulous timing. Foucault described the school routine as an endless sequence of mechanisms for control and surveillance. "Education" and submission present themselves as two sides of the same process of subjectification.

In The Bell: Scenes from a Coming School Delier juxtaposes Foucault's dystopia of school as a disciplinary institution with the vision of school as a realm of experience. We see a series of exercises and experiments Delier developed together with students from a grammar school in Istanbul during a workshop. The aim was to find an approach to the sphere of individual actions and experiences as an alternative to power and knowledge calculations. Delier thus proposes a radical re-evaluation of learning criteria in his film: "[...] slowness rather than speed; solidarity/mutual support rather than competition; subjective time rather than objective time; free and vacant rather than busy; studying immediate and unmediated life rather than being made to learn pieces of information of questionable value, which meet god-knows-which one of the student's needs, if any." (Burak Delier and GSL Drama Club, Bell: Scenes from a school on its way, 2018. www.peramuseum.org/Workshop/ The-bell-isringing/739)



Buck Ellison

*1987 in San Francisco, lives in Los Angeles

Anxious Avoidant, 2016 Archival pigment print on Dibond, 94 x 109 cm

Mama, 2016 Archival pigment print on Dibond, 67 x 95 cm

Untitled (Christmas Card #2), 2017 Archival pigment print on Dibond, 147 x 198 cm

Untitled (Christmas Card #6), 2018 Archival pigment print on Dibond, 116 x 160 cm

Private Collection, courtesy of the artist

In developmental psychology "anxious avoidant" or "insecure avoidant" is one of four kinds of infantile attachment types used to describe the relationship between mother and child. In this context, Mary Ainsworth's so-called "Strange Situation Test" is used to examine the child's behaviour in relation to the presence as well as the absence of the main attachment figure. Although "insecure avoidant" children appear to be unimpressed by their attachment figure's absence, they manifest high stress levels in this situation. Often these children are confronted with high expectations, judgements, and instructions from their parents during their upbringing. Consequently, they develop a need to fulfil expectations that can be so dominating that it suppresses their own feelings, wishes, or even personalities. As a relief from the potential emotional burden of being rejected by their parents should they fail to fulfil these expectations, these children develop an avoidance of attachments. At the same time, their selfperception as well as their self-evaluation depends on reassurance from others and generates a personality structure between success orientation and inner emptiness. In his photographs Buck Ellison portrays these smooth, almost sterile surfaces and their simulations of seemingly perfect lives, in which subjective appreciation depends entirely on outward perception.

The Untitled (Christmas Card) group portraits initially appear to be representations of perfect families. However, the extensive staging casts doubt on their authenticity. The promises of the white

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US-American middle class are manifest in Buck Ellison's meticulously planned photographs: family as a lifestyle offer. Their aesthetics are reminiscent of commercial advertisements and generate a cold, almost clinical image of a society striving for perfection through self-discipline and self-optimisation. With an ironic undertone Ellison exposes a yearning for social success which is distinguished by taste and education. In this world the possession not only of economic but also of social and cultural capital is communicated via imagery.

The aspiration for an expressive, unique self, which performs within the neoliberal logic of distinction and competition. is manifest in the attempt to give life both an aesthetic and ethical structure. This endeavour is no longer restricted to the highest social class, but also affects a level of society, whose material possibilities are limited but have profited from the revaluation of cultural assets. The successful self is defined by the performative display of its singularity, a trend the sociologist Andreas Reckwitz describes as the "singularisation of society". Contrary to individualisation as the social transformation from heteronomy to increased self-determination, singularisation refers to the complicated relationship between independence and the desire for uniqueness, an expectation which has reached all levels of society. Reckwitz regards the concomitant "cosmopolitan feeling of cultural self-empowerment" of the new middle class as one of the causes of growing social polarisation.

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Isabella Fürnkäs

*1988 in Tokyo, lives in Berlin and Düsseldorf

In Ekklesia, 2015 Video installation, kinetic sand, ca. 300x250cm, projection, colour, sound, 3:15 min.

The Boomerang Effect, 2017 Performance on 24/10 2018, 6.45 pm, with: Nikolas Brummer and Jan Seevetal

Blind Land, 2018 Installation and performance, sound, basin with black water, 600 x 300 cm Performance on 24/10 2018, 8 pm, with: Marlene Kollender and Steven Sander

Courtesy of the artist

A crossover of hyperactivities: rapidly alternating images of nervous assembly robots and flickering impressions from a rave. Two constellations that could not be more different, a party and an assembly, both driven by the same beat, the same craving for repetition and perpetuity: slaves to the rhythm. In her video work In Ekklesia Isabella Fürnkäs turns the archetype of democratic public life (in antiquity the ecclesia represented the core of Attic democracy) into a farce. Instead of an assembly of free. politically mature citizens eager to participate in discussion, Fürnkäs presents an encounter between human and machine, both indulged in a mute dance of endless activity. The automation of production – the future of labour - continues with the automation of pleasure - the future of leisure. It's up to the viewer to determine whether politics still play a role in this scenario.

