

taxi drivers

don't get taxi

driver's block

fort

writing after

herbert

vote

funicular



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# Introduction

by Martin Herbert

Welcome to *FORT*, a collective endeavour by the participants of the Writing About Contemporary Art course in this year's Salzburg Summer Academy, held in the imposing Hohensalzburg fortress that overlooks the city. Here, during a frequently intensive ten days, these fifteen writers looked intently at art in museums, in commercial and artist-run spaces, and on a paper-covered workshop table festooned with scribbles and shaped like a keyhole. They gamely took on overnight writing assignments, hit their deadlines with aplomb, and showed up to face group critiques the next morning. They broke down examples of art criticism until those texts could take no more, studied and practiced the invisible art of editing, swapped intuitions and info concerning professional practice, and restored themselves at soirees, for all that those soirees were sometimes chock-full of performance art and antic lecture-performances. They dealt with the background noise of a cluster of nearby curators, on the understanding that it wouldn't be the last time. Tasked with submitting *something* for this magazine, some of them took up and expanded pieces of writing they'd begun earlier, while others swerved and produced something completely new. Brought together—in a publication that, as the cover demonstrates, almost appeared under several other titles—these writings move in and out of the genre of art criticism, and offer a viewpoint on contemporary art, in Salzburg and beyond, as it stood in the long hot summer of 2018.





# Room For Us All

by Karin Buchauer

Room 5 on the second floor of the Summer Academy premises at the fortress of Hohensalzburg. A guy armed with the sustainable starter kit of the student, fabric tote and ceramic cup, is orientating himself.

‘What’s here?’

‘Writing.’

‘Oh no, I’m thinking.’

‘Well, we’re post-thinking.’

Since she took over the direction of the Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts in 2009, Hildegund Amanshauser has focused on the networked aspects of art production and discourse, and quickly set up a class for curators, aka ‘thinking’. A writing class followed in 2016, with journalist and art critic Kimberly Bradley putting images into words with a first crop of students via a seven-day intensive exercise in training the writing muscle. The class of 2018 has three more days than that to ‘write about contemporary art’, and teacher Martin Herbert doesn’t rule out some thinking going on here too: ‘writing is embodied thinking’, he says. He is assisted by co-teacher Andrea Kopranovic, who was one of those 15 first timers, quickly moving from there to assist Kimberly before doing so now with Martin. Before that, she had done staff work in the office of the academy for some years, so she ‘knows everything!’, as last year’s participants testify in their class project magazine. To Andrea, mediation is a necessity in academia, but even more so in the art world. That’s also, apparently, the experience of those here who blog: to educate students and writers, you have to give them space.

So Room 5 is the dedicated space for finding out. Finding out what you see when you look at art. Finding out how you react to it. Finding out what, of this reaction, is to be conveyed. And how. For Martin Herbert, clarity is key: ‘You need to understand for yourself what you are writing’. This sounds sound, but isn’t always intuitively achievable. So, ground: tell the reader where you and they are, lead their gaze, inspire their minds to wander. Sprinkle the tour with facts. The practical exercises to achieve this were regular writing assignments after extensive tours of the Museum der Moderne on one day, a full itinerary of galleries throughout the center of Salzburg on another. Then research. Ask the artist, but don’t take their words as the final ones.



Meet them at their studio and investigate, knowing that things often speak louder than words, and discarded works have something to say too. And then... do the right thing. Write. It is your passion. It is what you have come for all the way from around the world. It is what was in the background of your other work, and which you want to give center stage. It is what you might do for a living in the future. Write about art.

