

**kunsthalle  
wien prize  
2021**

museumsquartier  
museumsplatz 1  
1070 vienna

**DIANA BARBOSA GIL  
CHO BEOM-SEOK  
JOJO GRONOSTAY  
ANI GURASHVILI  
LUKAS KAUFMANN  
NORA SEVERIOS  
ANNA SPANLANG  
CHIN TSAO**



# Handspells



Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022





Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022



Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

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# Preface

**What, How &  
for Whom / WHW,  
Artistic Directors  
of Kunsthalle Wien**

“Jointly organized by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, the University of Applied Arts Vienna, and Kunsthalle Wien, the annual Kunsthalle Wien Prize has been awarded by a jury since 2014.

The two prizewinning graduates receive € 3,000 each. All finalists are part of a group exhibition held at Kunsthalle Wien.

We consider it a crucial institutional task to support young artists on their way. Therefore, it was a special concern of ours not to just highlight two selected positions, but to gather others and organize a group show where all artists get equal attention. The new format challenges the common economy of art awards, where full attention is placed on the winners, whereas the shortlisted positions become invisible.

The group show is a framework fostering conversations, exchanges, and discussions, which have been sorely missing in the recent period and are fundamental to any cultural practice. Working on a group show means crossing gazes and standpoints, looking at one’s own practice through the lens of others’, finding a balance between the particular and the whole. Also, the exhibition will be the starting point for further collaborations between the artists and the team of Kunsthalle Wien in organizing public events and in activating the show in different ways.

For Kunsthalle Wien, gathering young artists from the same generation who have lived in the same city for some time is an occasion to offer an insight into the young contemporary artistic scene and to gain insight into what they are moved by, interested in, and stand for.”

**Johan F. Hartle,  
Rector of the  
Academy of Fine  
Arts Vienna**

“The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna is very pleased by the new Kunsthalle Wien Prize exhibition format and looks forward to the presentation of four outstanding artistic profiles. The exhibition at Kunsthalle Wien Museumsquartier offers our graduates a prominent public forum. The positions selected for presentation are diverse, but they share a particular attention to the ordinary, to what passes unnoticed or fades into oblivion. The works range from a humorous and playful montage of mobile phone video clips by Anna Spanlang to Cho Beom-Seok’s documentary black-and-white film inside a black box, from a fragile sculptural installation of ceramics by Nora Severios to Jojo Gronostay’s sprawling intervention

composed of jeans sculptures and photographs. The Academy is proud of its graduates and the wide range of the creative positions showcased in the Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021 exhibition.”

**Eva Maria Stadler,  
Vice Rector of  
the University  
of Applied Arts  
Vienna**

“The Kunsthalle Wien Prize offers the University of Applied Arts an invaluable opportunity to initiate an ongoing exchange between the curators at Kunsthalle Wien and our graduates and teachers. We are especially pleased that Diana Barbosa Gil, who completed her studies in the Sculpture and Space program under the direction of Hans Schabus and who was nominated together with Ani Gurashvili, Lukas Kaufmann, and Chin Tsao, has won the first prize. Diana Barbosa Gil undertakes a nuanced inquiry into the interactions between Western, colonialist, and postcolonial cultural productions in light of her own experience as a Colombian-born artist. The changes to the award’s selection process proposed by Kunsthalle Wien, which are designed to nurture lasting relationships based on mutual commitment between the young artists and the institution, are an important signal for quality and artistic position in an age of fast-paced production.”

# Introduction

by Anne Faucheret

For the first time, the exhibition showcasing the winners of the Kunsthalle Wien Prize takes the form of a group presentation, gathering eight artists: Anna Spanlang and Diana Barbosa Gil—winners of the first prize—as well as Cho Beom-Seok, Jojo Gronostay, Nora Severios, Ani Gurashvili, Lukas Kaufmann, and Chin Tsao. The prize exhibition has been extended to a larger selection of artists in order to represent a wider spectrum of artistic positions among the graduates of both art academies. The new constellation privileges the many over the few and the collective over the individual.

The title of the exhibition, *Handspells*, refers to sequences of gestures performed by bodies or body parts that have performative or transformative effects—expected or unforeseen—on their environment and on other bodies. The exhibition is not primarily about witchcraft. Rather, the works presented reenact or inquire simple, mundane, sometimes repetitive gestures as they appear in the realms of work, of creation, of craft, and in a wide range of other productive but also reproductive activities. When these gestures affect the real, they get imbued with some sort of magic, they become connection, they create relation and can be seen as spells. *Handspells* also evokes chiromancy, where the inscriptions of gestures, of techniques, of habits, of narratives in the palm become signs that can be interpreted. The creases testify of the maneuvering of connecting bodies in the world. The gestures of this maneuvering leave traces on bodies, the creases then become language, which eventually again calls forth gestures. The exhibition is about bringing close to each other touch and vision, language and body, magic and labor and emphasizes the creative dimension of the ordinary, the transformative dimension of iteration, and the political dimension of sharing body techniques.

The exhibition takes place primarily in the lower hall of Kunsthalle Wien but begins already in the entrance space with a display we call *Teaser Table* that works as a horizontal showcase. It is a long white table gathering artworks by each of the eight artist, which are either unique or parts of small editions and which are available for purchase. The presentation and its title play with the double function of the space that is at the same time an exhibition space and a commercial space where tickets are sold.

Running along almost every wall of the exhibition, the display by Julia Hohenwarter, named *Skirting Board*, with its undulating



horizon made of pale color fields sometimes highlighted with waxed sections, punctuates the space, offers a subtle signage, and holds the artworks.

\*

Diana Barbosa Gil creates performative and sculptural installations that function as a kind of highly personal coordinate system by setting various ideas, techniques, objects, styles, or motifs from different moments in history in interrelation. Loud and fragile at once, her work constellations tell stories of the quest for an origin and a defined place in the now, while also bearing witness to the absurd pressure artists struggle with today to keep producing new and better art.

Cho Beom-Seok is scouting for what, to him, is the perfect moment: when the filmmaker's gaze through the lens of his camera dissolves. It is often the encounter with a person or a group of people that triggers the filmmaker to initiate the work process. His focus, however, is on the shared spaces and moments these encounters create, when Cho crosses, with many detours and incidents, city districts and forests, empty and crammed spaces. In the presented film, the enigmatic montage makes the interconnections between the scenes not readily apparent or intelligible.

Jojo Gronostay questions the mechanisms of overproduction and waste, globalization and circulation, exploitation and commodification—fostered in the global late capitalist economy but also in the contemporary art world. At the same time, he harnesses these mechanisms to cast deserted places, objects of informal labor, or unnoticed gestures in a new light: his works transmute traces of the capitalist disaster into tokens of a poetic resistance.

Ani Gurashvili's paintings toy with the conventions of representation and narration. Defined by elisions, cuts, and latencies, her pictures affect and move the viewer rather than telling stories or illustrating something. Gurashvili poses her mysterious protagonists as though on a stage, blurring the categorical distinctions between humans, animals, and objects as well as the differentiation between foreground and background. Her works are suffused with a kind of magical eeriness that captivates the viewer with magnetic force.

Lukas Kaufmann's watercolors and prints transform folds into reliefs, surfaces into volumes, the grid pattern into a motif, painting into sediment—effects achieved by a succession of precise techniques and interventions that are nonetheless open to randomness and the physical peculiarities of the material. Kaufmann's works evoke at once landscape drawings and digital screens, the fragility of a paper sheet and the hapticity of an architectural

facade. Being reflections on foundational paradigms of art making, they are also projections of intimate psychological spaces.

Nora Severios investigates the points of contact between humans and other species—animals and plants—and the forms and practices that grow out of these encounters. Learning and practicing techniques, imitating gestures and reliving them in the imagination lead the artist to distinctive creations and a critical engagement with exploitation and extraction, in which she also challenges antitheses that have long been conventional (in the cultures of the West): nature vs. culture, wild vs. domesticated, production vs. reproduction.

Anna Spanlang's works seek to limn a poetics of the ordinary while underscoring the political dimension of an everyday life in which community, friendship, and feminism are actually lived and not just discussed. Her films, full of sharp wit and loving care, are based on a very specific editing and hence reinterpretation of the autobiographical video material she recorded on her mobile phone in the last ten years.

Chin Tsao's visual idiom interweaves familiar styles from the history of art with a techno-optimistic post-human aesthetic. The ceramic and porcelain works, which resemble supersized amulets, wearable ornaments or instruments, seem anachronistic, as their look from the past contrasts with their technique and finish that rout them in the contemporary. These and other sculptural works can be seen as sharp comments on extraction habits, that are foundational for the Western culture since the "Age of Discovery". In her video work, the artist stages a future alter ego who seems to be schizophrenically caught up between a perfect embodiment of capitalist norms and its utter disintegration.

\*

Holding, scratching, making, drawing, writing, folding, weaving, stroking, touching, but also reading with fingers, speaking with hands, are crossing the artworks presented, more or less literally, more or less visible. These gestures interact with matter, transform surfaces into interfaces, reestablish knowledge through contact. They induce another semantics of touching, grasping, and feeling and favor the regime of touch against the centrality of vision. They also (re)connect bodies to other bodies and help repairing damaged connections or inventing new ones beyond domination, extraction or service.

f. l. t. r.: Ani Gurashvili, *Fickle Weather*, 2022; *Uninvited Guest*, 2020; *Moonlit Secret*, 2021; *A Thicket*, 2022,  
installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

# Artworks





**Diana Barbosa Gil (DBG)**

- 3 *Das weiße Zelt*  
[The White Tent], 2022
- 5 *Darm an die Wand*  
[Gut on the Wall], 2022
- 30 *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten*  
[The best Idea ever], 2021
- 31 *Herz über Kopf verliebt*  
[Head over Heels in Love], 2022

**Cho Beom-Seok (CBS)**

- 41 *Prägung* [Imprint], 2021

**Jojo Gronostay (JG)**

- 1 *Chateau Rouge Displays*, 2020
- 2 *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*, 2020
- 32 *Untitled*, 2022

**Ani Gurashvili (AG)**

- 8 *Circulation*, 2019
- 9 *Fickle Weather*, 2022
- 10 *Uninvited Guest*, 2020
- 11 *Moonlit Secret*, 2021
- 12 *A Thicket*, 2022
- 13 *The Windowsill*, 2021
- 14 *The Shadow*, 2020
- 15 *Sea Smoke*, 2020
- 16 *Maggie's Valuables*, 2021
- 17 *Lady's Mantle*, 2021

**Lukas Kaufmann (LK)**

- 4 *o.t. (betweenbetween II)*, 2022
- 6 *o.t. (betweenbetween IV)*, 2022
- 28 *o.t. (betweenbetween III)*, 2022
- 29 *gunpowder*  
(betweenbetween I), 2021
- 34 *sous les yeux du sphinx I–V*  
[under the eyes of the sphinx I–V], 2021
- 35 *screen shot*, 2021
- 36 *screen memory I–II*, 2021
- 37 *waking the tiger, healing trauma*, 2020

**Nora Severios (NS)**

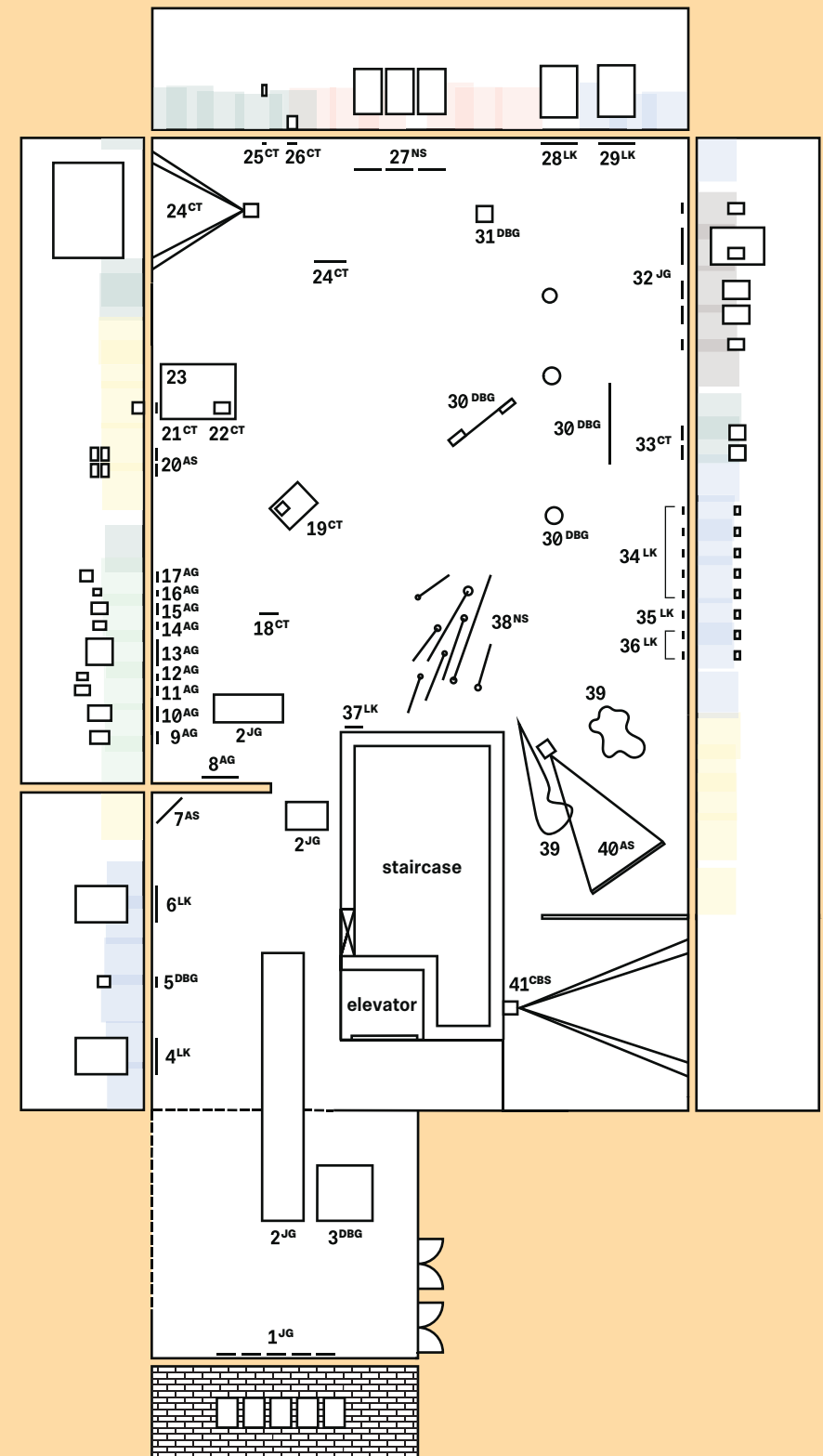
- 27 *Itchy & Scratchy*, 2022
- 38 *Schulen über der Erde*  
[Airs above the Ground], 2022