In the long run, repetition and unison either lead to lethargy or provoke – sometimes even active – resistance. In communication theory, the latter is described as the "boomerang effect". The term boomerang effect refers to the unintentional turn of a communication strategy by 180 degrees. The attempt to influence a communication partner has the opposite result. Despite (or because of) the objections and counterarguments, they feel more convinced by their opinion, plan or suspicion than before the attempted persuasion. In economic psychology, poorly launched advertising campaigns are plainly described as having

a boomerang effect. Instead of increasing the recipient's buying interest, the additional advertising leads to aversion and anger. The client must fear that the promoted product might not only reduce purchasing but even inspire deliberate boycotting. The boomerang effect can mark the beginning of a revolt.

Fürnkäs's eponymous performance contains an entire series of boomerang effects. A split ego in conversation with itself: a chain of half expressed demands and questions, which, once uttered, turn against their originator. Sometimes they spontaneously merge with a pop song quote. sometimes they get lost in Dadaesque listings. Fürnkäs's performers, both men, both white, both blond doppelgangers. try in vain to join the two halves of their monologue to form a whole. The moments of sense and connection are, however, mainly accidental. Then: a turn of events. The two men no longer have the stage to themselves when two women in the audience speak up. Using the same staccato as their precursors they bring the conversation to a preliminary conclusion. "Just continue to dissolve my personality," are the laconic last words of a consciousness that sees itself disappearing. It remains unclear whether it is witnessing its end or its liberation.



Eva Giolo

*1991 in Brussels, lives in Brussels

Gil, 2016 Video, b/w, sound, 4:43 min Courtesy of the artist

According to Freud, the only way to combat the famous "return of the repressed" (the sudden reappearance of past fears and traumas) is a process of persistent and cautious remembrance and confrontation. Incapable of ultimately exorcising the repressed, we must make a conscious effort to come to terms with it. Denial only fuels its power. This applies to the individual as well as the collective psyche. Modern society excels at managing its subconscious. It knows that the best and most sustainable way to suppress dark and unpleasant aspects of history is to record and file them in diligently kept archives. Nothing is as reassuring as the certainty that the documents of one's own greater and lesser sins have a fixed, scrupulously guarded place. But what if there are no such records? What if the repressed is faceless? The absence of images calls for inventiveness. Usually this is where art takes over.

"What happens to all the things that nobody sees?" is the first sentence in Eva Giolo's video essay Gil. The question is an expression of unease, the dark apprehension of something unacknowledged. Based on the attempt to reconstruct an image of something the artist herself has never seen - the face of her dead twin brother Gil – Giolo develops a complex reflection on the interaction between repression, remembrance, oblivion, and fiction. The images in her film are derived from both public and private archives. Homely interiors, children, rarely older than two or three, figures disappearing into the dark, magicians and artists, abandoned meeting places, and blurred holiday impressions are among the recurring motifs. The artist creates a both elegant and associative montage by embedding these images of childhood memories in similarity relations and lines of movement, forever on the verge between wonder and disconcertment, consternation and sentimentality.

"What happens to all the things that nobody sees? – They grow in the dark"

is the answer Giolo provides after a few seconds. As hard as we might try to picture it, we can only touch but never capture the repressed. It lives on in the dark, behind the images.



Thibaut Henz, Untitled, from series: Liaisons Latentes, 2017, courtesy of the artist

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Thibaut Henz

*1988 in Liège, lives in Weimar

Liaisons Latentes. Violette, 2018 28 C-Prints, each 70 x 50 cm, resp. 50 x 35 cm, 1 mirror Courtesy of the artist

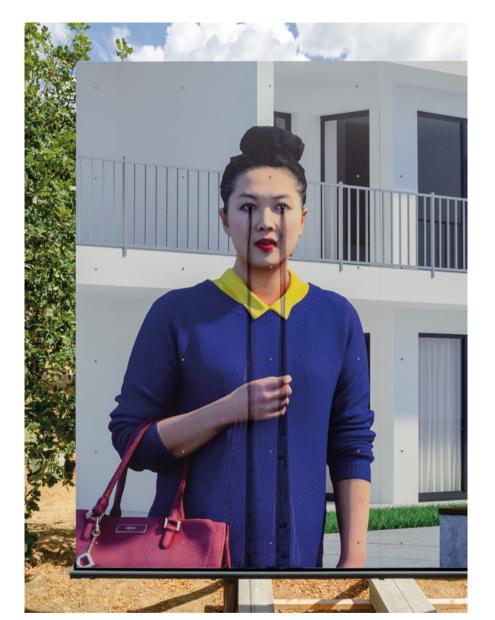
Close-ups of human bodies, views of rooms, plants and animals, sculptures -Thibaut Henz's photographic works cover a wide spectrum of motifs. He combines shots of different situations which initially seem unconnected. In this fragmentary approach every motif alludes not only to their representation, but also to something absent, which only formalises through the viewing process. In the field of tension between presence and absence, a reciprocal reference system evolves which points to something that was. Instead of fulfilling a representational function, Henz's photographs illustrate the present as a contingency reflected in coexisting realities experienced either directly, through the media, or digitally.

Henz belongs to a generation whose perception of the world is strongly influenced by the reception of digital images. Online platforms such as Instagram mainly serve the purpose of displaying multiple, successful selves, either through the demonstrative exhibition of wealth, the representation of an extensive social network, or an original handling of visual material. The aesthetic fabrication of singularity in the context of the digital attention economy is always at the forefront. Henz uses the mechanisms of the "visually represented experience" (Andreas Reckwitz) and shows that the production of visual material is anything but unique (or even algorithmically determined).

