

Kunsthalle Wien

Press release

Burn The Diaries, Read Them Out Loud

On annotating, editing and making text in contemporary art

6 June–19 October 2025

Artists: Anahita Asadifar, Sanna Helena Berger, Lara Dâmaso, Joshua Leon, Ville Laurinkoski, Prosopopoeia, Rietlanden Women's Office, Lisa Robertson, Shanzhai Lyric, Miriam Stoney, Ian Waelder, Eleanor Ivory Weber

Burn The Diaries, Read Them Out Loud is an exhibition incorporating a programme of performance, readings, discussions and exchange with a focus on text in the field of contemporary art. Conceived as a group exhibition in progress, artworks installed at its inception will be in dialogue with numerous performative interventions taking place at and around Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz over a course of four months. Looking closely at the practice of annotating, editing and writing in art, the format considers text as the framework for or 'skeleton' of artmaking, expanding its status beyond the preliminary note. The exhibition serves as a page upon which artworks and performances are inscribed as interrelated notes—sampling, (mis)quoting and rehearsing themselves and one another.

The exhibition's title *Burn The Diaries, Read Them Out Loud* unites two distinct references. It combines quotations from artist Moyra Davey's book *Index Cards* and a hand-written note that the curator Gina Merz discovered in a copy of Kathy Acker's *Bodies of Work*. In a chapter entitled *Burn The Diaries*, Davey employs a method of editing that implies a multitude of voices in addition to her own, while Acker's essays explore the relationship between text, voice and interpretation.

Artists employing text in their work have been invited to use the exhibition as a space for production and experimentation. A display that artist Ian Waelder conceived in conversation with the artists, curator and institution, forms a setting ready for interaction, as well as a site for reference and meeting that quite literally punctuates the space. An expansive MDF wall with five window cut-outs and a long plinth forms a sentence traversing the entire length of the building. Just as punctuation can dictate the flow of a sentence, the display directs the gaze through a series of cut-out 'windows' with Joshua's Leon's paint-stained glass panels onto the busy Karlsplatz intersection.

Lisa Robertson's book, *Anemones: A Simone Weil Project* (2021) which includes an annotated translation of Weil's 1941 essay *What the Occitan Inspiration Consists Of* was another source of inspiration for the exhibition. The book was designed together with Rietlanden Women's Office to emphasise Robertson's hand-written annotations, thus revealing a process that would normally be hidden in published writing and translation. Rietlanden Women's Office conceived two posters for the exhibition based on Robertson's book *Anemones*.

Waelder's display also includes two plinths positioned in the foyer of Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz, hosting *Entertaining Ideas*, a selection of books curated by Prosopopoeia, a Vienna-based project space for text and language-based artistic practice led by Inga Charlotte Thiele.

Anahita Asadifar's installation takes the form of a desk that suggests a place of research. On the monitor, montage becomes the artist's language in a composition of text fragments and image segments that quote from Claude Cahun, Audre Lorde, Susan Sontag and bell hooks. These seek to create a new conversation from borrowed voices.

Spanning the length of the wall of the exhibition space, Sanna Helena Berger's newly commissioned installation *Schmutztitel* (2025), comprises a large number of copies of *Die Klavierspielerin* written in 1983 by Elfriede Jelinek.

Lara Dâmaso explores the expressive, therapeutic and political potential of the voice in close relation to movement and dance. Focusing on the sensitive and vibratory dialogue between humans and the space they inhabit, the artist will show a newly commissioned video work in the exhibition.

Miriam Stoney's newly commissioned diaristic contribution *Missing* (2025) takes the form of a fictional journal updated daily throughout the exhibition. The artist will connect to a printer positioned in the space to remotely send her texts to print. A dreamlike narrative derived from Stoney's lived reality will build up in the printer-tray over the course of the exhibition.

Shanzhai Lyric's latest iteration of their ongoing project *Incomplete Poem [Hedge]* (2023) is a wooden structure draped in a collection of slogan T-shirts that reflect on China's *Shanzhai* culture. Derived from the Chinese term meaning "mountain fortress", *Shanzhai* has come to signify counterfeit or imitative production and the subcultures that emerge around it. The T-shirts are reframed as an evolving poetic archive appearing as an embodied, fragmentary text formed through repetition, parody and circulation.

Eleanor Ivory Weber's pointed poem of dualisms entitled *Smoking is good* (2023) will commandeer the LED which spans the Kunsthalle's façade.

Ville Laurinkoski's performances will punctuate the exhibition opening on Thursday, 5 June. The artist weaves together literature, voice and bodily expression with heightened speech, screaming and singing. The (un)consumable spaces and stages his performances create transform experiences of loneliness and intimacy into collective scenes and sceneries.