**Anna Spanlang (AS)**

- 7 *KLITCLIQUE – AUTO*, 2019  
(videoclip by Anna Spanlang)
- 20 *You & Me 1*, 2022
- 40 *CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria*, 2022
- 39 *Sunny Pfalzer, Cuddle Slugs*, 2020

**Chin Tsao (CT)**

- 18 *For the Dreamer of Mushroom Cloud*, 2019
- 19 *if you just want to disappear from ...*, 2020
- 21 *The snake will fix the sky with magic stones*, 2020 (photo)
- 22 *The snake will fix the sky with magic stones*, 2020 (sculpture)
- 23 *Päivi Vähälä, 33 Berge*  
[33 Mountains], 1981
- 24 *The Land of Promise*, 2021–ongoing
- 25 *Listen the Advice of the Wall-Street Witch*, 2020
- 26 *POPPY & PHOBIC*, 2019
- 33 *My thumb was bleeding #1–#2*, 2019



## Diana Barbosa Gil

- *Das weiße Zelt* [The White Tent], 2022, cotton, dirt, color, 200 × 200 × 400 cm
- *Darm an die Wand* [Gut on the Wall], 2022, cold porcelain, clay, plastic, plant remains, approx. 25 × 15 cm
- *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best Idea ever], 2021, installation
  - *Demonstrationswand* [Demonstration Wall], 2021, stained MDF, approx. 270 × 182 × 4 cm
  - *Demonstrationsreste* [Demonstration Remains], 2021, 2 parts, stained MDF, 90 × 150 × 25 cm, 210 × 4 × 101 cm
  - *Figur mit Kind* [Figure with Child], 2021, unglazed ceramic, 60 × 26 × 30 cm
  - *Relief*, 2021, unglazed ceramic, 60 × 30 × 1 cm
  - *Androgyne Lampe* [Androgynous Lamp], 2021, aluminum, wax, tin, mirror, 60 × 20 × 25
  - *Gebrochene Glühbirne* [Broken Bulb], 2021, wax, 15 × 10 cm
  - *Spiegeleisch* [Fried Egg Table], 2021, glass, wood, modeling boards, paper, mirrors, approx. 60 × 50 × 50 cm
  - *Die Tonne* [The Barrel], 2021, glazed ceramic, 50 × 33 cm
  - *Bobel*, 2021, glazed ceramic, 60 × 30 cm
- *Herz über Kopf verliebt* [Head over Heels in Love], 2022, clay, silver, wax, light bulb, fabric, leather, ring, approx. 40 × 20 cm

## Cho Beom-Seok

- *Prägung* [Imprint], 2021, DCP 2k, 1:1.85, black and white, 65 min

## Jojo Gronostay

- *Chateau Rouge Displays*, 2020, 5 parts, framed pigment prints, 70 × 100 cm each, Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter
- *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*, 2020, felt carpet, floor panels, dimensions variable, Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter
- *Untitled*, 2022, 6 parts, silver paper on alu dibond, poster, pigment print on canvas, dimensions variable, Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter

## Ani Gurashvili

- *Circulation*, 2019, oil on canvas, 90 × 110 cm
- *Fickle Weather*, 2022, oil on canvas, 50 × 65 cm
- *Uninvited Guest*, 2020, oil on canvas, 61 × 70 cm
- *Moonlit Secret*, 2021, oil on canvas, 32 × 50 cm
- *A Thicket*, 2022, oil on canvas, 35 × 40 cm
- *The Windowsill*, 2021, oil on canvas, 100 × 88 cm
- *The Shadow*, 2020, oil on canvas, 40 × 50 cm
- *Sea Smoke*, 2020, oil on canvas, 45 × 53 cm
- *Magpie's Valuables*, 2021, oil on canvas, 35 × 33 cm
- *Lady's Mantle*, 2021, oil on canvas, 45 × 45 cm

## Julia Hohenwarter

- *Skirting Board*, 2022, dispersion and wax on wall, polished, dimensions variable

## Lukas Kaufmann

- *o.t. (betweenbetween II)*, 2022, screenprint on paper, 134 × 192 cm
- *o.t. (betweenbetween IV)*, 2022, screenprint on paper, 134 × 192 cm
- *o.t. (betweenbetween III)*, 2022, screenprint on paper, 134 × 192 cm
- *gunpowder (betweenbetween I)*, 2021, screenprint on paper, 134 × 192 cm
- *sous les yeux du sphinx I-V* [under the eyes of the sphinx I-V], 2021, 5 parts, aquarell paint and acrylic paint on paper, 28 × 20 cm each
- *screen shot*, 2021, aquarell paint and acrylic paint on paper, 28 × 20 cm
- *screen memory I-II*, 2021, 2 parts, aquarell paint and acrylic paint on paper, 28 × 20 cm each
- *waking the tiger, healing trauma*, 2020, aquarell paint on paper, 28 × 41 cm

## Sunny Pfalzer

- *Cuddle Slugs*, 2020, second-hand clothing and pillow stuffing, 70 × 130 × 20 cm and 600 × 100 × 30 cm

## Nora Severios

- *Itchy & Scratchy*, 2022, 3 parts, nettle fabric, dyed nettle fibers, 100 × 170 cm each
- *Schulen über der Erde* [Airs above the Ground], 2022, 8 parts, ceramic, banana fiber, rose fiber, merino wool, flax fiber, cashmere wool, mulberry silk, baby camel wool, tussah silk, yak hair, baby alpaca wool, kid mohair, wild silk, and angora wool, dimensions variable

## Anna Spanlang

- *KLITCLIQUE – AUTO*, 2019 (videoclip by Anna Spanlang), 16:9, color, 3:42 min
- *You & Me 1*, 2022, 2 parts, C-prints on alu dibond, 98 × 28 cm each
- *CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria*, 2022, 16:9, color, 33 min looped

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TRUST—(in order of appearance) Florentina Holzinger, Rebecca Strobl, Denice Bourbon, Pia Wilma Wurzer, Pille Riin Jaik, Judith Rohrmoser, The Valenzuela family, Sunny Pfalzer, tourists at Uxmal Pyramids, Julian and Leo, couple at beach (Tijuana), Hyäne Fischer, runner at beach (Tijuana), Katharina Blum, Apollonia T. Bitzan, Schmauswaberl, Luna Ghisetti, Hannah Hinsch, Philip Scheiner, metro passengers (San Diego), officer at gated community (Guadalajara), tourists at Teotihuacán Pyramids, Emmanuel Valenzuela—Djoana Gueorgieva, Charlotte Bohn, Tilman Porschütz, Denise Kottlett, Samuel Guerrero, Zahra and Brad, guy at wedding (Grado), people at LA Amber Rose SlutWalk, Mathias Ringgenberg aka PRICE, Hannes Böck, Nestor Hiebl, Jonida Laçi, Alice Ursini, Julija Zaharijević, car passengers (CMDX), Jessyca R. Hauser, Lukas Heistinger, visitors at Art Fair CDMX, Stefanie Sourial, Denise Palmieri, Sabine Marte, Hyo Lee—Mirjam Schweiger, Markus Pires-Mata, Daniel Hüttler Pineda and friend, passengers at subway Karlsplatz, passengers at Metro Rave CDMX, Eva Sommer, Desi Bonato, Miriam Kruppa, Noah Safranek, Gisi Hakanson, Moira Hille, Antonia Mayer, Corona (tranquil\_top), welding operator Spittelau, singer at subway Karlsplatz, Eric Andre Show, The Nanny (CBS), Katharina Maria Trenk aka KMT, Michelle Karussell, Rana Farahani aka fauna—Matthew Lenkiewicz, Paron Pour & husband, Katharina Rauch, Kurdwin Ayub, visitors Welser Volksfest, stranger in Shanghai, Katharina Spanlang and her colleagues, Ania Przygudzka, strangers at Moscow Airport, Lucia, Ferhat, Marco Aviña, Anaïs Lazerges, visitor at WFW-Container, Marina Weitgasser, car driver at Dead Sea, Ann-Katrin Dörner, party guests in Ankara, Rudi Takacs, Characters Bojack Horseman, Selina Traun and friends, party boat people BLISS, Pablo Cendejas & Natalia, tourist group at active vulcano (Guatemala), metro passengers (Beijing), Michalina Kies—Wanda Spahl, Gelitin: Florian Reither & Ali Janka, people at Volkertmarkt, Adrien Summer, Georgiana Nightingall, people at Skatepark Längenfeldgasse, St. Marx & Hütteldorf, KLITCLIQUE, Elena of Macedonia, Maresi Riegner, Verena Dengler, Katrina Daschner, Stephan Hilpold, Stefan Wurmitzer, Anna Barfuss, Sofia Zabranovic, Philipp Fleischmann, Barbara Schwertführer, Simona Obholzer, Kilian Immervoll, Kenneth Goldsmith, Fabian Kühnle, Luca Pályi, Gesine Danckwart, Andrea Gabriel, Inge Rudnicki, Mirza Kebo, Steffi Sargnagel, people at Girls Skate Session, people at 1st Moisturride—Maria Hofer, Bruno Mokross, musicians Parkhotel Graz, Fanny Wendt Höjer, Carolina Mayr, Caroline Peters, Marcella Ruiz Cruz, Anneliese Spanlang—Natalie

Winkel, Thomas Wurm, Ipek Hamzaoglu, Hicran Ergen, Flora Schausberger, Michel Jimenez, Alexa, The Eric Andre Show, Sean, colleagues at first aid course, Steph Kretowicz, Maria Minerva, Piotr Winiewicz, Dan Wilkinson, people at birthday party of Luna—studio of Ai Weiwei (Beijing), performers Las Trenzas, people at demonstrations in Vienna/Tel Aviv, Maximilano León—people at bikini wax (CDMX), wrestlers at Arena Coliseo (CDMX), pupils at Escuela Obrera, dancing couple (CDMX), dancing group (Beijing), Raphael Reichl, people at La Cañita Marisqueria, Lydia Haider, Moni Rován, Magda Fischer, Cecilia Nyman, Mark Baigent, Lisa Weishäupl, dancers Patrick Miller Club, Laia Fabre, Karin Fisslthaler, Julischka Stengele, Evandro Pedroni, Krööt Juurak, Mzamo Nondlwana, Lukas König, people at 'Ibiza' demonstration Vienna, people at demonstration 'Es ist wieder Donnerstag', Nick Roomie, Peter Paul Gruber, David Reichert, Minna Liebhart & friend

— TEASER: Therese Terror, KLITCLIQUE, Denise Kamschal, Johannes Gierlinger, Nora Gutwenger, Shurug Tramontini, fauna

— AND THANK YOU—Francesca Audretsch, Hannes Böck, Oliver Brunbauer, Elena Cooke, Katrina Daschner, Veronika Dirnhöfer, Katrin Euler, Laia Fabre, Anne Faucheret, Luna Ghisetti, Valerie Habsburg, Ipek Hamzaoglu, Richard Hilbert, Patrick Holzapfel, Liesa Kovacs, Isabella Kresse, Harald Krobath, Jonida Laçi, Dorit Margreiter, Gilbert Marx, my parents and siblings, Bernd Oppl, Sunny Pfalzer, Sasha Pirker, Marion Porten, Judith Rohrmoser, Sibylle Schwarzkogler, Melisande Seebald, WHW + team of Kunsthalle Wien

## Chin Tsao

- *For the Dreamer of Mushroom Cloud*, 2019, epoxy, copper, print, plastic, metal, 160 × 70 × 3.3 cm
- *if you just want to disappear from ...*, 2020, porcelain, 36 × 25 × 1.5 cm, Courtesy Jessica Nam Kim
- *The snake will fix the sky with magic stones*, 2020, C-print on fine art paper, ceramic frame, 55 × 45 × 1.5 cm
- *The snake will fix the sky with magic stones*, 2020, porcelain, copper wire, 67 × 21 × 2 cm, presented on:
  - Päivi Vähälä, 33 Berge [33 Mountains], 1981, hautelisse, cotton chain, sheep wool, mohair, 270 × 198 × 5 cm, Collection and Archive, University of Applied Arts Vienna
- *The Land of Promise*, 2021—ongoing, 2 videos, 16:9, approx. 14:30 min in total, 2 LED devices with text
- *Listen the Advice of the Wall-Street Witch*, 2020, porcelain, 38 × 15 × 1.5 cm, Courtesy Ivana Ridler, lic. oec. HSG
- *POPPY & PHOBIC*, 2019, ceramic, 49 × 33 × 78 cm
- *My thumb was bleeding #1*, 2019, porcelain, ceramic, 52 × 60 × 1.5 cm, private collection Harald Mahrer
- *My thumb was bleeding #2*, 2019, porcelain, 50 × 35 cm



# Diana Barbosa Gil

was born in Cali in 1990 and lives in Vienna and Lisbon.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

I show the installation *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best Idea ever]. It consists of a mobile timber wall construction, called the *Demonstrationswand* [Demonstration Wall], which the objects hang from or are embedded in. Hence, it is both an exhibition space for the works and an independent pictorial space. Other pieces of furniture and ceramic objects, such as *Die Tonne* [The Barrel] or *Spiegeleisch* [Fried Egg Table], are set in relation to it. But an integral component of the installation is missing: *Das blaue Zelt* [The Blue Tent]. As a stand-in, I reappropriated an older textile work—*Tabernacle* from 2017—and rubbed it through all of the spaces where I felt comfortable. The idea of generating a form of cartography in this way refers to a method that artist Franziska Schneeberger used in her projects. The stitching work for *Tabernacle* was done by Federico Protto.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

Generally speaking, the installation is a citation, an assemblage of artistic expressions from twentieth century European modernism. I found the urgency of many avant-garde movements of this time quite intriguing. Their ideas often aimed to no longer view life and art separately. The new, which would prevail through originality and fundamentally change society, played a guiding role. There is a tension that emerges between home objects, exhibition design, and lifestyles, which I find rather fitting. *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best Idea ever] is also a reflection on identity,

situatedness and positioning, and heritage in which methods of appropriation often come into play. And it's an ironic commentary on being an artist in a time when the white upper middle class is "fed" and at the same time criticized within a Eurocentric tradition, which refuses to disclose colonial power structures as it continues to benefit from them.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

In my artistic work, I try to activate objects, figures, and perspectives from history in a different or in my own personal context. This often results in sculptures, installations, and performances in which I try to dissolve the specificity of different media (or even materials). Intimate moments of creativity and life, such as feelings of shame and moments of daring, are always an impetus for my work. Humor and intentional dilettantism are very important as well.