In Henz's works the individual image is at once specific and generic, and primarily alludes to another image. In his examination of emerging technological reproduction processes, the philosopher John Berger drew attention to the camera's ability to isolate fleeting impressions – contrary to the claim of painting to represent universal meaning – and thereby destroying the idea of timeless pictures. This concept is manifest in the digital age of the viral circulation of images: the picture as a means

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of representation becomes the performative realisation of the self. Henz uses highlights and strong contrasts to focus the attention on the subject while leaving the background and thus the context undefined. On the receptive level, this ambiguousness challenges the viewers to create their own allusions and referential contexts. Furthermore, the intense zoom, which defines the segments, reveals a paradox within the digital overproduction of images: with increasing proximity, the representation of the subject becomes less specific.



Jan Hoeft

*1981 in Blankenburg, lives in Cologne

I Feel You, 2018 Installation, billboard, water cycle, 400 x 600 x 300 cm Courtesy of the artist

General standards are often presented as pragmatic summaries of individual needs. However, their representative function is based on the idea of a universally conceived subject that has already internalised these norms. This potential discrepancy is especially evident in the urban sphere: in the interaction between the built structure and social context. Architecture not only creates housing space but also living space. It proposes ideas on the shaping of togetherness, personal areas and the ideal setting for a collective "we". In contrast to a rented flat, owned property represents high social prestige and association with a social segment that is defined by similar ideas of "lifestyle". Moreover, habitation has become an important field in the context of customised aestheticisation and thus a mirror of a supposedly individual lifestyle.

Jan Hoeft's installation I Feel You alludes to the billboards on construction sites which promote emerging groups of buildings. They show computer-simulated structures whose idealised forms visualise the future. Anything that might disturb the overall picture is left out, even the imagined residents blend in with the structural setting. Instead of families or communities, they are presented as ensembles of individuals whose urban lifestyle complies with prototypical consumer groups found in the world of advertising. They all look towards the viewer, which makes them appear even more isolated. Likewise, the spacious windows and balconies of their virtual flats seem more like stages for self-presentation than passages from private to public space. A closer look at the billboard reveals a perplexing intervention: these people, who have apparently found a home in the perfectly designed building, are all crying.

"The urban planners envisage a better future. The estate agent promotes a new, more perfect life. But the new inhabitants arrive with feelings that do not fit in with the concept. I see the photo of the perfect

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resident in the brochure. Can I become this person? How does my past correspond with the capitalist lifestyle? As soon as real people move in, the cold shell becomes a living home, the vision becomes concrete. However, problems move in with the people. Things get complicated." (Jan Hoeft)

ANONINITY ANONINMITY **AMNONININTY INANIMOTY IN AN ENTITY** ANONONONONO MON ANO MANO ANON ANIMAL MAN MONEY? NONE ONE AMON NAM ANONAMNONIMINININITY **AMOBILITY AMITY ANOMIRITY AMONINITY** A MINORITY IMMOBILITY **INABILITY NANOMINITY** MANONIRITY NAMONINITY IN A MINUTE, TEA

Hanne Lippard

*1988 in Milton Keynes, lives in Berlin

Anonymities, 2017 6 channel sound installation, 5:40 Min. Courtesy of the artist and LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina

Is the experience of listening itself alienating? Hanne Lippard often employs language - particularly the voice - as raw artistic material, manipulating the spoken word. The rhythmical and fragmented word play presented in the installation Anonymities is no exception. Lippard dramatises both the diction in her piece and the setting - via a specific spatial configuration. Six stereo speakers transmitting recordings of her own voice are positioned in a circular arrangement that circumscribe the encounter with the work. On approach, the individual act of listening is reflected and amplified by the acoustic field. The choreography of language produced by the alternate sound bites is a lexicon of abstraction deriving from a singular. isolated word: "anonymity".

Lippard's articulations trip up and roll off the tongue, faltering, slowing down, speeding up, elongating syllables. Her splitting and splicing, re-jigging and rephrasing parts of the whole word results in a reimagining of "anonymity". It becomes poetically refigured and redefined into plural anonymities. At times robotic, in instances melodic, the experience can be direct or disorienting, playful or painful, depending on the listener. What, on first hearing, could be construed as absurd blabbering into a sing-song tune, turns into an insightful and intriguing musing on what it means to be anonymous, to be distant, cold, perhaps even alienated. What does it mean to have no identity?

"A, ah, an, non, a nam." What is really being said here? A singular thing, a sigh, an individual, a negative response, a name? The element of time is trapped, twisted and tangled into the score of her linguistic trance-like tune. "In a min... minute ... minutely..." caught between the lines becomes a self-referential recognition of the durational feature of the work.

Lippard's piece teases, tries and tests the listener's patience and perception, putting the individual on the spot to stop and listen. Cognition and visualisation of what "anonymity" means spring to mind, actively engaging the viewer or listener to ponder on the term and the various other words suggestively stuttered in between. The auditory texture created becomes a chorus from one to many, much akin to the contemporary individual's alienated plight, from one figure of alienation to all entities alienatied at large.