After a few days, the class of 2018 is bonding. A WhatsApp group is set up, people meet for the academy's events, going to artists' talks, open days and exhibition openings, as well as drinks and swims to mellow the heat wave. And avoid any kind of writer's block. Martin has a recipe against that as well, of course: write. (A taxi driver doesn't have taxi driver's block, right?) And read, read things you like, set your mind up in the confidence that you know who you are, what you like and what you are doing. Listen to music, Bach for structure, hip hop for... ass kicking. Actually, get your ass on the seat. The 25-minute writing experiment on the last day of the first week showed that free writing always produces something to be used somehow. So, just do it. If you need routines and rituals, use them. Move, do some sports. And talk about your writing. This is by far the most frequently stressed benefit of the writing class: exchange. To inspire each other, to challenge each other, the discussions have proven the most fruitful conversation to all the participants, some of them having initially chosen the class in hope of this specific outcome.

The group experience is indeed invaluable. This takes two primary forms: working together on texts by others selected by Martin Herbert and informed by his decade long experience as writer, critic and editor, and feedback on anonymized texts written from one day to the next by each student. The feedback feeds what is usually missing when working on your own, sometimes under the prescription of the job, due to deadline pressure or just simply being lonely. Martin has practical advice here too, stressing structure and clarity once more when building paragraphs, regarding the ratio of information in your text and editing. Edit your darlings, he says. Print out and rewrite. Don't be afraid of being literary. Find your voice.

And when all the beautiful texts are polished, present them, pitch, and make the world of art magazines better. Nobody can see all art, and criticism is a facilitator. It also records what is going on and thus provides the material for future art history. This class of 2018 hasn't yet set out to found the most amazing art magazine there is, but we did write about contemporary art for ten days, and we will definitely go on to do so.







Elizabeth Peyton: Eventyr  
Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg  
27 July – 25 August, 2018

by Christoph Chwatal

Elizabeth Peyton's solo show at Thaddaeus Ropac features all new works, among them eight small-format oil paintings and works on paper. The exhibition is consistent with earlier bodies of work, wherein the American artist draws on media images, literary and mythological accounts. Peyton also works in portraiture sessions, painting fellow artists like David Hockney, celebrities such as Leonardo di Caprio, and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. What is striking about her work is not only her particular painterly style but her use of fragmentation. It seems that Peyton's tightly cropped images – comparable to the framing, or *cadres*, in Robert Bresson's films – do not create intimacy but rather foreground a type of vision that corresponds to the human psychic apparatus, one that cannot be conceived in terms of totality but only in fragmented, singular experiences.

Similar to the French filmmaker, Peyton crops her images to an extent that sometimes almost hurts. In this show, a good example is *Raphael (Nick Reading)* (all works described 2018), an oil painting, sitting on a lot of gesso, on wooden board. While the material support (and notably its thick, white primer) is dense, the painted scenery suggests translucency and a certain lightness. The painting staggers between fixation and fluidity and depicts a scene of absorption in which a young man is seated on a sofa, assuming a leisurely pose. He is reading and unaware of the presence of a beholder, be they real or imaginary. His head is partly outside out of this painting, as is his right foot. While here the source of the image remains unclear, the painting *Elio, Oliver (Call me by Your Name)* is more specific. Reading the title only, one might immediately think of a kitschy close-up of the protagonists of the 2016 film referenced in the subtitle, about the friendship and homosexual relationship of an underage Italian and a midcareer American scholar. In Peyton's painting, the pair are depicted in an intimate moment, further condensed in a cropped version of what looks, indeed, like a film still.

As in *Raphael, (Nick Reading)*, the scene appears isolated, and even hostile towards both an imaginary witness and prospective beholder. The picture is caught in an ambiguity of suggested intimacy and a repulsive resistance. Hence, in further delimiting the frame, this painting does not get closer but, on the contrary, deflects the view. The same might also be said for *After Hammershøi (Jens Ferdinand Willumsen)*. Here, Peyton takes Danish painter Vilhelm Hammershøi's 1901 portrait of fellow

artist Willumsen as her point of departure. While there is an interesting though all too obvious inversion of hues – from dark to bright – Peyton rejects the painterly move of inventing what is in the picture. Instead it seems that for her, as it was for Bresson, it's more about what to frame, and what to leave out.