Diana Barbosa Gil, *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best Idea ever], 2021 (detail)

# Cho Beom-Seok

was born in Daegu in 1986 and lives in Seoul.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

I show my 65-minute-long documentary film *Prägung* [Imprint], (2021). My films are experiments and journeys, almost a hunt for matter through the prism of the camera. Light and shadow are raw materials to explore the surface, depth, and feel of the world. However, my investigations do not conform with the expectations of others or a certain aesthetic. In my films, I want to test just how far I can play with cinematic elements to create an image—to the limit of the image itself. The image in my head is reflected in my films, or not. The search for it and its seduction are more important.

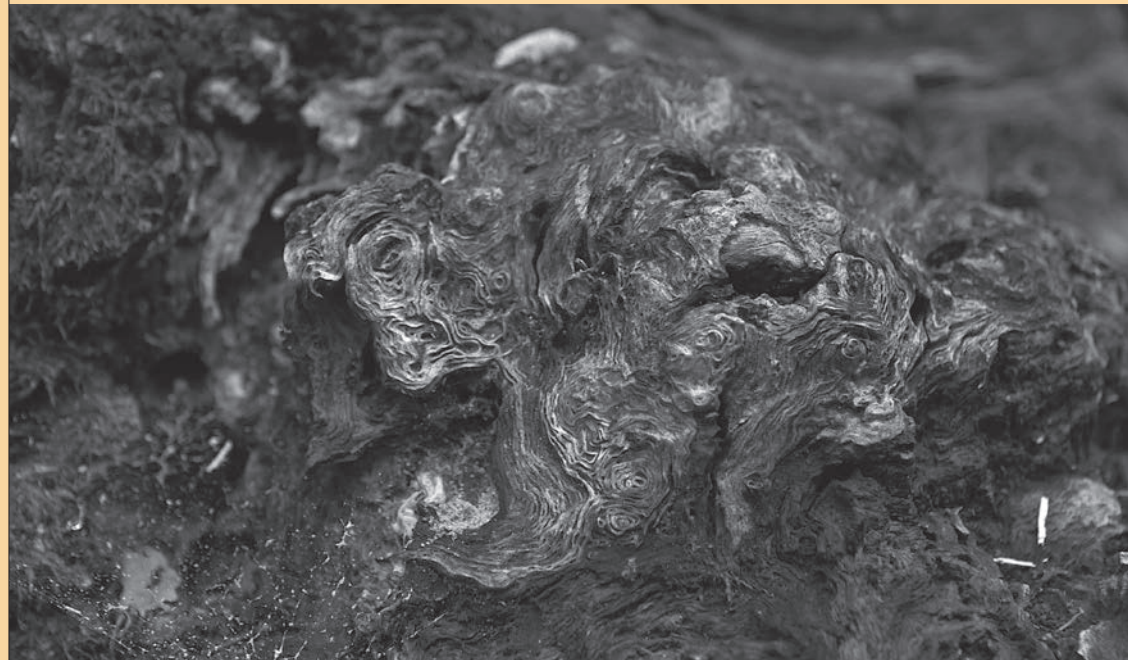
\* **What are these artworks about?**

The film is about a blind man (Osman Porcha, 60) who has a small garden on his balcony. The protagonist wants to create a paradise out of it. But the film not only depicts an encounter with a person, with his voice, not only shows how he spends his time and in which rooms—it is a montage of images that have no connection with the story or the protagonist, which introduce a completely new perspective or temporality. It is about my journey to this person and a social space that has come in between.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

I experience different or unexpected moments and make documentary films from them. I study people and landscapes, and this attentive observation triggers an image or various images in my mind. An image, for me, is the discovery of a still

(in)visible form. From each image, I learn something about the world and something about myself. But learning is also a reaction, a necessity in living together. Images are not just insights about the world, rather they are also insights about their authors—a will is reflected in these images, a moral goal, a declaration from oneself. But the quality of the image depends on distance. Not a physical distance or social distancing, but the liberation from any moral objective. My aim is to achieve pure seeing/hearing through the camera and editing—a point zero of documentary film—although this is virtually impossible.



Cho Beom-Seok, *Prägung* [Imprint], 2021 (film stills)



# Jojo Gronostay

was born in Hamburg in 1987 and lives in Vienna.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

I am represented with three works in the exhibition—*Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*, *Untitled*, and *Chateau Rouge Displays*. *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet* is a floor installation with sculptures: pants scattered over gray felt carpets. They are part of my project DEAD WHITE MEN'S CLOTHES. DWMC is an art project and fashion label. The label's name originates from the Ghanaian expression "Obroni Wawu": when the first waves of second-hand clothes arrived from the Global North in Ghana in the 1970s as help aid, the clothing was of such a high quality that locals assumed that the previous owner must have died. The photo installation *Untitled* consists of edited photographic imagery taken in Barcelona of the hands of street merchants. They hold ropes connected to blankets, which serve as display surfaces for their products, mostly fake designer goods. The ropes are an aid used to pack up things as quickly as possible, should the police turn up at the scene. *Chateau Rouge Displays* is a photographic work, too. The photos show typologies of abandoned cardboard tables, which I found in the eighteenth district near the Chateau Rouge metro station in Paris. The cardboard boxes were used as pedestals for the presentation of pirated merchandise.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

The works pose questions about hierarchies (between the Global South and the Global North and between "high" and applied arts), identity (my own and

the collective), power, and value. Two aesthetics collide in *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*: the cheap office (non-)aesthetic of the tiling and the bleached look of upcycled secondhand clothes. Through the cropped detail and the technique, *Untitled* transforms the holding hands of the street vendors, which are intended to present but also protect their goods, into abstract and quasi mannerist gestures. In their diversity and multiplication, they become an alphabet of signs. In *Chateau Rouge Displays*, precarious sales pedestals become fragile (and precious) architectures.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

In my work, I deal with notions of identity, display, and "recycling." It is important to me to create works that are not clearly categorizable. They are intended to illustrate the complex and paradoxical nature of the relationship between Europe and Africa. Furthermore, I am interested in concepts of value and economy as well as spiritual, human, and material exchanges in different social contexts.



top: Jojo Gronostay, *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*, 2020 (detail),  
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter

down: Jojo Gronostay, *Untitled*, 2022 (detail), Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter



# Ani Gurashvili

was born in Tbilisi in 1990 and lives in Vienna.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks presented?**

The works presented in the show are a group of oil paintings that have been executed during the last couple of years. They do not work together as a series, but they form a connection and strengthen each other. Their hanging can change according to the space in which they are presented. Each new constellation offers new storylines.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

These works explore the narrative potential of painting as well as the convention of representation by creating semi-identifiable spaces, shifting perspectives, and focusing on new unexpected angles. The paintings are built on contradictory strategies and effects (switches): finding and hiding; locking and unlocking; zooming in and zooming out; inspecting inside and outside, and, sometimes, in-between. My paintings aspire to create the effect of a reflection in an obsidian mirror in which light is powerful enough to glow and illuminate dark surfaces. To follow this light allows the discovery of new shapes and new spaces.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

I am fascinated by humanity's tireless attempts throughout history to communicate with the supernatural and to self-empower through magical thinking. My interest is rooted in speculative fiction—mainly feminist science fiction—female surrealist painting, as well as anime, and role-playing game aesthetics. I consider

these references as tools, and I like to mix them in a syncretic and sometimes opulent visual language, to build otherworldly and yet familiar multilayered spaces. My works are neither narrative nor illustrative, they are merely a grouping of idiosyncratic symbols that gather together in the process of painting.



Ani Gurashvili, *Sea Smoke*, 2020

# Julia Hohenwarter

was born in Vienna in 1980 and lives in Vienna.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

I was invited to work on the display for the show, which turned out to appear more like a wall painting that alternates its status between being present and absent, between being seen and being sensed. The idea behind the curatorial invitation was to find a way to structure the space without building separating walls. This was achieved by simply animating the surfaces of the existing architecture to create a display that would at once frame and support each artwork, offer a subtle way to identify the artists behind the artworks through colors, and give an orientation for the visitors to navigate in space.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

I wanted to relate to something already in the space: the floor stands out with its waxed surface, a finish that suggests intimacy and domesticity. My work is titled *Skirting Board*, which actually describes an element that includes the floor. Most of my work is rather black or in the natural color of the material. But this time, I decided on colors that arise from the reflection of the lights off the wooden floor of the exhibition space. The color fields—each of them having the same width but different heights according to the artworks displayed on them—have overlapping parts and gaps of different intensities. The height contributes to the interpretation of a skirting board, which often has pompous edges and does not end with a clear line, as a horizon does. I like the soft focus. The overlaps are the waxed parts

of the wall; they structure the space and protect or highlight moments of joining. The perception of the work depends on the angle from which one looks at it. Because of its flickering, it is shifting constantly. For good reason, the ancient Greeks called color “pharmakon”: the meaning is paradoxical and can be translated as artificial color, remedy, poison, drug, charm, or medicine. This work is about the communal relationship of parameters of space in a site-responsive way: the wall, the floor, the corner, the surface, and the tactility.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

My interests are concentrated on classic sculptural questions, such as gravity, connectedness, absence, and presence. I focus on the tense relations between empowerment and spatialization; therefore, I introduce strategies to capture space. I think of space from the center rather than from its boundaries and reflect upon possibilities to stretch it here and there and shift its margins. In my way of working, I like to emphasize the volatility and precarity, the solidary moment in the material, the stiffening and the occupying of spaces. That is all in a constant process of change, as is the instability and fragility of reality. For me, this means dealing with a "site-responsive" instead of "site-specific" concept: my sculptures and installations explore sites as the private, the institutional, the public, and the social.



both: Julia Hohenwarter, *Skirting Board*, 2022 (details), photos: Julian Feritsch



# Lukas Kaufmann

was born in Klagenfurt in 1993 and lives in Vienna.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

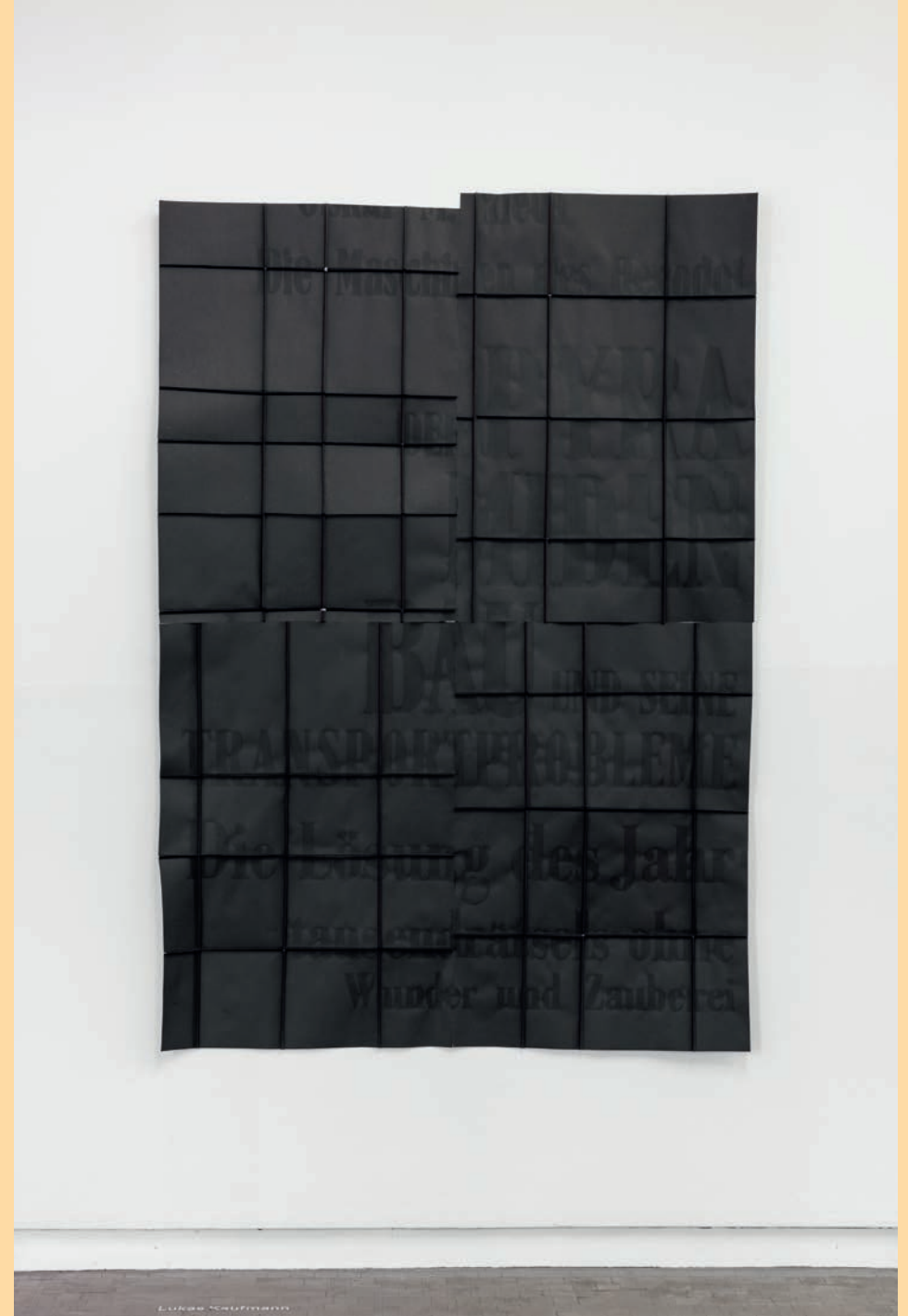
Work excerpts from two ongoing series of small and large format watercolors as well as prints on folded paper are included in the exhibition. The relationship between the ethereal pictorial space and the image carrier, namely the superimposed relief grid and the surfaces in between, forms the basis of the series.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

The coupling of the work steps and production techniques makes the synergistic link between spatial and psychological dimensions tangible. In its lying position during the work process, the folded sheet of paper resembles a landscape. The fields become flooded basins in which water and color merge into seas, dry and become swamps. The seams are like dams. As the watercolors are applied, the fibers of the paper soften, and the sheet loses its smooth regularity and tension. With the segmentation of the formats and motifs, the relationship between outside and inside, so to speak, or before and behind is destabilized. In the layering of paint on the paper and the quality of the paint layers, the application, the absorption and repulsion of pigment dissolved in water, certain levels of the pictorial space are at once concealed and revealed. The relationship of the grid to the motif is equally ambivalent. In keeping with the relief, it seems to thrust to the front of the image, partially obscuring while fixing it in place.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

The presented selection of works is derived, above all, from the potential in the simultaneous mystification and demystification of contents, motifs, and words. Therein also resides a connection to the individual work steps and the interplay between concealing and revealing.