Joanna Piotrowska

*1985 in Warsaw, lives and works in London and Warsaw

I, Frowst, 2013–2014 Silver gelatin print, 130 x 160 cm

V, Frowst, 2013–2014 Silver gelatin print, 130 x 160 cm

Untitled, 2015 Silver gelatin print, 21.8 x 28.8 cm

Untitled, 2015 Silver gelatin print, 21.5 x 16 cm

Courtesy of Southard Reid, London

Untitled, 2016 16mm film, colour, no sound, 3 min. Courtesy of Dawid Radziszewski Gallery, Warsaw

Joanna Piotrowska explores the interactions between individuals and groups in her works. The couple constellations in her Frowst series generate a feeling of unease. Between intimacy, vulnerability and defence she reveals the subtle conflicts within familial structures. Emotionally staged, the group portraits mediate between private atmospheres and patterns of social interaction. The physical nearness of the men represented in black and white appears ambivalent and oscillates between dependency, affection and erotic desire. The pictorial ambiguity reflects the complexity of personal relationships within social structures.

As a normative institution, the nuclear family generates a field of tension between emancipation and repression. Moments of individual freedom contrast with the restraints triggered by collective dynamics. Inspired by Bernd Hellinger's idea of the family constellation, Piotrowska traces these symbolic and invisible power structures in her imagery. In this context, physical expression functions as an indicator of the discrepancy between the subjectively experienced social relationship and the superordinate system. The artist develops a concept of family as a complex network, which produces moments of comfort as well as repression, and offers protection

while enabling violence. The individual relationship expresses itself as a concrete form between freedom and unfreedom, which Piotrowska translates into sculptural photographs. The title "frowst" alludes to the sensation of being in a warm and cosy, but also stifling, almost suffocating room. The representation of physical tensions portrays how traumas inscribe themselves into the body and are passed on from generation to generation.

The film *Untitled* deals with the absence of attachment figures and both the physical and mental repercussions: the haptic communications simulated here derive from psychotherapy and are supposed to provide autarchic support in case of a panic attack. The depicted touching hand belongs to the same person who requires support and assistance. When faced with anxiety or loneliness, touching one's own body is supposed to have a therapeutic. comforting effect. The skin as a sensitive surface embodies the fragile boundary between the self and the outside world, which are in a constant state of exchange. On the one hand, a self-help method which cannot be provided by others due to the absence or the impossibility of emotional closeness, on the other hand, a metaphor of the individual's isolation in postmodern society. The strangeness of the touching hands illustrates the attempt to compensate social distance, but also seems like a mechanism that leads to further alienation from an attachment to a person or group. By showcasing the body as the embodiment of socialness, Joanna Piotrowska exposes the effects superordinate structures and power dynamics have on private lives, whether in familial, economic, or cultural contexts.



Jeroen de Rijke / Willem de Rooij, I'm Coming Home in Forty Days, 1997, film still, courtesy of Willem de Rooij and Galerie Buchholz, Berlin/Cologne/New York

Jeroen de Rijke Willem de Rooij

*1970 in Brouwershaven, † 2006 in Takoradi, Ghana

*1969 in Beverwijk, lives in Berlin

I'm Coming Home in Forty Days, 1997 16mm film, colour, optical sound, 15 min. Courtesy of Willem de Rooij and Galerie Buchholz, Berlin/Cologne/New York

Time and space, and the different intensities they develop play an important role in Jeroen de Rijke and Willem de Rooij's early films. A second level in their explorations of perception, movement, seeing and recognition concerns the setting of the film and defines it as an ideologically and politically charged territory.

In 1997, de Rijke and de Rooij travelled to Greenland and made the 16mm-film I'm Coming Home in Forty Days during a four-week journey. Three takes of varying lengths show the circumnavigation of an iceberg in the bay of Ilulissat. The filming took place in the early morning under a misty sky. Time and again, the contours of the iceberg dissolve and its appearance transforms in the changing light. In this almost indeterminable realm of diffuse chiaroscuro all things solid and substantial congeal in the transition from matter to atmosphere. The line between water and ice is the only clear contour. The iceberg itself, however, remains perplexingly abstract. It is hard to estimate its actual size, as the real surroundings are equally indistinguishable, thus obscuring conventional recognition in the sense of a reproduction of cultural knowledge. In the last take, the camera focuses solely on the deep blue water, which resembles a monochrome surface and levels all connections with reality.

I'm Coming Home in Forty Days is only shown at fixed times in a room adapted for the projection. That way, the absence of the image between the showings becomes an integral part of the installation: the memory of the viewed images incorporates the time after the screening into the work. This conceptional connection between the production of images and the conditions of their viewing is characteristic of de Rijke / de Rooij's work: what we see is

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merely the visible part of the presentation. The social, political, and ideological implications are excluded from a purely phenomenological viewing but inscribe themselves into our perception as a subtext. Therefore, the idea of an iceberg as the sublime beauty of nature is superimposed with the metaphor of existential isolation, while it is up to the viewer to consciously call to mind the ideological context of Greenland as an autonomous part of the Kingdom of Denmark.