# Dividing Line

by Yinka Elujoba

A.

A man steps out of a vehicle, cigarette in hand, a sly smile on his lips. He is dressed in white and coated with white paint. Hair, hands and face. A black, jagged line runs across his frame like a bisection. This man – Gunther Brus, Austrian painter and performance artist – begins a series of walks across Vienna while being photographed by his friend, the great photographer Ludwig Hoffenreich. Eventually he walks up to a policeman, seems to report himself and promptly gets arrested.

All performance art exists at the edge of theatricality. The ability to exaggerate, provoke, surprise, shock and scare appear to be frequent tools employed by performance artists to communicate thoughts and ideas. When weighed in this light, what does Brus' walk propose?

At first glance the fascination of onlookers as Brus takes his walk is apparent. Some are laughing, others are taking photographs of him. Brus' demeanor never changes, not even when he is interrogated by the policeman. Instead, his smile widens, as if this is a moment he has been waiting for. Still, what is obtainable from this performance?

Brus' walk in 1965 was not the beginning of whatever conversation he was trying to have. Five years earlier he had cofounded Viennese Actionism, a short and violent movement in 20th-century art. It was one of many independent efforts in the 1960s involved in developing performance art. Its members included Otto Muhl, Hermann Nitsch, Rudolf Schwarzkogler and Brus himself. Their work was popular for its incredible amount of transgression, involving naked bodies, destructiveness and violence. In fact, it was Muhl who had helped to paint Brus' body and with Schwarzkogler, filmed the whole performance.

Consider the human body as a tool for intervention, for useful agitation.

During his walk, Brus regarded himself as a kind of *live painting*. He believed, like the other Actionism group members, in the body as a surface for making art. He often promulgated his ideas by intense and shocking actions carried out on and within his own body. Brus was also arrested for covering his body with faeces and masturbating while singing the Austrian national anthem.



B.

Four men arrange themselves in a community center, surrounded by little wood carvings. They dress up in polythene bags sewn to model masquerade garments. Black and red. They attach the wood carvings to their heads and begin walking across the community in Ejigbo, beating gongs as they proceed. The four men, led by Jelili Atiku – a Nigerian performance artist – eventually get arrested a few days after their performance.

Jelili was born in September 1968, three years after Brus took his walk in Vienna. After studying Art in Zaria and Lagos he began to work as a performance artist employing different media to communicate his political concerns and in defense of human rights. The performance that led to his arrest, *Aragamago Will Rið This Land Off Terrorism*, on January 18, 2016 was a response to an event that had happened earlier in the community: three women had been sodomized publicly at the marketplace as punishment, with concoctions of chili pepper and wine poured into their private parts.

What thread can be drawn from Brus to Jelili?

Returning to the idea of performance art as an embrace of theatricality, the highest level of empathy in humans is perhaps evoked when we imagine our bodies going through the motions that other people put theirs through. One of the world's biggest religions is in fact based on the premise that God offered his own body as a sacrifice on a cross, an entirely irrefutable performance that is supposed to convey, once and for all, eternal love that cannot be rivaled.

The thread from God to Brus to Jelili is a continuous tradition that demands an extraordinary amount of devotion. It is a practice that transcends materiality and demands to put your body where your ideology is.

Again, the human body as an irrepressible tool of civic engagement, an illimitable surface for public discourse.

There is also a certain heft obtainable from documentations of these body actions. While the documentation is not greater than the action, the documentation can help relive the action or give wings to it. God's performance on the cross was given wings by the writers of the four gospels. Brus' *Viennese Walk* was so elegantly documented by Hoffenreich that the series of images from that day are now considered a piece of art in their own right. And the eight-minute video from Jelili's *Aragamago Will Rið This Land Off Terrorism* remains an immensely emotive film that transports us into an inexplicable outerdistance.