Lukas Kaufmann, o.t. (*betweenbetween II*), 2022



# Sunny Pfalzer

was born in Vienna in 1991 and lives between Berlin and Ternitz.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

*Cuddle Slugs* are textile sculptures, composed of the costumes of my previous performance *Las Trenzas* (2017), which took place in the public metro system in Mexico City. The costumes protected the performers from bruises as well as from being identified, and they enhanced the formation of a collective body in public space. I cut up the performers' outfits and assembled them to form creatures, resembling slugs lazily lingering in the room. Thus, the collective body is transformed into a sculpture. The form is inspired by a former accidental roommate, a *Limax maximus*—a leopard slug—and their fascinating reproduction ritual in which alien-like ice-blue leaves emerge from their heads.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

During performance, the body is active, but after the adrenaline rush comes the need to lie down and rest. My textile sculptures share that experience, inviting the visitors to cuddle, lounge, and watch a video together.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

Between two bodies lies a boundary, an interface. This is the surface onto which I project poetry, performance, and textile sculpture. Unfurling from the skein of lived experience, I weave together my activist background, artistic research into history and politics, as well as popular visual culture. My methodology builds on embodied and representative attributes of protests,

the commonalities of cheerleaders and hooligans, and the possibility of turning “being together” into a tool for empowerment. Work ethics and friendship underly my practice.



both: Sunny Pfalzer, *Cuddle Slugs*, 2020 (details)

# Nora Severios

was born in Vienna in 1986 and lives in Vienna.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?**

*Itchy and Scratchy* features paintings of three wild animals in the moment of scratching themselves. The painting material consists of nettle fibers dyed with vegetable dyes, arranged and fixed on woven nettle fabric. In *Schulen über der Erde* [Airs above the Ground], colored ceramic sculptures stand on the floor and are supported by hand-spun strings made of banana fiber, rose fiber, merino wool, flax fiber, cashmere wool, mulberry silk, baby camel wool, tussah silk, yak hair, baby alpaca wool, kid mohair, wild silk, and angora wool. The strings were dyed with madder root, gallnuts and iron (II) sulfate, pomegranate peels, onion peels, hibiscus flowers, dyer's broom, and lady's mantle.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

In the ongoing series *Itchy and Scratchy*, each painting depicts a wild animal; the painting medium and image motif are complementary. I am interested in capturing comprehensible and emphatic moments in the typically distant encounter between wildlife and humans. The process of twisting the body and scratching, in which an itch impulse is replaced by pain, provides a common ground between humans and wildlife. The grooming, braiding, and knotting of a horse's mane and tail became another area of interest in this context. Tail gaiters—leather bags used to tie up the horse's tail (to prevent the horse from stepping on it)—were the departure point for the ceramic sculptures in *Schulen über der Erde* [Airs above the Ground]. To

secure the ceramic figures from falling, I use thin strings spun with a hand spindle to pull them into a predetermined position. In the installation, I take the conscious risk that the strings might not withstand the weight of the ceramic pieces, rip apart, and subsequently let the ceramic fall. My ceramic figures perform backward bends, have a spine, and rest on a support. The time-consuming, manual twisting of different plant and animal fibers into strings reflects my interest in rotational movements, endless repetitions, and in experiencing and appropriating originality.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

In the works on display, I focus on the diverse contexts of life and points of contact between species, for example, the relationship between wildness and taming. I try to grasp both the cultural and technical dimensions while also experiencing and getting into the spirit of old techniques. The absurdity and simultaneous appeal in activities like studying and applying ancient craft techniques fascinate me as much as the results. My goal is to create a relationship with my environment by physically and investigatively probing such fields of interest in their origins and individual aspects.



top: Nora Severios, *Itchy & Scratchy*, 2022

down: Nora Severios, *Schulen über der Erde* [Airs above the Ground], 2022 (detail)



# Anna Spanlang

was born in Grieskirchen in 1988 and lives in Vienna.

## \* Could you briefly describe the artworks you presented?

I present two videos as well as prints from video stills. *CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria* is a video essay comprised of eleven chapters, which are played in a random sequence and projected on the screen. Part of the title refers to a line of lyrics from a song by Mexican artist Vivir Quintana—it is sung at rallies against femicide. The other moving image work is the video to the track *AUTO* by KLITCLIQUE from 2019, one of four videos we have made together to date. The third work, *You and Me 1*, consists of four prints from my mobile phone video archive in the time frame 2010 till today.

## \* What are these artworks about?

*CEREAL / ...* presents serial snapshots that depict a search for the poetic aesthetics of everyday video recordings in both private and public spaces: premiere party, film sets, friendships, abortion, dancing, protest, mom, not at home, skateboarding, border fences. I work with the filmed material and intentionally distort it. The same goes for the music video *AUTO* made in collaboration with the artists from KLITCLIQUE. It is composed of “men and cars” internet video found footage—it is about men who drive cars. *You and Me 1* features stills that document outtakes from video footage. They happen when I press the REC button, something now commonplace for most people equipped with camera phones. What follows: sifting, sorting, and reassembling.

## \* What are your main interests in your artistic practice?

My artistic practice also involves asking myself about one to 1,000 questions each and every day. As an artist living in Europe, I am in the privileged situation of being able to address these questions in my work. I am fascinated by the scope in rearranging and reinterpreting everyday situations. This process is for me. Then I like to share the results. The best things typically come about when I share one of these creation processes with Katrina Daschner, KLITCLIQUE, or all the extremely talented women\* in my surroundings, and something new becomes of it: a film shoot, a new episode of *Green Scream* with G-udit, or ceramics.



top: Anna Spanlang, *CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria*, 2022 (video still)

down: Anna Spanlang, *You & Me 1*, 2022



# Chin Tsao

was born in Taipei in 1989 and lives in Vienna and Taipei.

\* **Could you briefly describe the artworks presented?**

In my works, I am interested in fluid identities. Reality is constantly shifting; I use personal narratives to reassemble it from a perspective informed by current happenings. In the exhibition at Kunsthalle Wien, I show several sculptural works—made in ceramic, porcelain, or epoxy resin—and one photograph, as well as my most recent video installation, *The Land of Promise*.

\* **What are these artworks about?**

The selected sculptures refer to both the contexts of chinoiserie and Art Deco. Chinoiserie is a European style of decoration, the origin and development of which are part of a series of artistic and commercial exchanges between Europe and the Far East. Exchanges between civilizations that are distant and fundamentally different in their perception of the world, but which nonetheless met with a certain degree of success in the eighteenth century. Art Deco—one of the first international art movements—became a symbol of optimistic luxury during the Great Depression. I find it interesting how both aesthetics represented peak optimism and ornamentation in Europe and America at a time when their economies were declining and their geopolitical power was shifting. With my ceramic sculptures inspired by these styles, I am interested in creating an anachronistic moment, caught between ironic nostalgia and futuristic exoticism, while simultaneously putting into question the cultural appropriation and exploitation by the West in history and in the present.

*The Land of Promise* is a series of speculative science fiction, which reflects our current techno-culture. Techno-culture, a notion brought to the fore by the cyberpunk and electronic music movements in the 1980s, among others, acknowledges the cultural dimension of technology, the technological dimension of all culture, and the indivisibility of both realms.

\* **What are your main interests in your artistic practice?**

In general, my work is an aesthetic and political position on the accelerationist pace the world is currently taking: either to put an end to technology or to foster the coming of technological transhumanism. On the one hand, I try to challenge the passive adaptation to technology, and on the other hand, the complete alienation from technology. I am particularly interested in the complex relations between bodies and technology, between the potential of transformation and the risk of normalized enhancement. Through my own experience and storytelling, as well as through music and pop cultural tropes, I try to find a new perspective on the complex relations between technology, culture, economy, and the body.



top: Chin Tsao, *if you just want to disappear from ...*, 2020 (detail), Courtesy Jessica Nam Kim; Chin Tsao, *The Land of Promise*, 2021–ongoing (detail)  
down: Chin Tsao, *POPPY & PHOBIC*, 2019



Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022





Chin Tsao, *The snake will fix the sky with magic stones*, 2020. Presented on: Päivi Vähälä, 33 Berge [33 Mountains], 1981, Collection and Archive, University of Applied Arts Vienna, installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022





Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022



left: Lukas Kaufmann, o.t. (*betweenbetween III*), 2022,  
right: Lukas Kaufmann, *gunpowder (betweenbetween I)*, 2021





Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022









Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022



Anna Spanlang, *CEREAL / Soy Claudia, soy Esther y soy Teresa. Soy Ingrid, soy Fabiola y soy Valeria*, 2022  
together with: Sunny Pfalzer, *Cuddle Slugs*, 2020, installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021,  
Kunsthalle Wien 2022



# Conversation with the artists

## ARTISTIC LABOR IN TIMES OF PANDEMIC

You did your diploma at the Akademie and the Angewandte in 2021, meaning that your last academic year was during the first waves of Covid. What affected you the most, as an arts student, during the pandemic?

**Diana Barbosa Gil** \* I've never been lonelier than I was during this time. It was difficult to keep building up so much faith and hope for a work that might not get much publicity or that could have been canceled at any time. During this time, people were constantly under pressure, fearing for money and health and hoping for the new city funds that would come with the new Covid waves. So you were caught in a loop of complete absurdity as a working-class person with basic questions of creation and existence. At the same time, there was a lot of violence going on in the world and things had only gotten worse for a large part of the world. Meanwhile, I sat at the "Art Student in Vienna Bubble" and thought I was so special because I had *The best Idea ever* (title of the diploma work). So somehow it was completely insane and ignorant. But I liked the risk that you had to take because it required you to convince yourself that it was important to put this work out there at this time. What got me through the pandemic was that I had such good, close friends and we really tried everything to make each other feel safe and secure. Without Viktoria, Michael, Anna, Franziska, Jon, Daniel, Lucia, Eva, Amar, and Antonia, I would never have survived a time like this. And all the artists who also had their struggles. Sometimes I even borrowed money from them. Thank you for your love and help!

**Anna Spanlang** \* I can relate to many things Diana is talking about. On some days it felt completely weird to work on an art project, in my case my diploma. I was guided through it thanks to my professor Dorit Margreiter, and other close souls: Judith, Katrina, and Patrick. But while this pandemic has been happening, the problems within our *Zusammenleben* [global community] got more visible: the violence against women—in Austria but also worldwide—the Latin American feminist movement *Ni Una Menos* [not one (woman) less]; the underpaid people in "care work", in our



Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

healthcare system; the patriarchal capitalist system to which we have become accustomed; the non-existing level of honesty and empathy of our so called *Volksvertreter*—politicians, who live in our TV sets. I think at some point, it just gets to be too much at the same time. The infinite press conferences turned into white-male-power shows ... nobody could watch anymore. I recorded some of the footage for instance and used it as a green-screen background for our web series *Green Scream*—created during the lockdowns—which you can access on YouTube and IGTV.

**Cho Beom-Seok** \* The financial problem.

**Nora Severios** \* During my years of study, I very much enjoyed our weekly class meetings, which included presenting and discussing works of students in an exhibition space. Even though I sometimes did, I never liked attending the online lectures, meetings, or even worse, online presentations of art. On the one hand, it's a waste of time to watch art online, since you never get the experience that you are meant to have; on the other hand, it's better than nothing. The same relates to exhibitions and museums that were closed during lockdowns.

**Ani Gurashvili** \* During the first lockdown, I had to continue working at home. This is just an advantage of a painting medium—not to be dependent on different workshops. Despite the continuous working process and support from Henning Bohl’s class, it was not easy to adapt to the new form of study and find the motivation to make a graduation show online, not to be seen in person by the jury itself. So, I postponed the diploma for a semester and summer turned out to be way more tolerable. But I have to say, I am thankful for how Angewandte dealt with the problems—access to the ateliers was prioritized and resumed, even during holidays, way earlier than other in-person operations.

\*

**During the pandemic, art and culture, coined as “non-essential” domains, were relegated very far down in the official rating of human needs—at the same level as entertainment, if not behind it. As a consequence, artistic labor became even more precarious. As young artists, did you specifically sense that? And did this change your own perception of artistic labor, as well as of art in general and its role in society?**

**DBG** \* Because I’ve always had to move through moments and phases of life that required a kind of improvisation, it wasn’t as heavy for me as it was for some artists, who were forced to come to a standstill immediately when workshops or hardware stores, etc., were closed. I think as an artist you have to be able to react to the conditions that you are given. You make art out of necessity; it’s not just a job, it’s also a decision. It sounds strict, but it has often helped me not to let art define its value from the outside. But for me, preparing a meal is also a work of art. So it’s part of life itself. It’s completely absurd to think that art only happens where there is enough prosperity because that’s where it finds such recognition.

**Chin Tsao** \* I was more expecting that young artists would wake up from the old bubble of fine art. But I didn’t see that happen. It’s brutal to see how helpless the emerging artists are, stuck in between or trying to be Instagram artists (lol). Asking if art is essential in society, which has been asked forever anyway, and it’s still not really answered—it’s just a wrong question. Society is fucked up; I don’t think it’s the artist’s job to fix that. But society is fucked up in some specific way. People should know how interesting/strange/fucked up it is. If you don’t want to know, fine, fair enough, you are free to go. Hey, people out there, you just wanna be normal? What do you mean by being normal? Being normal is so overrated, don’t you know?

I care more if young artists can do things differently and be aware of what is actually coming, as well as how it is affecting our culture with the new politics and economy.

**Lukas Kaufmann** \* Maybe artists from former generations experienced the shift of priorities even stronger than I do. Personally, I still feel “new” to this and probably miss the comparison—or maybe I’m just lacking too much in revolutionary spirit to call for a reevaluation of arts in society. I think it takes time to build an understanding of what a cultural scene means to you and how the relation of community and value is set within. Most importantly, this process raises questions like: Where do you want to attach yourself? Where do you want to make change? Do you want to be a satellite to this world (which is fine, too)?