Jana Schulz

*1984 in Berlin, lives in Leipzig and Berlin

Golden Boys. Iğdır. Maravilla. Monterey Park, 2018

Single channel projection, HD video, colour, sound, 17:33 min.

with: Iğdır: Alen Rahimic, Hussein Chehimi, Zelimhan Dadaev, Hamsat Shadalov, Valentino Radu, Harun Colak, Alexander von Bergen, Ahmed Omeirat Maravilla: Andre Perez, Martin Urias, Raymond Otanes Monterey Park: Rico Ramos

Courtesy of the artist

The long takes in Jana Schulz's Golden Bovs provide alimpses into the everyday lives and largely unproductive routines of young men from different social spheres. The camera follows the vouths during mundane activities such as personal hygiene, hanging about, plaving with their smartphones, doing sport or watching television. The film's title is derived from the company name Golden Boy Production, an American agency for boxing fights which hires young boxers and organises tournaments. Jana Schulz is interested in this subcultural milieu with its strict body norms. construction of male honour and groupspecific rituals. Beyond the centre of social attention, special rules and codes determine the inclusion in a social world of its own.

Schulz's film focuses on the peripheral showplaces beyond the boxing ring, where the boys' identities continue to be defined by their connection with the group. The three filmic sequences evolved in different places such as Los Angeles, where Schulz made contacts through boxing clubs, or the Turkish province lădır, where she accompanied the boxers to their fights. In these often remote, economically challenged areas the sports clubs represent an antipode to the surrounding social environment. As the sociologist Loïc Wacquant pointed out in his examination of the Chicago boxing milieu (2003), it is this opposition that defines the subculture: in the boxing club the anarchic violence of the streets is replaced by the regulated violence in the ring.

The artist approaches her protagonists with sensitivity and oscillates between

closeness and distance as she provides an insight into a social milieu which is unknown to a large part of society. Soft focus takes, focus changes, and the lack of distinct beginnings and endings to the excerpts place the film somewhere between documentary and fiction. Every now and then, individual glimpses come into focus, filmic tension builds up, but comes to nothing. The impression of expanded time and the specifically composed sound capture the atmosphere in the community of young men whose social identity has inscribed itself into their bodies. The discipline and work invested in these bodies at the gym is reflected in the banality of mundane routines. The interactions between the youths, their preoccupation with physical appearance and the ongoing optimisation of their own performance and capabilities, even after dark, point to a habitus that embodies the social sphere and is linked to the power of economic living conditions.



Andrzej Steinbach, *Untitled*, from series: *Gesellschaft beginnt mit drei*, 2017, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Conradi, Hamburg/Brussels

Andrzej Steinbach

*1983 in Czarnkow, lives in Berlin

Untitled (Sequence #1) from series: Gesellschaft beginnt mit drei, 2017 7 Fine Art Prints, each 90 x 60 cm Private Collection, Hamburg

Untitled (Sequence #4) from series: Gesellschaft beginnt mit drei, 2017 7 Fine Art Prints, each 90 x 60 cm Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Conradi, Hamburg/Brussels

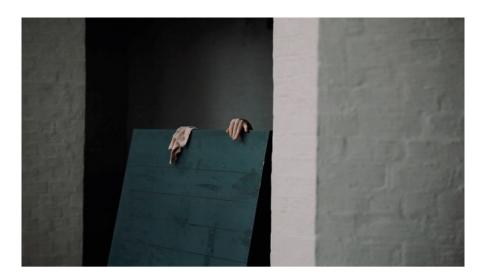
The two photo sequences by Andrzei Steinbach are part of Gesellschaft beginnt mit drei (society starts with three), a series of portraits the artist developed in 2017 inspired by Ulrich Bröckling's eponymous essay. In alternating order, three people with constantly changing clothes and accessories are depicted in one room. One figure is always in the centre, while the others are only partly seen in the picture, or not at all. This empty space is a deliberate part of the composition and shifts throughout the sequence. The models switch their position and posture, and leave the viewer in the dark regarding their relationship with one another. With the same subtlety, Steinbach transforms the spatial surroundings and the perspective on the subjects: the pictorial constellations continue to disintegrate casting doubt on the representations of the triangle relationships.

The role of the subjects – and thus their social contexts – appear to be coded by clothing and attributes, and unfold associations with the elements of work, management and freelancing. At the same time, they resemble indeterminate templates – devoid of references to specific companies or brands, and dissonant in their alternations. The campaign like style of the photographs alludes to the fashion industry as a potent agent, which renders subcultural codes mainstream and thereby indistinct. Reduced to commodity forms, precisely coded patterns lose their distinction and thus their political potential.

According to the sociologist Bröckling, however, the ambivalence that undermines the binarity of "we" and "the others" provides a chance for political self-empowerment. In his essay he examines forms of a third

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party as a guiding figure of political practice with a critical approach to power. While the rationalising tendencies of modernity were based on binary orders with the potential to force the adaption, alienation. disenfranchisement or persecution of those who did not fit in with the schemes, the fluid and accelerated social conditions of postmodernity produce ambivalent third parties, who "undermine the pressure to homogenise with a puzzling game of indistinct or changing positions" (Bröckling). The role of the third party is disparate and "mutates from troublemaker to an often emphatical quarantor of an aesthetically absorbed diversity or serves as the starting point for specific identity politics." The contingency, fragility, but also the contentiousness of the social order is manifest in Steinbach's photographs. whose dissonant details provide food for thought on the represented roles as well as the relationship between subject and role. Instead of catering to industrially manufactured desires, they use performative means to visualise the normative contexts surrounding them.