Biographies

Anahita Asadifar

Anahita Asadifar (b. 1993, Isfahan, Iran) is an artist, researcher and lecturer. Recent solo exhibitions in Vienna have been held at Fotogalerie Wien (2025); 20 20 (2023); and School (2021). Asadifar lives and works in Vienna.

Sanna Helena Berger

Sanna Helena Berger (b. 1983, Sweden) is a self-taught artist working with site and situation-specific installations. Berger's work has been shown at Rinde am Rhein, Düsseldorf; Centralbanken, Oslo; Kaiserwache, Freiburg; Cittipunkt, Berlin (all 2024); Den Frie, Copenhagen; Baerum Kunsthall, Oslo; Galerija Miroslav Kraljević, Zagreb; Waf Galerie, Vienna; Skånes Konstförening, Malmö (all 2023); Kunsthalle Bremerhaven; Spazio ORR, Brescia (both 2022); and Cell Project Space, London (2020). Berger lives and works in Berlin.

Lara Dâmaso

Lara Dâmaso (b. 1996, Biel, Switzerland) studied Medienkunst at Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, Leipzig and fine arts at Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, Zurich. Dâmaso's work has previously been shown at Atonal, Berlin; Basel Social Club; Triennale Milano, Milan; *We travel to know our own geography*, Terraforma x Kuboraum (60th Venice Biennale) (all 2024); DeSingel, Antwerp (2023, 2024); Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tanzquartier Wien, Vienna; Gessnerallee, Zurich (all 2023); Krone Couronne, Biel; Istituto Svizzero, Milan (both 2022); Kunsthalle Bern (2019 and 2022); MASI, Lugano; Kunsthau Langenthal (both 2021); and Kunsthalle Zurich (2020). Dâmaso lives and works in Biel and Milan.

Joshua Leon

Joshua Leon (b. 1990, London, United Kingdom) is an artist and writer. Leon received his PhD from the Royal College of Art, London. Selected exhibitions include Chisenhale Gallery, London; 49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine, Metz (both 2024); Kunstverein München, Munich (2023); Barbican, London (2022); Daily Practice, Rotterdam (2020); and the 10th Berlin Biennale (2018). Leon lives and works in London and is artist in residence with PART International Art Residency Austria June-July 2025.

Ville Laurinkoski

Ville Laurinkoski (b. 1996, Finland) is a visual artist and performer. Alongside studies at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Visual Arts, Laurinkoski completed the Maumaus Independent Study Programme in Lisbon. Laurinkoski has exhibited at Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen (2025); the Museum of Finnish Architecture and the Design Museum, Helsinki (2024); Galleri Elverket – Pro Artibus, Ekenäs, Finland (2024); Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2023); and Amos Rex, Helsinki (2020). His performances have been presented at O—Overgaden, Copenhagen and Art Hub Copenhagen (both 2024); and Den Frie Centre of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen (2023 and 2024), among others. Laurinkoski is a member of the artist collective Jennifree-See Alternate. Laurinkoski lives and works in Copenhagen.

Prosopopoeia

Prosopopoeia (est. 2023 by Inga Charlotte Thiele) is an exhibition space, program, book shop and host for text- and language-based artistic practices. Prosopopoeia is located in Vienna's 5th district in the Julius-Popp-Hof, which was built between 1925-26 and is one of Wiener Wohnen's first social housing complexes.

Rietlanden Women's Office

Rietlanden Women's Office (est. 2018, Rietlanden, Amsterdam by graphic designers Elisabeth Rafstedt and Johanna Ehde) makes the publication series *MsHeresies*. Together with Phil Baber of The Last Books, they organise the poetry reading series *Don't Pay Your Rent*. Rietlanden Women's Office teach book design and typography at various European institutions. Elisabeth Rafstedt and Johanna Ehde live and work in Amsterdam.

Lisa Robertson

Lisa Robertson (b. Toronto, Canada) is a writer whose writing has been published across various forms and disciplines since the 1990s. She has taught at numerous institutions including Cambridge University, Princeton University, University of California, Berkeley; The University of Chicago; California College of the Arts, San Francisco; Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam; The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, Naropa University, Boulder; and The Banff Centre for the Arts. Robertson lives and works in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France.

Shanzhai Lyric

Shanzhai Lyric (est. 2015) is a collective producing a body of research that focuses on 'radical logistics and linguistics through the prism of technological aberration and nonofficial cultures'. They are currently in residence at Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York, where they are researching a colony of wild parrots, the original mimicry artists. Shanzai Lyric consider themselves a roving archive.