I just know that valuing my own artistic practice, and the conceptual and manual labor that lies within, is not only essential for my own mental health, but it is also inescapable facing the fact that all aspiring artists start developing their own body of work without any specific economic demand or predetermined market that can provide a secure income. Regarding the capitalistic structures of our societies, this seems quite radical to me.

**NS** \* Those facts are something you feel most when you start committing your time to art.

I got a scholarship for attending the European Forum Alpbach a few years ago; in this context, hierarchies became even more close and realistic and directly thrown against me.

Well, I guess there is possible potential to go in and slowly cause change, but I personally have always chosen making art. For me, it is more important to achieve a certain kind of attitude, rather than adapt other systems with a view to change them. Of course, it is important to stay political and it is important to observe—not only in the arts—but in the end, I know where I want to work.

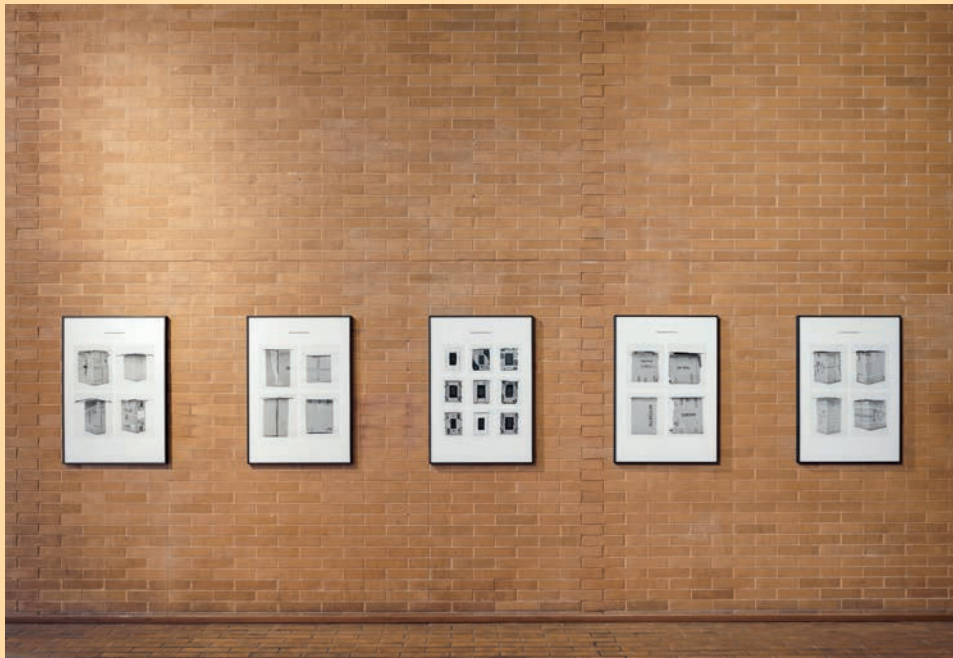
**AG** \* About the relegation very far down in the official rating of human needs, this entertainment label feels absurd, as my personal experience was completely the opposite, after all. At the beginning of the pandemic, with so much confusion, fear, and despair hitting in waves and questioning the art labor ever being relevant again, I would still get up every day and start to work. Discovering that this engine could get going under any circumstances was a beautiful and liberating thing in its strangeness. A lot of my colleagues experienced it in the same way, and it was interesting to have conversations about it. Needless to say, this is not a case of treating/thinking of art practice as therapy or fighting boredom. For that matter, there was enough banana bread to bake and sourdough to grow.



**AS \*** I did not bake a single loaf of bread, neither banana nor sourdough. I started creating episodes of a web series that my neighbor and colleague G-udit and I produced in our homes turned home studios. When I took a break from editing our raw material into episodes, we spent our time eating really fantastic food, mostly cooked by G-udit. I totally agree with Diana that cooking can be very artistic and keeping up sugar levels within a working progress is essential, too. The best idea (ever?) was to start skateboarding again during the lockdown and yes, I felt and thought about the value of art now and then, maybe also while skateboarding!

**Jojo Gronostay \*** I had never really seen myself as an artist; that changed during the pandemic. With no prospect of exhibitions, I still worked every day. I've found that making art will stay with me my whole life, whether I make money from it or not. Nevertheless, I find it difficult to project my own experiences onto society. Art is a basic need for me, but I partly grew up in an environment in which it was totally unimportant. Maybe how art has been treated during the pandemic even reflects its actual standing in society. I don't know.

Jojo Gronostay, *Chateau Rouge Displays*, 2020, Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter, installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022



\*

**More pragmatically related to your artistic practice, how did and does the pandemic change your practice, beyond the psychological trauma? How permeable is your practice to this very pressing current context? Did you, for instance, change formats or media you are working with, did it influence your production rhythm, did you stop working because you couldn't, did it shift the topics you are interested in?**

**NS \*** In my artistic practice, I do spend my studio time mostly alone, so the pandemic and its limitations had no great influence on my studio work or topics of interest. Especially in the first lockdown, working on art was the only meaningful thing to do all day and night, excessively using this phase to fill the time I had on my own. What I really missed and still miss is the exchange and influence from other artists and artworks, which happened before the pandemic more often and was especially more carefree.

**LK \*** Ironically, it was a strong feeling that I needed a moment to process the current situation that kept me from continuing my artistic practice. It led to a moment of stillness; a stillness that can be quite destabilizing when you are about to do your diploma, which for many art students is a moment of manifesting or refining the practice you have built over the last few years. In retrospect, I can say that the destabilization of habits, beliefs, or simply the way of producing works very much shaped my further process.

Thinking back on my last year, I felt quite paralyzed by the incongruence regarding my perception of time. More specifically, by the feeling of running out of time towards a deadline on one side and being confronted with seemingly infinite amounts of time spent at home due to Covid-19 restrictions, combined with feelings of boredom on the other side.

I think I hadn't experienced boredom for a very long time, and I probably mostly remembered it from my childhood. In the past, I always considered the feeling of "not knowing what to do with yourself" as an initial experience to start an artistic practice in the first place.

I guess I'm not very good at answering pragmatically—but yes, I changed to more handy formats as well.

**CT \*** It does affect my work progress, as I practice in sculpture. For me, sculpture has always been working with the context of space. So during lockdown, it doesn't really make sense for me to produce sculptures, as there is no physical space. Meanwhile, I have always been interested in digital culture. The

pandemic actually pushed this part of my interest further. I find in the European fine art scene that there is actually a huge blank space around contemporary digital culture and the new global politics. I'm really bored with the same old European colonization/post-colonization theory. History is good, but you guys, Europe is not *the* world superpower at the moment. Any kind of ignorance and generalization is dangerous, and the worst is lack of imagination.

By digital culture, I don't only mean AI art, visualization technology, NFTs, social media art, etc., but also critical thinking about media theory in relation to cultural images, the media transition between generations, imagining the future and techno-politics/economy between world superpowers.

I mean, at least thinking about who produces these technologies and where, all the white IT dudes mapping the magic for the techno-giants, and how the American value system is represented on social media.

I think a lot of topics have been processed very intensely, especially about digitalization and globalization. It shows the change in a very direct way. It questions the previous theories and practices of institutions. For emerging artists, I think, it's on one hand very frustrating, but on the other hand, it's a critical challenge we have to deal with and maybe it is a possibility to bring something new.

**AS \*** As I mentioned above, we started this web series *Green Scream* where we talk about menstruation, abortion, *Gastro-Gutscheine* [Gastro Voucher] from the mayor's office, the patriarchal system. We invite guests (Florentina Holzinger, Ash B., Denice Bourbon, Kenneth Goldsmith, Josef Jöchl, etc.) who also talk about their daily lives. We do all of that within a humorous mindset, and afterwards go skateboarding with a smash-the-patriarchy-attitude. *Kunst muss gar nichts!* [Art doesn't have to be anything!] The pandemic does not change my thoughts and fight against this system. In the media, 2022 shouldn't be so much about the pandemic; there will be a climate catastrophe, while white-male-power men battle with their attention-seeking penises for everything other than justice for gender, for nations (if needed), for coexisting on this earth. It is so pathetic, and we don't have time for that!

**JG \*** Working in collaboration is an important part of my practice, and I actually continued to work in this way during the pandemic. The production rhythm just got slower, which I didn't necessarily find negative.

\*

**How did you finance your studies, before and during the pandemic? Do you have teaching positions? Day jobs? Financial support from third persons? Did you regularly sell your works and did that bring you a kind of financial stability?**

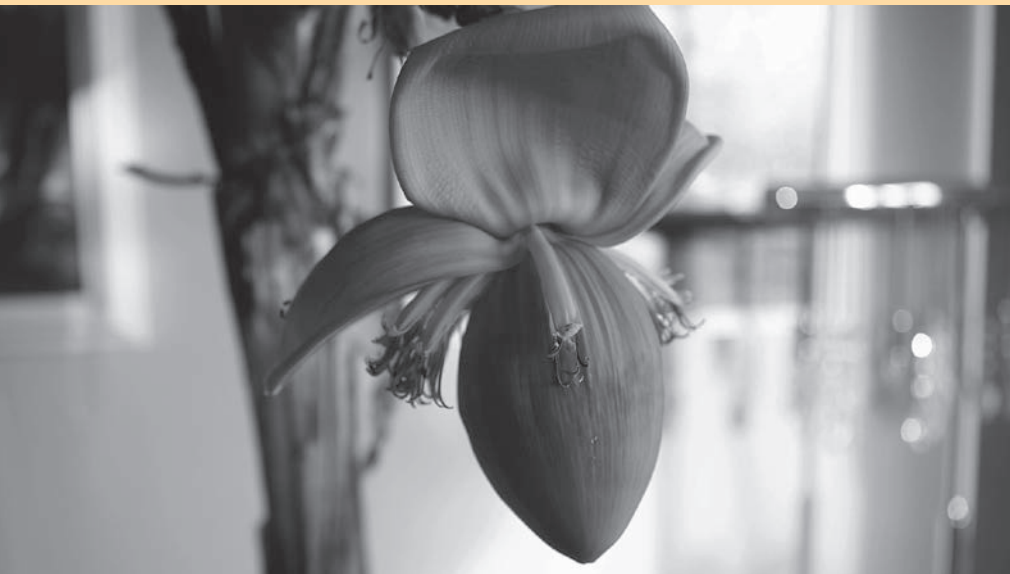
**AS \*** *Kinderbeihilfe* [child allowance], *Studienbeihilfe* [study grant], a lot of odd jobs, paid projects with artist colleagues. I managed film award ceremonies for FC Gloria and an international youth media festival: YOUKI. I fried fries at Welser Volksfest to buy a MacBook for editing videos. I teach film in *Berufsschulen* [vocational schools] with my colleague Liesa Kovacs from time to time and I have worked on Katrina Daschner's film sets for many years now. I still take things from my parents' fridge back to Vienna when I visit them (thanks, Mum).

**JG \*** I worked in a techno club for a long time and actually financed my entire studies with it. The job is gone for the time being; fortunately I got support from the state. Unlike many other art students, my parents never had the opportunity to support me financially. I think the time I gained and the opportunity to focus during the pandemic was extremely important for my artistic development.

**CT \*** My parents supported me for a few years. As a non-European, it's almost impossible for me to find a job in Austria due to my visa. The Austrian job system is really good at fucking up foreigners. AMS [Austrian Public Employment Service] and MA35 [Immigration and Citizenship Office]—these places are two gates of hell. I have been unemployed for ages, since I got fired from a fake Asian restaurant (I hate that place). I miraculously survived through different sources of income, including my own tax money, in the past few years.

**CBS \*** Of course I was fired during the pandemic, like others. I had no money, not only for my daily life and study, but also for my documentary film. Thankfully, I got financial support from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, KSVF (Künstler-Sozialversicherungsfonds) [Artist Social Insurance Fund], Interspot Film GmbH, AMS, and my family. I also got so much support from Thomas Heise, Isabella Kresse, Sibylle Schwarzkogler, and Bettina Henkel from the film class, Veronika Dirnhofer and Steffi Alte from the drawing class, Rudolf Pototschnig, Joseph Rudolf, Erich Nikolasch, Alexandra Nikolasch, Richard Hilbert, Gilbert Marx, Thomas Pflieger, Markus Hilbert, Harald Krobath, Victor Alberto Alario Del Rio, Park Hisu, Keiko Nakama, facultas druckt., Austrian Film Museum, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the Republic of Austria, YunJong-Seok, Yang Kyung-Soo, and the protagonist of the documentary *Prägung* [Imprint] (2021), Osman Porca. I have to say to all of you, thank you.





Cho Beom-Seok, *Prägung* [Imprint], 2021 (film still)

**NS \*** I am in the lucky position to have a crisis-proof part-time job in an elementary school. Even before the pandemic, this job gave me the opportunity to have enough stability for my artistic work.

**LK \*** I teach in TU Wien's architecture department.

**AG \*** I started supporting myself through selling my works only in the last couple of years. Luckily and ironically, it lined up with the beginning of the pandemic when it was so stressful to think about finances. Before that, I had a lot of family support. Sadly, due to bureaucracy, it is hardly possible to get by without third-person assistance and to have a job with enough income as a non-EU person with the limited rights of a student residence permit.

**DBG \*** I used the time to do all the things I had never got around to because I always had jobs on the side and could hardly keep up. For the first time there was so much funding that I could really take a deep breath and even intentionally quit my job as an antiques seller. It was sort of a very important decision at the time, which was very risky for me because I was so dependent on the money. I agree with Lukas about the idea of boredom, but for me it was more about the relaxation of having no more fear of existence because everything was in the doldrums anyway.

Besides selling antiques, I've been a babysitter, cleaner, janitor, actress, singer, author, and got help from the German government. I know it might be strange to say this here, but I've had lots of trouble with my visa and affiliation issues. Especially when it comes to cultural differences, and this goes through and with the language of things and their values. In abstract terms, I spent most of my time studying to acquire everything that was possible—everything that was Western, professional, and recognized, so that I could survive on my own in Europe. At that time, the class for transmedia art under Prof. Brigitte Kowanz was really my home and with it my colleagues, who had a tremendous impact on me.

## THE ROLE OF ART INSTITUTIONS IN THE SUPPORT OF YOUNG ARTISTIC PRACTICES

**How do you relate to public art institutions as young artists? What has been your experience with them so far?**

**JG \*** During my studies, I occasionally dealt with public art institutions. The small budgets of many institutions are very difficult for young artists. The desire to make my own work visible has often led me to self-exploitation. Nevertheless, I think they are important!