Ingel Vaikla

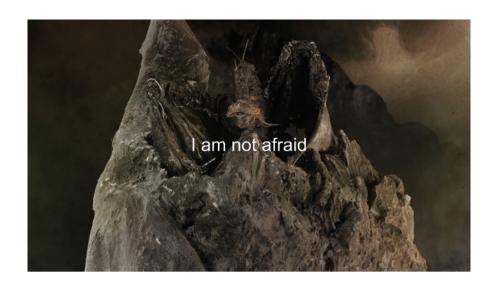
*1992 in Estonia, lives in Ghent

Roosenberg, 2017 HD video, colour, 5.1 sound, 29:15 min. Courtesy of the artist

Roosenberg portrays the eponymous cloister in the Belgian town of Waasmunster and its four last inhabitants: the nuns Amanda. Godelieve, Rosa, and Trees. Even during the last days before the final closing of the abbey, they go about their daily routines and religious rituals in the modernist building, only interrupted by preparations for the relocation and packing boxes. In Ingel Vaikla's film the camera explores the architecture and its underlying mathematical principles - forever in search of the life which has inscribed itself. into the constructed environment. The sisters' simple, abstemious everyday life is reflected in the elementary forms of the architecture. With the departure from Roosenberg the structure loses its primary function. Designed by the Benedictine monk and architect Hans Van der Laan, the building is an outstanding example of modernist sacred architecture. In the manner of artistic synthesis, all parts of the structure correspond with the big picture: the functional rooms, the interior decoration, even the nuns' habits blend with the conceptual aesthetics. Both space and form allude to a close connection between the congregational life and the building - drawing a line line between interior and exterior.

The cloister can be interpreted as a heterotopia as defined by Michel Foucault, in other words, an area which fulfils a systematic function. Defined by a community of faith and structured according to hard rules, the cloister represents religious life as part of society, despite its self-imposed isolation. In the manner of counter positions. heterotopias reflect social conditions and are thus subject to change. Understanding a place and the significance of its history also means tracing the cultural transformation of a society. The dwindling influence of religion is a side effect of modernisation – the erosion of traditional structures and the increasing secularisation of society. Ludwig Feuerbach, whom Karl Marx referred to and criticised in his theory of alienation, perceived religion as a manifestation of peoples' alienation from themselves. Religion, he argued, is

humans' projection onto a being outside of themselves, expressed in the idea of God. Marx transferred this concept to the secular context and used it to describe moments of heteronomy within relations of property and production. For him religion was no more than a dream, an "opium of the people", designed to make worldly suffering more tolerable. Thus, the cloister also functions as a heterotopic sphere which oscillates between contemplation and compensation.



Peter Wächtler

*1979 in Hanover, lives in Brussels and Berlin

Untitled (Clouds), 2018 Video, colour, no sound, 10:36 min. Courtesy of the artist and Lars Friedrich, Berlin

Tom Cruise, 2005 C-Print, 118 x 86 cm Private Collection, Berlin

In Peter Wächtler's films, image and sound often tell completely different stories. Untitled (Clouds) has no audible soundtrack, the reflections of a winged creature on its own future amidst an apocalyptic landscape are conveyed solely by subtitles in the style of a prose poem. Comprised of individual frames, the film portrays a flying dragonesque animal with a straw hat in a lonely, barren mountainous landscape. Six short vignettes show its flying skills and obvious routines. There is no dramatic development, no recognisable purpose, no deeper meaning. Cloud formations, composed of black clouds of ink in an aquarium filmed from below, enliven the psychedelically glowing sky arching over the endless wasteland. The landscape is reminiscent of fantasy films, but the Beckettian existentialism of the inner monologue has as little to do with this genre as anything else that might be closer to reality.

Thunderdome has fallen. At least I think it has. Nobody tells me anything. Silence.
The seed is in the ground. Why didn't anybody tell me? My life. I read about it in the papers.
Bullshit. I understand of course. But still. OK.
But is a call really that much to ask? A little chat?

The language alternates between registers, switches from common to prosaic, ignores coherency and drifts into absurdity, only to reveal repeated attempts at self-reassurance between the lines. I am not afraid. And I am just a butterfly now.

There is no alternative to the life being lived, and after the fall of Thunderdome the future is also uncertain. The winged creature circles stoically. While taking a rest on a cliff, it talks to itself to combat what would probably be called loneliness in a more realistic scenario. Peter Wächtler's lo-fi version of a fantasy aesthetic undergoes a systematic dystopian transformation, a scenario which is inconceivable in the real

world. Nothing is as we know it, and yet the protagonist is often unnervingly close to us.

By contrast, the photo work *Tom*Cruise is surprisingly realistic. Wächtler managed to take this picture with his mobile phone while the actor was visiting Berlin. Surrounded by fans, Cruise is on the telephone and seems distracted. He is at once removed from his surroundings and extremely present. It is hard to say whether he is being himself or simply living up to expectations in this captured moment. Authenticity and staging have become indistinguishable because his self and his roles are merely facets of his persona.