Miriam Stoney

Miriam Stoney (b. 1994, Scunthorpe, United Kingdom) is a writer, translator and artist. Stoney's practice is primarily text-based and includes exhibition-making, performance and various different forms of writing. The artist's work has been shown at Prosopopoeia, Vienna; Salzburger Kunstverein; Kunstverein in Hamburg (all 2024); Klosterruine, Berlin (2023); and Tanzquartier Wien, Vienna (2022), among others. Stoney lives and works in Vienna.

Ian Waelder

Ian Waelder (b. 1993, Madrid, Spain) is an artist and publisher. Waelder studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. His work has been shown at Neuer Kunstverein, Gießen (2024); Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani, Palma; Delfina Foundation, London; Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona (all 2023); Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden (2021); and La Casa Encendida, Madrid (2014). His work is held in the collections of Kunststiftung DZ BANK,

Frankfurt am Main; Es Baluard Contemporary Art Museum, Mallorca; and Rothschild & Co, Zurich. In 2019, Waelder founded Printer Fault Press, a publishing house and collaborative platform supporting the work of fellow artists, curators, and writers. He was awarded the Kunststiftung DZ Bank Förderstipendium for 2023–24 and was artist-in-residence at WIELS Center for Contemporary Art in Brussels in 2024. He is currently artist-in-residence at the Laurenz-Haus Stiftung in Basel and lives and works in Frankfurt am Main and Mallorca.

Eleanor Ivory Weber

Eleanor Ivory Weber (b. Australia) is a writer, artist and publisher. Weber's writing has been published in magazines and periodicals including *Afterall*, *Collateral*, *Flash Art*, *Jacket2*, *Le Chauffage*, *Meanjin*, *Paradis*, *Starship* and in artist catalogues. Weber is a PhD candidate at the Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels. She is a co-founder and co-director of Divided, a publishing house established in Brussels and London. Weber lives and works in Brussels.

Notes to Editors

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6 June–19 October 2025

Kunsthalle Wien Karlsplatz

Press conference: 5 June 2025, 10 am

Exhibition opening: 5 June 2025, 7 pm

Artists: Anahita Asadifar, Sanna Helena Berger, Lara Dâmaso, Joshua Leon, Ville Laurinkoski, Prosopopoeia, Rietlanden Women's Office, Lisa Robertson, Shanzhai Lyric, Miriam Stoney, Ian Waelder, Eleanor Ivory Weber

Curator: Gina Merz

Press images for download and further information:

<https://kunsthallewien.at/en/exhibition/burn-the-diaries-read-them-out-loud/press/>

All dates for guided tours and the programme are available at:

<https://kunsthallewien.at/en/calendar/>

Public Programme

Thu, 5.6., 19:00

Ville Laurinkoski (Performance)

Sat, 14.6., 16:00

Lara Dâmaso (Performance)

Thu, 3.7., 18:00

Eleanor Ivory Weber and Cassandra Seltman (Performance)

Thu, 4.9., 18:00

Sanna Helena Berger (Performance)

Sun, 14.9., 14:00

Anahita Asadifar and Sam Dolbear (Workshop)

Sat, 20.9., 14:00

Prosopopoeia (Workshop hosted by Inga Charlotte Thiele)

Thu, 25.9., 18:00

Lisa Robertson (Lecture and Conversation)

Thu, 16.10., 18:00
Miriam Stoney (Reading)

Sat, 18.10., 16:00
Shanzhai Lyric (Performance)

Sun, 19.10., 14:00
Joshua Leon (Conversation and Reading)

About Kunsthalle Wien

Kunsthalle Wien is the City of Vienna's primary institution for contemporary art. At its locations in the Museumsquartier and on Karlsplatz, it presents an annual programme of exhibitions alongside public and educational programming that seeks to engage diverse publics. We provide a platform for artists, commissioning new works and partnering with individuals and institutions, both local and international, to develop exhibitions and publications based on original research. Kunsthalle Wien is committed to providing an inclusive space for exchange and debate and furthering the discourse on contemporary art in all its forms.

Kunsthalle Wien Thanks

Kunsthalle Wien is financed by the Magistratsabteilung Kultur der Stadt Wien (MA 7). The artistic programme is also supported by the members and patrons of the Kunsthalle Wien Club. Joshua Leon's commission for *Burn The Diaries, Read Them Out Loud* is supported by PART International Art Residency Austria.

Address and Information

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Opening Hours

Tuesday–Sunday: 10:00–18:00
Thursday: 10:00–20:00

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