**AG \*** I did not have much experience working with institutions either, but I agree with Jojo that most budgets are limited and contribution is driven by the motivation of collaboration and the opportunity to show the work. There's always a danger to feeling exploited in the end. Though I do not question their importance and function.

**LK \*** It took me a while to understand that there are also politics within the landscape of public institutions. Especially in Vienna, where the density of art-related institutions seems very high, it can be difficult to get an overview regarding their dynamics, alignments, and potential interplay. I think there are people that perceive institutions' programs as hermetic modalities, or at least it seems difficult to initiate an overarching discussion on what is shown and what is not.

\*

**Do you need public institutions as young artists? Do you see them as potential allies?**

**AS \*** Yes!

**JG** \* Yes.

**CT** \* Hell yeah.

**CBS** \* Yes.

**LK** \* Yes and yes. I think they are essential, not only for young artists. Allyship between artists and institutions can only exist if it is mutual, I guess.

**NS** \* Yes, I am learning a lot from them, in several ways.

**AG** \* Definitely!

**DBG** \* It's a mystery to me why the institutions don't work and interact with the art schools much more. That's probably why there are so many off-spaces in Vienna, which in my opinion represent something of an intermediate step. Maybe too few curators are interested in the scene in Vienna or don't really get what's going on in Vienna. But Kunsthalle Wien is an exception because they really try a lot in that regard.

What is missing so much in Vienna for me is rather a cohesion among the artists to create something that might even represent new movements. There is such a strong urge to adapt; one could get the impression that risking something that may not appear so polished and bourgeois cannot be an option at first. I often ask myself whether this has to do with a real, existential fear or maybe a psychological one of our generation.

All avant-garde movements had in common that they tried to make themselves independent of the institutions and then ended up there again because of the historical events that followed. I think it really depends on whether the institution is able to maintain a certain independence from the state, politics, and the market, and is able to be a home for the arts so that it can be a protective ally.

## WORKING ON EXHIBITIONS

**What are the last exhibitions you took part in and liked the most, and where did they take place?**

**AS** \* My work is mostly shown in cinemas and international film festivals—recently: Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, Diagonale'21, Kassel Dokfest, Annecy International Animation Film Festival 2021, Mezipatra Queer Film Festival in Prague. Some of my work is managed by sixpackfilm. I also regularly present my work in a school context,

as I love (and at once fear) screenings with pupils, because they are so honest and straightforward.

**CBS** \* It was at bAU, an exhibition space in Vienna. It was a beautiful space for my installations and photos, presented with Miriam Meyer's works. And also the Austrian Film Museum was the ideal space for the projection of my four documentaries.

**JG** \* I had my first solo show at Galerie Hubert Winter in Vienna (January 14 – March 5, 2022).

**AG** \* The last exhibition was my first solo show in New York at the Harkawik gallery. It was very exciting to work on this collaboration after graduation, but at the same time, it felt surreal because I could not travel to see it myself due to the Covid regulations and visa-issuing delays.

**LK** \* I was very happy to be part of *Chambre d'Ami-xes*, a re-enactment of the seminal show from 1986, *Chambres d'Amis*. This project, organized by Monika Georgieva and Aaron Amar Bhamra, was very close to my heart since they paid tribute to this historical exhibition in a refined and open way. Even more so, they managed to draw a very sensitive picture of a scene that includes artists, designers, and architects from different generations and backgrounds. As the title already implies, it took place in a private apartment.

Chin Tsao, *The Land of Promise*, 2021–ongoing (detail)





\*

**As winners of the Kunsthalle Wien Prize, the eight of you take part in a group show at Kunsthalle Wien. In the previous editions, only two artists were praised and exhibited. The idea behind it is to foster dialogue and exchange and also to challenge the competitiveness involved in prize-giving. What do you think about exhibiting as collective practice? Did you encounter other artists that you felt close to?**

**DBG \*** Because there are different prize amounts, two out of eight are still the winners. All positions should be treated equally financially. Choosing eight instead of two positions does not necessarily eliminate “competitiveness.” Unfortunately, as young artists, we are also heavily dependent on being recognized and the pressure that arises may not allow us to engage in more collective processes. Often what holds us back is lack of time or experience, and also possibly past disappointments when one has turned to collective processes.

The idea of a collective practice is nice, left-wing, and romantic, but from personal experience, artistic exchange is more feasible in collaborations. The focus is often on one’s own career, as well as the eternal question of authorship, including ego problems. I often think the reason is the image of the genius artist and the catalog on the bookshelf with the bold inscription of a surname. As long as authorship has this status, I’m afraid there won’t be any collective practice here either. After all, the art market also works with idolatry, attribution, and the idea of prestige.

But what happens in the room through the intervention of the curators, this I find very exciting. I think you have to open up and trust the job and the person’s approach. So I think it’s often down to methods that can create collective moments. For this, however, artists would have to have more confidence in their work. I have the feeling that there is a strange distrust amongst artists towards the institution as soon as it tries out new approaches, because one is afraid that the work will be dragged along in the sense of being instrumentalized by “trend themes” and “labels.”

**CT \*** Hey, what was said above, I totally agree that all the artists in the prize should have equal financial support. Especially considering all the artists are in a collective circumstance, it’s definitely not fair. There is for sure room for improvement on the institution side. Personally, I’m happy that the prize includes more artists this year. I found the prize, which has always been a two-person group show, pretty dry in the previous years. I like to see more diversity and dialogue among talented young artists. We have really different practices and interests in relation to the strange time we are living in.

Hey, my ego is bigggg, but a group show doesn’t bother me so far. Only that same old question, why only two of the eight people got da prize money?

**JG \*** I also think it was a good idea to extend the prize to several artists. Although the circumstances with Covid made the collective practice part of the exhibition quite difficult, I find it very interesting to see all these different positions in one space.

**CBS \*** It turned out to be a big exhibition. Unfortunately, I can’t fly there and work on it directly. But my film will find a new balance with various other works. And it becomes a dialogue or a monologue. I look forward to it. This new kind of encounter, in which we have never seen or met each other before, with different artistic forms, could be a pleasure, at least for me.

**AS \*** The expansion to eight positions (instead of two) is great, and necessary in 2022. There are so many talented people out there! That only two people win actual prize money for their diploma, I see as problematic! When I have film projects where funding is involved, no one works unpaid. It can be toxic for collaborations. An art piece, whatever it is, is never just done by a single person. Even if it’s just random people around you who might give you one kick of inspiration, or an answer to a question. I genuinely appreciate working within this group of Kunsthalle Wien Prize. The talks and (Zoom) meetings with the people involved that I’ve had so far are enriching. We share views and shift perspectives into something new—this seems essential somehow: to stay curious.

**NS \*** I do appreciate the new concept of involving more than only two artists. The possibility to work in such a professional way with an art institution as a newly graduated artist feels exceptional. Exhibiting in a collective, having several individual positions that still interlink with each other, gives me the chance to get into an exchange situation, getting to know different ways of dealing with topics of common interest and to discover new possibilities for my own work. Nevertheless, I think it would be more fair to extend this connecting idea to the financial part as well, to share the prize money equally.

\*

**The title of the exhibition, *Handspells*, refers to gestures, signs, and formulas, but also to creation. Artistic and artisanal creation can be seen as spells—a (magic) encounter between the agency of the hand and the agency of the matter. The title also refers to the inscription and traces of gestures, of techniques, of habits, of**

work, on bodies—like in the palm—and that can be read and interpreted. How does the title resonate with you, and how would you read the title of the exhibition in regards to your work specifically?

**CBS \*** For me, *Handspells* as the title of the exhibition has special meaning. Having started my artistic practice as a sculptor, I envisage the process of making documentaries the same way as a process of creating sculptures or installations. I mean, I think and see the world with my hands. Anne and I talked about it in our first Zoom meeting. My hands are not only parts of the body that connect me to the world, but also a source and manifestation of knowledge. Of course, an image or a sound is not touchable like a stone. My way of creating image and sound with my hands is an attempt to track the ungraspable shape, time, and space and to communicate with others. It's a really big part of my decision-making that the image shapes the narration. *Handspells* reflects my work attitude directly.

**NS \*** In the last few years, my artistic interest has led me to very old and original handicraft technologies and topics. Examples are collecting and spinning of plant and animal fibers into threads or extracting pigments from plants. The very time-consuming, liberating, collecting, cleaning, and manufacturing is forcing me to seemingly infinite repetitions of hand movements. Those movements are becoming automated and eventually also disturbing in their consistency. Acts of this kind are allowing me, with physical, especially manual movements, to reach back to origins and to tie onto them. I try to find and understand connections and disjunctions and to develop them further in my artistic language. I want the modified material going into a collaboration with the installation of the objects, including simultaneous support and adjustment, stabilization and precarious positioning.

**CT \*** I have my handicraft skill, but I'm not specially into that. I don't consider myself a handicraft-focused artist. I'm interested in the material history and aesthetic representation. At some point, I hope there will be a 3D printer that can connect to my brain, so that I don't need to go through the whole process. Working with material is part of human culture, giving meaning to something alien to us. That's the fascination, that we can go so far that we even don't recognize what nature is anymore. And the artificiality turns back to us as the most alien creature; we even don't know how to deal with it.

**AG \*** The title is relatable in many ways. How I see it is that the medium of painting offers a way of slowing down time through the



Dana Barbosa Gil, *Figur mit Kind* [Figure with Child], 2021  
(detail of *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best Idea ever], 2021)

process of producing gestures and leaving the traces simultaneously in the role of an executioner and an observer. This process of artistic labor shifting to spell casting and being seen as a generator of “magic” is the magic. Besides, I work very closely with the concept of seeking the supernatural and simulation of other-worldliness in familiar/recognizable settings. *Handspells* feels like an acceptance of many forms as a tool, including divination, and enables dissimilar practices to coexist.

**DBG \*** I think it goes very well with all the works. There's such a strange way of touching and depicting things in all of them. What I really like about our work is the handling of the craft. It has something accessible to everyone and therefore an individual expression that is, of course, very specific to the respective practice.

**LK \*** My works shown in this exhibition result from a sequence of working steps and layers that synergistically intervene with each other to conjure the final image. By conjuring an image, I mean the mystical, as well as the pragmatic aspects I am facing in my decision-making, or simply the preparations that have to be made in order to let an image appear. In a way, it's like calculating with enigmatic variables.



Cho Beom-Seok, *Prägung* [Imprint], 2021, installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

**Diana Barbosa Gil** <sup>72–73</sup>  
**Cho Beom-Seok** <sup>74–75</sup>  
**Jojo Gronostay** <sup>76–77</sup>  
**Ani Gurashvili** <sup>78–81</sup>  
**Lukas Kaufmann** <sup>82–85</sup>  
**Nora Severios** <sup>86–89</sup>  
**Anna Spanlang** <sup>90–93</sup>  
**Chin Tsao** <sup>94–96</sup>



**Diana Barbosa Gil**  
*The best Idea ever*, 2021

Performance text

No grasp of reality, of the sentence types preferred.  
 Everything breaks down to pieces, in contention for  
 a monumental moment.

The poetic speaker says nothing at all.  
 Avant-gardists mix a palette and cast a shadow on  
 the world.  
 Guarding the garden of reference for use when the  
 time comes.

Fetish, Bauhaus, armchair, crime, leitmotif, dance,  
 colonial theft of forms, colors, inheritance. Isolation  
 as concept! Lounge décor by *De Stijl*, new doctrines,  
 exhibitions as “demonstration rooms”.  
 Copying *El Lissitzky* and exhaling so that the angle  
 is no longer quite as he placed it.  
 Names of persons, to be worked through  
 art-historically.

No muse is worthy of him.  
 His charming homosexual gesture settles the  
 matter. Meanwhile, I plan to pass into history as a  
 genius.  
 Humor from the wreckage of my soul.  
 The Alma Mahler doll must be burned, on the street  
 and yes, in full view of the public!

Good riddance to Futurism! Radical failure to grasp  
 responsibility.  
 Let radio and so on be a joke no longer!  
 Eat DADA manifestos for breakfast and demystify  
 genitalia.

From the remnants you find, build sublime, exqui-  
 site models. Offer these to someone with no use for  
 them at all  
 Conquest of inner conformism.  
 Impossibility of conquest.  
 Warn me, wake me up – why even think about the  
 market or trends in art and culture, when the artist  
 is pledged to the work alone?  
 Nothing shall ever become of me!  
*Oh no!*

To project yourself onto political crises.  
 To speak and assert nothing – perfectly normal in  
 our time.  
 To think so as to feel what is really there – perfectly  
 normal in their time.  
 To win admission to the next class.  
 Narcissism and isolation (redundant and  
 necessary)  
 Privacy and recognition  
 To rehearse bread rolls and assert individuality.

It's never enough that you are your self, nexus of  
 what bears down  
 Love wanders the city districts differently.  
 Vienna: elite wastrels flick hair from their faces,  
 excitedly shouting: “what nonsense!”  
 A strip mall for feelings and identities. Elite realism.  
 Exquisite romance always guaranteed.

“The sculpture is not a moment of emergency!”  
 “Nonsense!” Loud buzzing of bumblebees from a  
 distant radio.

The human being inherits and develops systems  
 that reproduce its own cell structure.

Often I was astonished to arrive at ideas that so  
 many before me had already set out. And I assumed  
 them to be mine.

There's no way to steal the horizon from me, right?  
 Because there's no easy way around things to do  
 with class, education and subjective standpoint  
 here either.

Some day I'll eat a blackberry without thinking of  
 it as a secretly poisonous little fruit. How to be  
 everything, without having experienced things  
 before? If only spaces were only ever notional! In a  
 house bespeaking a dreamscape shared by all.









## *Corporate Synthetic Felt Carpet*

I wanted to create a platform or display that could also function as a work of its own. The old synthetic felt carpet tiles don't have the characteristics of antiques because they are functional and too new. It is a serial object but got to authenticity through its used condition. The synthetic panels will still work long after my death, at least that's what the salesman told me. Because of their former placement, the sun, dirt, different use and people walking over it, there are color differences between the panels. I like the idea that the carpet is an assemblage from former interiors of banks and insurance branches that have disappeared in the course of digitalization. Although the synthetic felt panels look neutral they are very specific for certain commercial spaces. The pieces of pine wood for the floor have been cut from leftovers. The material, felt and wood, could be linked to Joseph Beuys work and the idea of the social sculpture, but this time with a "commercial" coating.