Ian Wallace

*1943 in Shoreham, lives in Vancouver

Room in Portbou, 1996 Photolaminate with serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 183 x 152 cm

The Tower, 1996 Photolaminate with serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 244 x 152 cm

At the Crosswalk VI, 2008 Photolaminate with acrylic on canvas, 243 x 484 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth, Zurich

Every meeting virtually begins at a crossroad: only when two paths converge, can people encounter one another and decide to continue together or not. The people in Ian Wallace's photo series At the Crosswalk, however. always seem to have just missed each other: two full body views in profile, the figures facing each other, potentially in sight and reach of each other, and yet individualised. Locked in their respective sections, separated by a thicket of abstraction. Wallace's monumental collage is more than a lament about the inhumanity and coldness of urban infrastructures. The figures may belong to different image spaces, but they are part of the same overall arrangement, part of a whole. What separates them is not a divide but a lack of consciousness.

With The Tower the line continues from crossings and junctions to the periphery, to the outskirts and borderlands. During high modernism the urban periphery became the setting for large factories and industrial sites. Visible for miles, their smoking chimneys defined the skyline of the Fordist metropolis. With the transition to post-Fordism (and the outsourcing of industrial labour from local to global peripheries), this picture started to fade until it vanished completely. The Tower is an allegory on the post-heroic, post-phallic society of the present, in which the figure of the "white, male worker" has lost its central position. Instead of potency and greatness, the factory tower symbolises a dwindling patriarchy's need for compensation.

From the outskirts it is no longer far to the terminus: Portbou, a small town in the

far north of Spain, was Walter Benjamin's last station while fleeing from the Nazis, his last address shortly before he committed suicide on the French-Spanish border in 1940. Room in Portbou is Wallace's homage to a great and critical theorist and archaeologist of bourgeois modernity, a thinker for whom the "revolutions of world history" were not "locomotives" but "humankind's attempt to activate the emergency brake". Benjamin set his hope on revolution, not because of its ability to accelerate the historical course of events, but because of its potential to prevent the worst, and maybe, to make way for a new beginning. In the context of this hope. Room in Portbou, all the more, becomes a document of melancholia, in which the grief over individual fate merges with the dismay over the outcome of the historical-collective.

As a theorist hoping for the miracle of the emergency stop, Benjamin's only choice in the real world was the fatal jump from the moving train. With the Jewish intellectual, a bourgeois utopia died in Portbou: the vision of a humanity as the voluntary maker of its own history.



Tobias Zielony, Mask, 2017, from series: Maskirovka, © Tobias Zielony, courtesy of the artist and KOW, Berlin

Tobias Zielony

*1973 in Wuppertal, lives in Berlin

Balcony, from series: Maskirovka, 2017 Archival pigment print, 84 x 56 cm

Kira, from series: Maskirovka, 2017 Archival pigment print, 56 x 84 cm

Kyiv, from series: *Maskirovka*, 2017 Archival pigment print, 105 x 70 cm

Line, from series: *Maskirovka*, 2017 Archival pigment print, 105 x 70 cm

Maria, from series: *Maskirovka*, 2017 Archival pigment print, 56 x 84 cm

Mask, from series: Maskirovka, 2017 Archival pigment print, 105 x 70 cm

River, from series: Maskirovka, 2017 Archival pigment print, 70 x 105 cm

Shine, from series: Maskirovka, 2017 Archival pigment print, 84 x 56 cm

Courtesy of KOW, Berlin

Masks notoriously bode ill. In Western philosophy they symbolise the defamation of two fundamental evidences: the truth and the self. A mask conceals more than just the face. Besides their love of truth, it is primarily the philosophers' fear of the loss of identity, the surrender of control and autonomy that makes them morally condemn concealment, while lauding the authentic and undisguised. Contrary to the philosophical discourse, the military approach to masks, masking, ambush and camouflage has always been pragmatic. In the history of the Soviet army, "Maskirovka" refers to an entire tradition of strategic deception and misdirection of the military opponent. The conflict with Ukraine, which has been progressing since 2013, proves that this form of both political and military travesty is still deemed an appropriate political power strategy by the current Russian government.

Tobias Zielony's photo series

Maskirovka explores the oscillating double
meaning of the mask and masking – as
a means of deception and denial as well
as self-empowerment and subversion –

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in an intimate portrait of the Kiev gueer and techno scene. Created between 2016 and 2017, three years after the historic protests on the Maidan, Zielony's pictures show vouth and a subculture under high political pressure: on the one hand, the experience in the club which promises unlimited possibilities of change, love and lust, and on the other hand, the ongoing conflict that makes all thoughts of tomorrow seem futile. Zielony's photographs document the moment of crossing over, the passage between realities. The title Maskirovka is not only an allusion to the mask-like quality of the war (which claims not to be one) - to this day, the Russian side has not officially declared war and denies the participation of Russian soldiers in military actions - but also to the joy of the subjects in practicing forms of queering and transformation. It is up to the viewer to decide whether the latter are escaping from reality or are in fact confidently countering the farce of this hybrid, unacknowledged war with another. better reality.

"At war, you can be forced to kill or be killed at any moment. Getting out of it, and entering into the situation of art, is also a pretty conscious choice", Tasia, an activist in and beyond the club, explains in conversation with Zielony. Tasia knows only too well: the yearning for a better life (anticipated inside the club) is a long way from being real – but by far more genuine than the masquerade of political innocence outside.