The edited pictures on the walls were photographed by me in Barcelona in 2020. I was very interested in the hands of the street vendors, because they reminded me of gestures in old paintings. In their hands they hold ropes that are connected to blankets that serve as displays for their products, mostly fake designer goods. The ropes are a device to pack things as quickly as possible in order to escape from the police. The hand is the complex and primary human tool. With it we manipulate our environment, shape nature into culture, and fulfill our creative mission. Just like an artist, the vendor is a trafficker of ideas. His product is an idea of luxury.

The used jeans, from the brand Dead White Mens Clothes, are bleached with hair dye and stitched with the brand's logo. Dead White Mens Clothes is a hybrid. It is an art project, a clothing brand and a platform. The label's name derives from the Ghanaian term "obroni wawu". Which can be translated into Dead White Mens Clothes. In the 70's, when first waves of second-hand clothes arrived in Ghana from the global north, the locals could not believe that such high quality clothing could be given away for free and assumed that the previous owner must have died.

When I started the project in 2017, I made a clothing collection out of used clothes that I found on the Kantamanto Market in Accra Ghana and brought it back into the western context. DWMC should ask questions about neocolonialism, identity and our value system. The project was also an opportunity

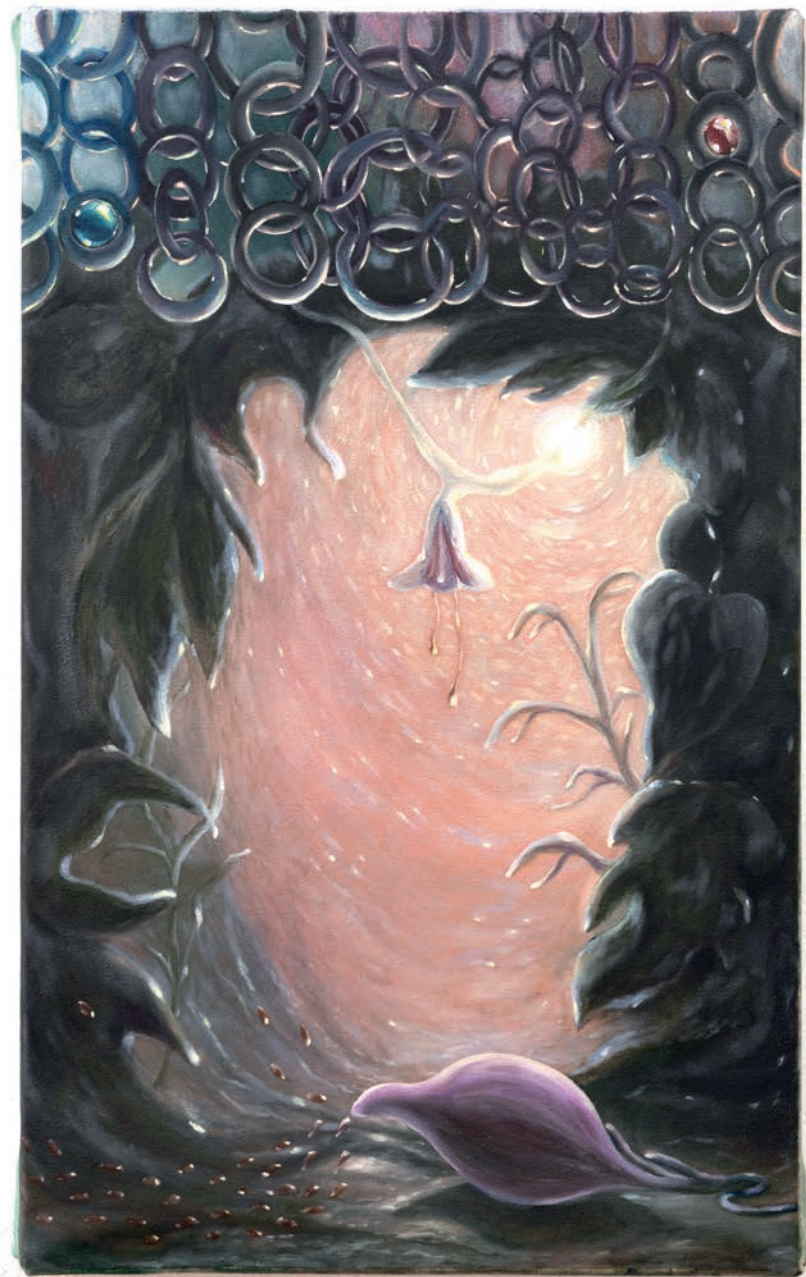
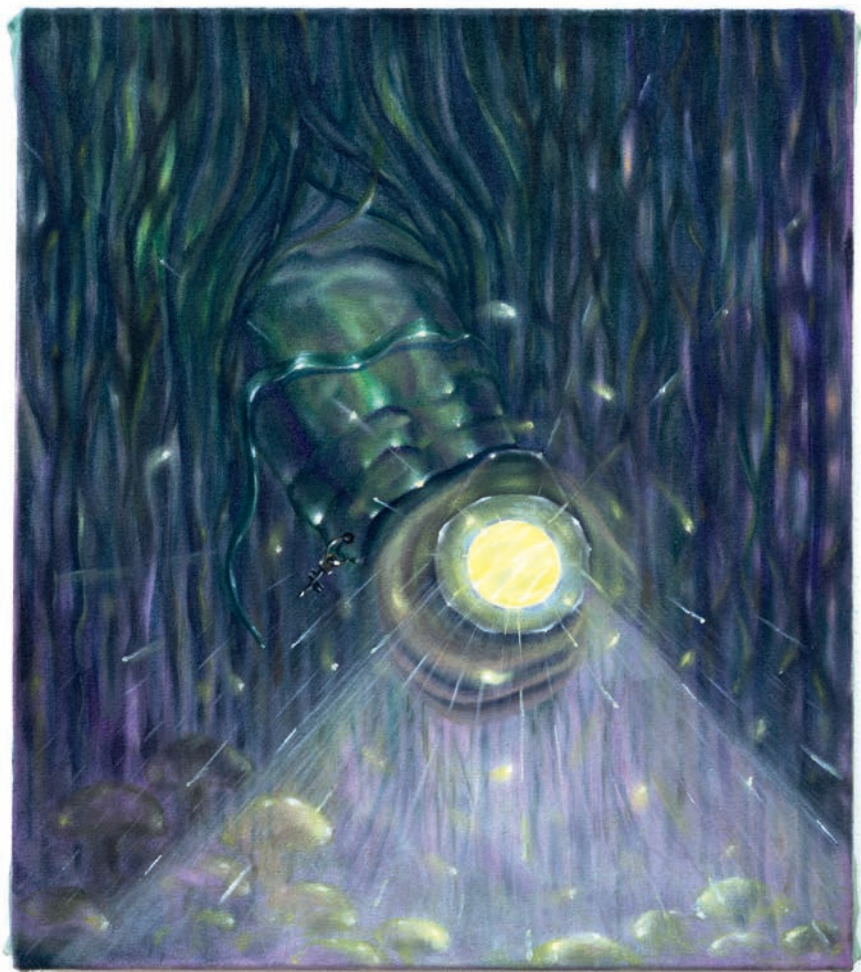
for me to get to know my Ghanaian family better. My mother is German and my father is from Ghana. I grew up with my mother, which is why I felt a little alien to West African culture for a long time.

I used to think art should always stand for itself and not have an agenda. That the uselessness of it is something beautiful. DWMC made me think a little differently about it. I believe it is due to its form as a clothing brand and its appearance in different contexts. Nowadays, a brand should stand for something good, in the best case even be an initiator for social change. So could DWMC be seen as a social sculpture or is it a disguised version of rag picking? Maybe even both? A ragpicker, like Adorno views it, is an ambiguous figure „between recycling entrepreneur and drunken waster, conservative capitalist and subversive outcast.“\* On the one hand rag-picking is a way to save the ecological damage and resources, but it could also be seen as the ultimate form of capitalism, wringing the last drop of exchange value from material that seems already exhausted.

Mary Douglas examined in her book *Purity and Danger* "Dirt can only be dirt when there is a system. Dirt is the byproduct of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. This idea of dirt takes us straight into the field of symbolism and promises a link up-with more obviously symbolic systems of purity". 30 000 second-hand sellers and 500 million used clothes are located at Kantamanto. Here the categorization between dirt and non dirt are rather complicated to classify. There is so much excess of clothing at Kantamanto, that when it rains the retailers and importers begin throwing clothing on to the walkways to soak up the mud, so in parts of the market walking feels shaky. It took me a while to realize that I was walking on earth-colored clothes.

\*Smith, *Trash Culture*, *Scrapbooks: Recycling the Lumpen* in Benjamin and Bataille

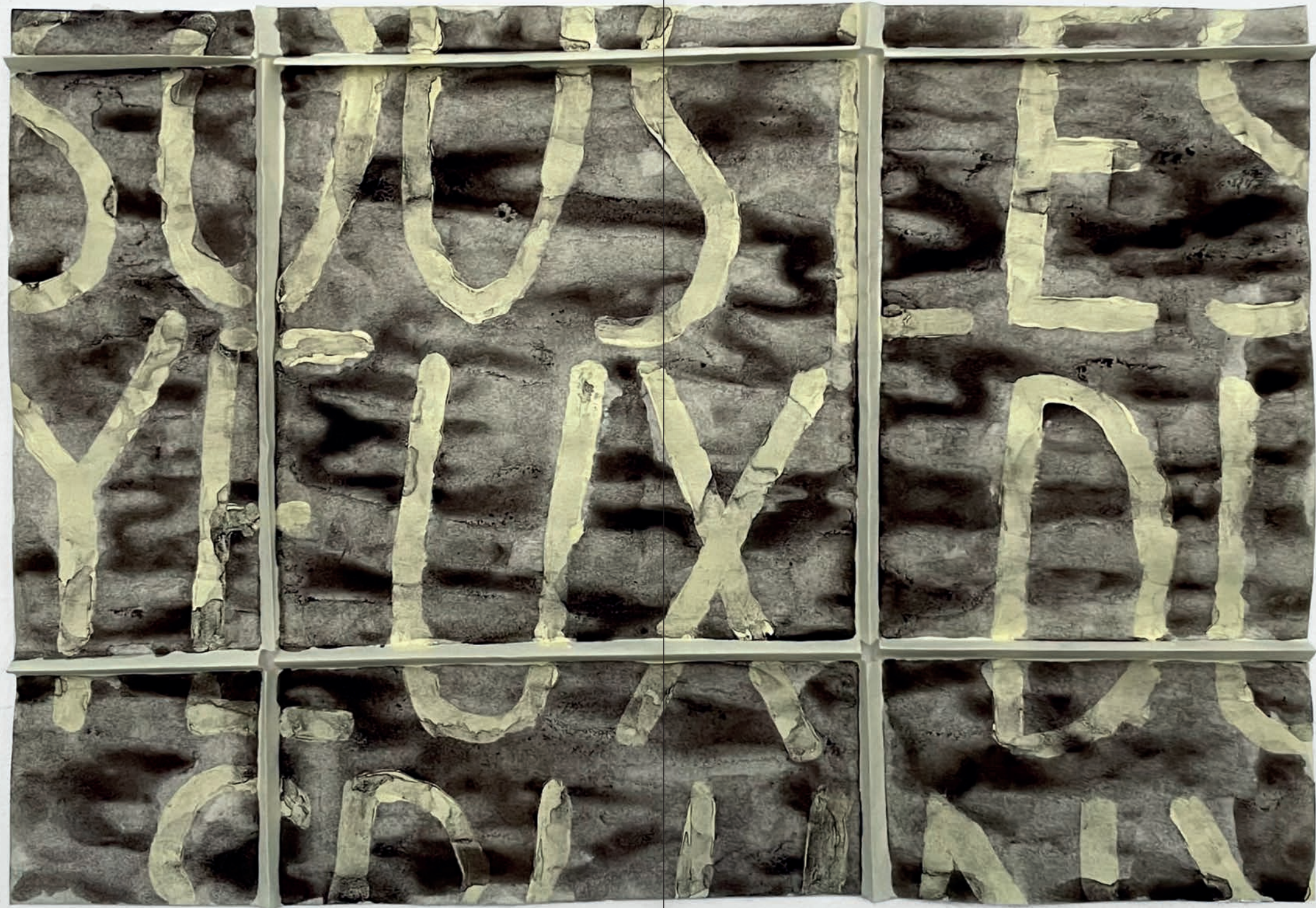




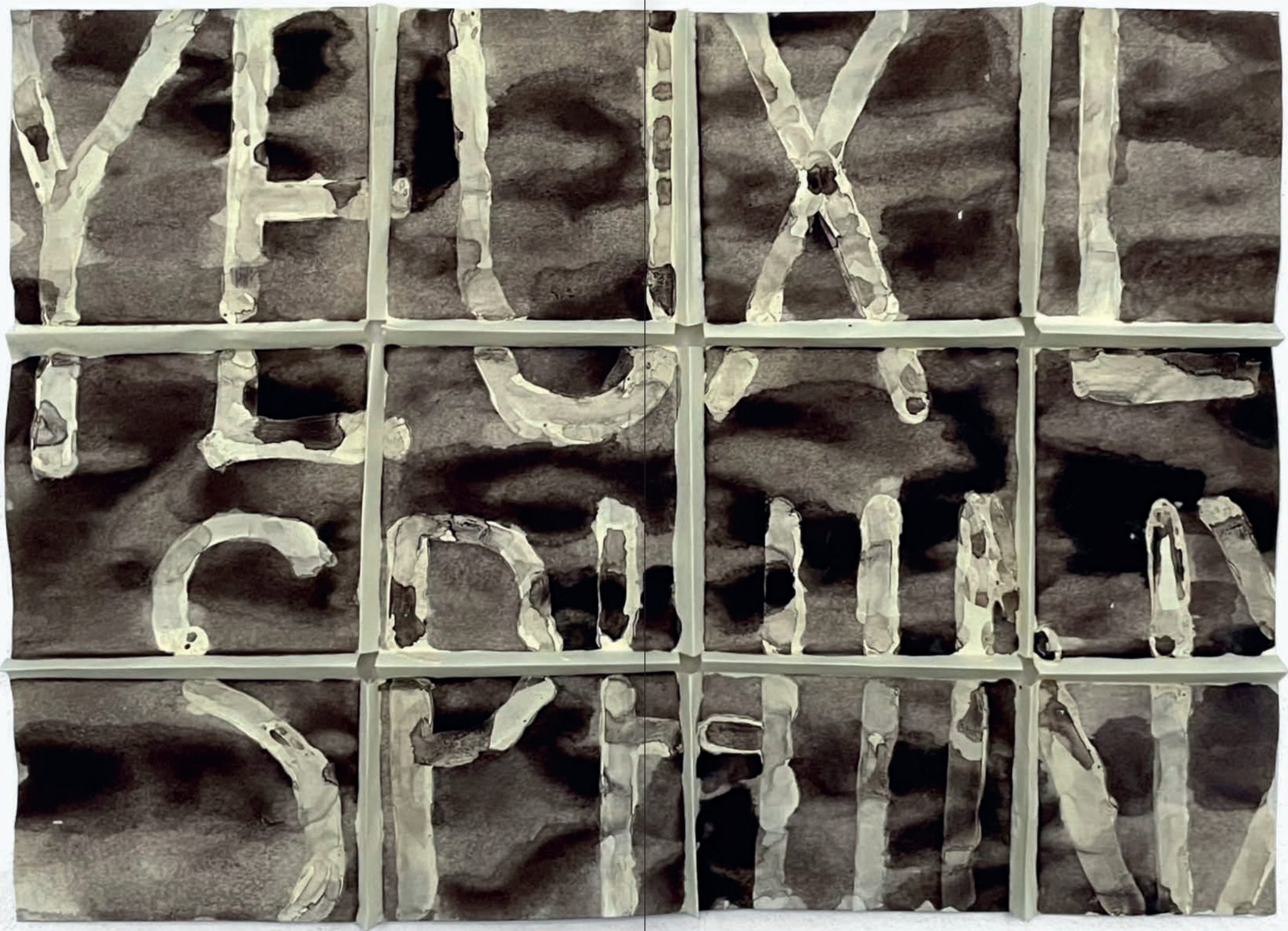














Ich glaub  
 Ich grinn mit Dir



Fig. 1.—2 *Dipsacus sylvestris* L.

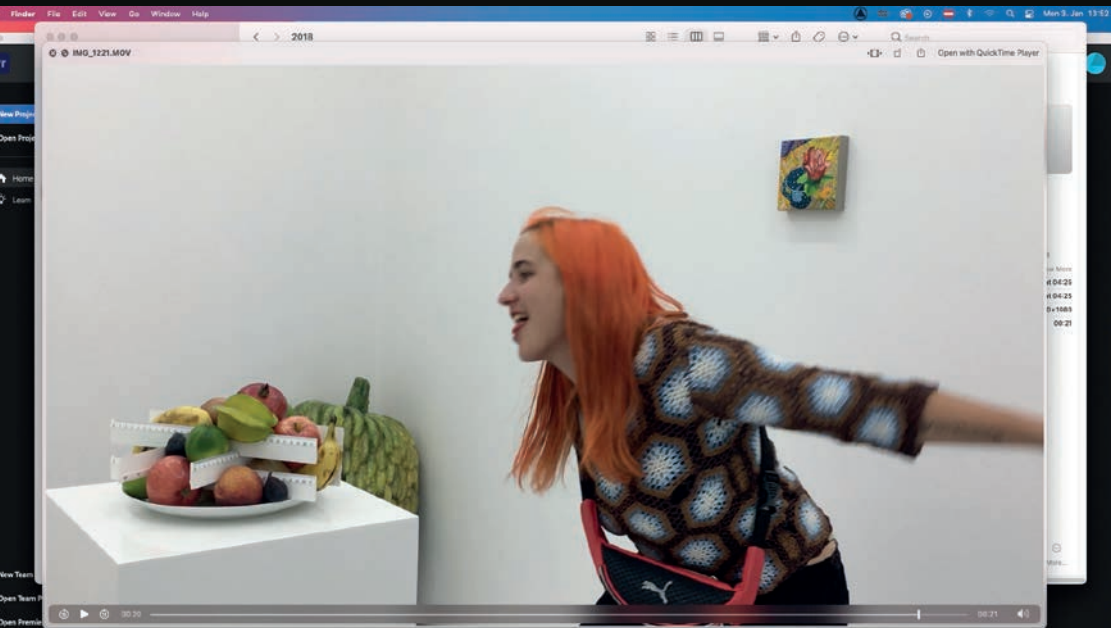
Gezeichnet von Dr. L. L. B. auf Holzschnitt u. Stein.



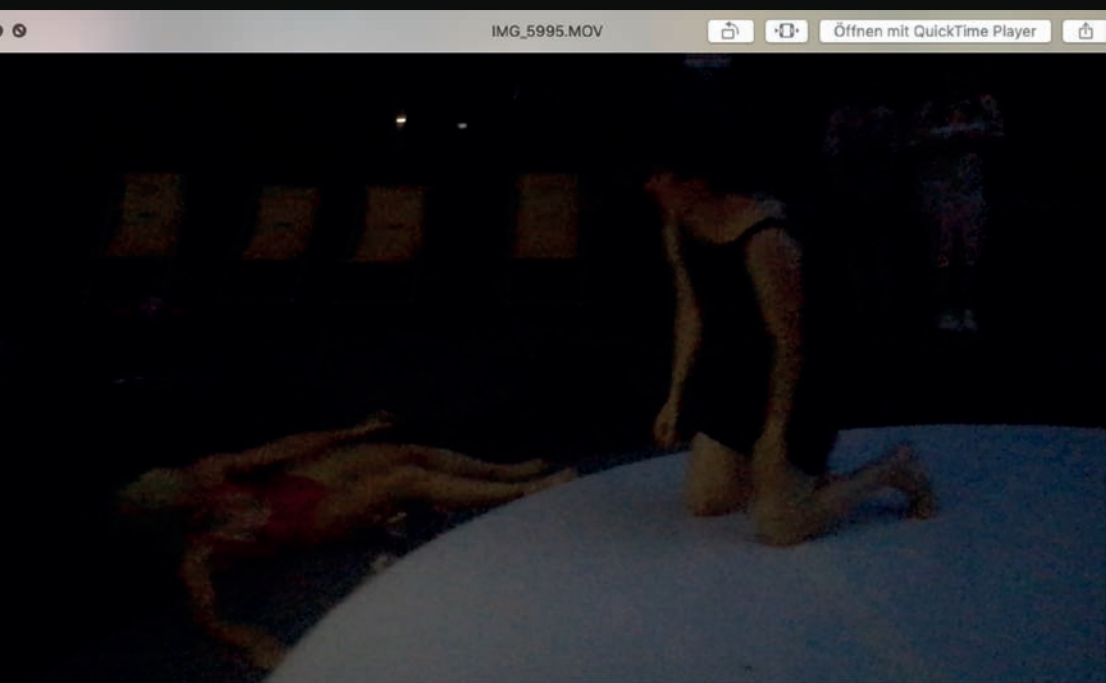


*Fritillaria Imperialis*

*Fritillaire Imperiale*













# Elective Affinities for a Future or the Exhibition as an Assemblage

by Georgia Holz

Upon entering the *Handspells* exhibition, I am initially struck by a sense of wonder, but I'm also a bit overwhelmed. The density of the displayed works is stunning, both in its material and media diversity as well as the aesthetic impressions, which have an immediate impact on me. This startling experience is owed to the decision to invite all graduates on the shortlist to participate in the exhibition. This approach implies a pleasant cesura that, in contrast to the previous solo presentations, affords space for the idea of collectivity and multiperspectivity.

Despite the multifaceted media and materiality—painting, textiles, sculpture, ceramics, video, and film—there are countless red threads to be picked up on, which create connections between the individual contributions. What's more, it is a space where productive transfers can take place. The show invites visitors to see the works from different angles, to interpret proximity, and to detect (elective) affinities. No work stands just on its own; on the contrary, they can all be read as commentaries on one another. Common thematic strands pervade the works and practices and are enhanced by the diversity of perspectives. The clever display by Julia Hohenwarter subtly embraces this permeation and superimposition, namely in the form of color fields on the wall in iridescent pastel tones that assign a protective space to each work, while acting at the same time as a frame and a backdrop. Forgoing built exhibition architecture, which likely would have had more of a separating effect, is essential to understanding the exhibition as an assemblage. An "assemblage" not just as a combination of different materials but, in keeping with Deleuze and Guattari, as

certain mixtures of practices that access new milieus and make them tangible by decoding and recoding territories.<sup>1</sup>

The territory of this exhibition does not stipulate a particular path—it is not linear. Visitors can swarm through it, plot their own course, choose a beginning from two entrances. The search for alternative paths unfolds ever new perspectives, readings, and interpretations of the relationships that the artistic works enter into with each other. Even upon repeated visits to the exhibition, threads can be picked up time and again, and other nodes in this web of connections become apparent. A few overlaps and elective relationships are described here as illustration.

Already at the entrance, the exhibition welcomes visitors with a collaborative intervention by Diana Barbosa Gil and Jojo Gronostay, whose works show similarities not only spatially but also in their materiality. The white tent floating from the ceiling by Barbosa Gil bears the traces, imprints, and scents of the spaces the artist traversed on a walk from her studio to the exhibition building, which has now been transformed into a (memory) space in its own right. Gronostay's installation with jeans and standardized carpet tiles, in turn, generates a space for reflections on the circulation of commodities between the Global North and South, on economic dependencies, and ultimately the perpetuation of colonial relations. This tenacious strand of colonial and imperial narratives surfaces several times in the exhibition, sometimes rather subtly, for example in Barbosa Gil's installation *Die beste Idee aller Zeiten* [The best idea ever]. She appropriates elements from European modernism, blatantly quotes and copies—even the colonial heritage of the avant-garde—but not without commenting on her own actions with a twinkle in her eye.

Some works are anachronistic in themselves when they juxtapose supposed opposites or combine the past with the present: Chin Tsao, for instance, with her ceramics reminiscent of Chinoiserie and Art Deco placed on her own “domestic” carpet or on that created by another artist (Päivi Vähälä). Or when Diana Barbosa Gil uses her paintings, oriented upon Classical Modernism, as a display for handmade objects. Alleged antipodes such as high and low, art and craft, pop and high culture are employed as equals, the dividing line abolished.

Many artists in the exhibition share an interest in craft techniques and a desire for closeness and corporeality, for the haptic experience of the chosen material. This tendency seems like a response to the disembodiment and virtuality of the post-internet age. In their films and videos, Chin Tsao and Cho Beom-Seok delve into the subject of bodiliness, albeit in very different ways. In tranquil black-and-white images, Cho tells the story of a blind man

1 Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: 1987, p. 503–505.



Lukas Kaufmann, *waking the tiger, healing trauma*, 2020, Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

and his garden. At the same time, he explores the possibilities of the documentary medium itself and reflects on his own search for a cinematic visual language. In stark contrast, the opulent, queer aesthetic of Chin Tsao's video installation stages a wild, speculative journey with techno-culture protagonists through pop, science fiction, and video games.

The affinities between Ani Gurashvili's and Lukas Kaufmann's works arise not only from the fact that they are grounded in related media, but also from their respective approaches to their pictorial space. At first glance, the motifs could not be more contrary. But the techniques of transparency and opacity, visualizing the invisible, and revealing the image surface as layers are painterly topoi that both artists investigate from different perspectives. In a process that conjures palimpsests or archaeology, Kaufmann's formally quite stringent works on paper let the various layers of paint application rise to the surface. The paper, gridded by folds, becomes a territory for the fluid color that contaminates and deforms it. Through the use of transparent colors, Gurashvili's paintings also reveal deeper image planes that merge different realities, fantastic motifs, and fictional settings. Everyday objects undergo a subtle transformation, become fantasy creatures or animal-objects that populate seemingly real spaces in dream-like sequences.



Animals act as intermediaries and communicators between the works in the exhibition in multiple ways. They appear as actors that embody the relationship between human and nonhuman beings in a posthuman world. Nora Severios's textile paintings address a seemingly banal commonality between humans and animals: the need to scratch. Applied to fabric, the animal motifs derive their corporeality and colorfulness from naturally dyed nettle fibers. With her ceramics, the artist targets the human desire to subjugate animals and translates the topic into a sculptural setting. The so-called tail gaiter—a piece of leather that holds a horse's tail in place—served as a model for the figures, whose precarious stance is secured by strings tied to the ceiling. This veritable tension spreads to the observers, leaving them with an immediate physical feeling of swaying. This dynamic also provides a fitting image for the artistic process, which is always performed in an exchange and intense relationship with others. No artist is a singular subject who develops ideas and conceives works autonomously. There can be no such thing as exclusive authorship, as Anna Spanlang's video essay powerfully illustrates. She edited her smartphone archive of the last ten years and compiled it into

Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022



Installation view: *Handspells*. Kunsthalle Wien Prize 2021, Kunsthalle Wien 2022

eleven episodes, which are shown in alternating sequences. The result is not only an indirect portrait of the artist herself—she is, after all, the author of the recordings—but also a portrait of her private and professional environments, which have helped shape her work, her artistic career, and her queer-feminist attitude.

Studying is a formative experience, a time of learning and acquiring knowledge. But above all, it is about friendships, exchange, participation in a community, sometimes about emancipation, about finding one's own place, and in the best case, one's own expression. At any rate, this time is characterized by a particularly intensive exchange with colleagues. The constant presence and physical proximity of other works resonate in the individual practice and affect the notion of authorship, which is often a shared or collective one and sometimes cannot be clearly defined. But the influence of other artists, accomplices, and companions persists throughout the entire professional career.

The step out of the art university, this safe space, can sometimes be an abrupt break. No matter how intensive the preparation, the first attempts to succeed on the art market and in exhibitions are often accompanied by disillusionment. This makes it all the more important to keep the collective experiences and perspectives from the student days in mind, and to preserve them as tools to engage with a globally operating art world that increasingly relies on subjectivization. This exhibition expressly counters the precarity and isolationist tendencies of the artistic profession with kinship, closeness, and collectivity. A friendly gesture by an institution that gives the complexity, polyphony, reflectiveness, and cleverness of this young generation a stage on which all actors find equal space, at least those who made it onto the shortlist.



Haltungsübung Nr. 67

# Meinungsvielfalt schätzen.



Das Schöne an Meinungen ist, dass jeder Mensch eine hat. Das Komplizierte ist: Viele haben eine andere als wir. Wir können jetzt einfach versuchen, lauter zu schreien. Oder Haltung zeigen und zuhören. Und vielleicht draufkommen, dass wir falsch liegen. Oder alle ein wenig richtig.

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Work und installation views *Handspells*:

www.kunst-dokumentation.com  
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**DIANA BARBOSA GIL  
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ANI GURASHVILI  
LUKAS KAUFMANN  
NORA SEVERIOS  
ANNA SPANLANG  
CHIN TSAO**



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