Pay as you wish

Each Sunday, you decide on the admission fee and pay as much as you want for your exhibition visit.

Program

Opening, Talk & Performance

Wed 24/10 2018, 6 pm Talk with Ian Wallace

Wed 24/10 2018, 6.45 & 8 pm Performances by Isabella Fürnkäs

Tours

All tours are free with admission!

Curatorial Tours

The curators of the exhibition, Vanessa Joan Müller and Nicolaus Schafhausen, discuss topics addressed by the presented works and elaborate on their background.

Wed 21/11 2018, 5 pm Vanessa Joan Müller as part of Vienna Art Week 2018

Wed 5/12 2018, 6 pm Nicolaus Schafhausen

Sunday Tours

Every Sunday at 3 pm you can join our art educators on a guided tour to explore the exhibition. The tours focus on the presentation and different aspects of alienation. (Guided tours in German). With: Wolfgang Brunner, Carola Fuchs, Michaela Schmidlechner and Michael Simku.

Sun 28/10, 2/12, 9/12, 23/12 2018, 3 pm Between Alienation and Dystopia Sun 4/11, 16/12 2018, 6/1, 20/1 2019, 3 pm The Compulsion to Selfdesign

Sun 11/11, 25/11, 30/12 2018 13/1, 3/2 2019, 3 pm Alienation 4.0 – Fluid Individuals

Sun 18/11 2018, 27/1, 10/2, 17/2 2019, 3 pm The Medium is the Massage

Sunday Tours in Sign Language

On Sunday 11/11 2018, the guided tour *Alienation 4.0* - *Fluid Individuals* will be translated into Austrian sign language.

Sun 11/11 2018, 3 pm with Eva Böhm, sign language interpreter

KHM x Kunsthalle Wien

Old Masters meet contemporary art – selected works from the collection of the KHM (Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien) and the exhibition Antarctica. An Exhibition on Alienation are the basis for the guided tours.

Thu 3/1 2019, 6.30 pm From Being Alienated in This World

with Andreas Zimmermann and Wolfgang Brunner Meeting Point: Foyer KHM

Thu 17/1 2019, 6.30 pm From the Objectification of Man

with Daniel Uchtmann and Wolfgang Brunner Meeting Point: Foyer KHM

Thu 24/1 2019, 6.30 pm From the Desire for Self-Determination with Daniel Uchtmann and Wolfgang Brunner Meeting Point: Foyer KHM

Children's Workshop

We invent a new image of ourselves. We dress up, style, alienate ourselves, until we are someone completely different!
Camera, mobile phone, selfie-stick, cool light and lots of material to transform will help us. We print out your photos and you can build a special frame for your doppelganger!

Sat 1/12 & 15/12 2018, 11 am–12.30 pm Out of the Ordinary Children's Workshop in cooperation with WienXtra For children from 6 to 10

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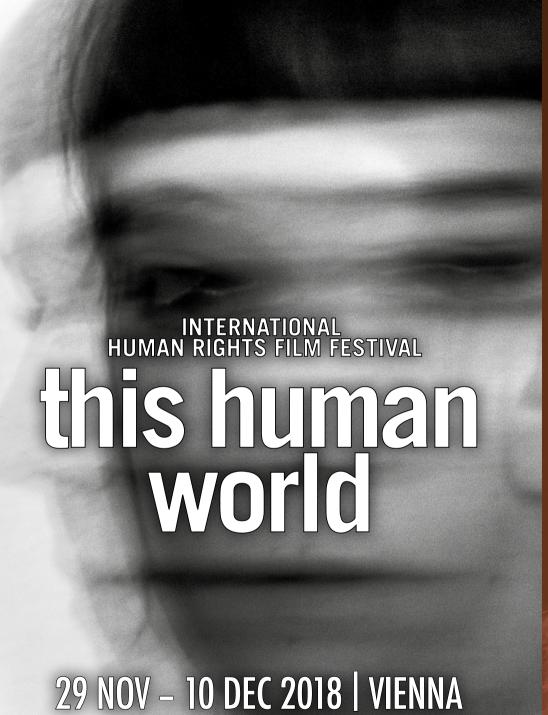
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Kunsthalle Wien GmbH

Director

Nicolaus Schafhausen

CFO

Sigrid Mittersteiner

Curators

Vanessa Joan Müller Nicolaus Schafhausen

Exhibition Design Hektor Peliak

Exhibition Management Hektor Peljak

Construction Management Johannes Diboky Danilo Pacher

Technicians
Mathias Kada
Beni Ardolic
Baari Jasarov
Frank Herberg (IT)

External Technicians
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Hermann Amon
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Office Management Maria Haigermoser Vasilen Yordanov

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Visitor Service Daniel Cinkl Osma Eltyep Ali Kevin Manders Christina Zowack Exhibition Booklet Kunsthalle Wien GmbH

Texts
Juliane Bischoff
Vanessa Joan Müller
Maximilian Steinborn
Eleanor Taylor

Editing Vanessa Joan Müller Eleanor Taylor Martin Walkner

Translation
Gerrit Jackson
Katherine Lewald

Art Direction Boy Vereecken

Design Antoine Begon

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Museumsplatz 1 1070 Vienna, Austria www.kunsthallewien.at +43 (0)1 521 89-0