Together with Muhl at the *Kunst and Revolution* in Vienna, Brus declared: "Art is politics that has created new styles of communication." Beyond shock value and public provocation, God, Brus and Jelili's walks with their bodies as living, moving installations on the streets of Golgotha, Vienna and Ejigbo, proffer the possibility of a world where the human body can own, be, and propagate a political statement.



Pecunia non olet. Quod artem non olet.

A Consideration.

Schilling, Mark, Dollar, Euro, and... Money in the Arts, Gallery Trakl, Salzburg

25 July – 15 September, 2018

by Franziska Tremel

Jeff Koons – we all hate him, no? – is the personification of all evil. His artworks sell for a fortune and we blame him for being a driving factor in the on-going commercialisation of the art market. Art and money: a difficult relationship that everybody seems to have a strong opinion on. Me included. We dislike the fact that creative works are being treated as commodities. An exhibition at the Gallery Trakl in Salzburg's city centre currently *deals* with this delicate issue. *Schilling, Mark, Dollar, Euro and... Money in the Arts* – the name says it all.

An Andy Warhol print of a dollar sign catches my attention upfront, yet I don't walk up to it but instead turn right to find a one-dollar-note, matted and framed in white, like an innocent bride in her wedding dress. 'Nice idea', I think, 'Selling money as art, in the literal sense of pointing out how ridiculous market mechanisms are, turning one dollar into a fortune by just putting the artist's name next to it.' Turns out I was wrong. Taking a closer look at Stefan Cagol's piece, I discern that on the note the word 'God' has been replaced with 'Art': 'IN ART WE TRUST.' is what it says now. Well, I'm not so sure about that, as I'm in the middle of an art exhibition on money – a quite divisive situation for me.

There are many more examples here of how different artists dispute this or similar topics, criticising either capitalism per se or the financial forces of the art market in a cynical way: Robert Zahornicky, for example, has shredded and compressed notes into little objects, while Alicja Kwade has created a cogwheel of Euro-coins. We even find Karl-Heinz Grasser's pretty face on banknotes painted by Sebastian Weissenbacher and, fluttering around a bath duck. *Pecunia non olet* – money does not stink – is the very fitting subtitle of the work.

I am fascinated and concerned at the same time. I really like some of the exhibits but I find it disturbing to see how boldly and obviously these pieces criticise monetary power which they have themselves. But I am curious and before I leave, I talk to Dietgard Grimmer, the director of the venue. My concerns make her laugh. "This is a themed exhibition. I put together shows about different topics and this time it's money. I simply asked collectors and museums to loan us works I like. There's nothing more behind it." Continuing, she says how unfair she thinks it is, that art gets constantly 'reduced' to the market, either in an impulsive or a repressive way.



I am ashamed. Because it's true: People either talk about money and art or they complain about people talking about money and art. Me included. Are we already so messed up that we have lost the ability to draw a line between those two? We shouldn't give a damn whether an artwork sells for a million or not, but instead just be happy that we can see it here, hanging on the wall, entertaining us in a way. Art is a pleasure, a delight, an excitement, a challenge, an outlet for emotions as anger, happiness, love or hate. Whenever I go to the Belvedere Museum to visit Klimt's *Sunflower*, I cry; and I don't cry because it's among the world's most valuable paintings, or because it has been endowed to the museum after the death of its former owner, nor because the battle for Klimt works and their pricing is a never-ending dilemma. I cry because something about looking at it touches me in such a deep, personal way that makes me feel endlessly happy. And I can't help it. *This* should be standard.

It's sad that we can't appreciate the value of money any more, but much sadder that we can't appreciate the personal value that art has for us. We complain about financial issues casting a pall on creativity while letting them determine our attitude toward it. What makes us believe that we are versed to evaluate the economic principles of the whole art world if we can't even evaluate a piece of art just on its own? But, then again, what permits me to judge? I am neither an artist nor an economist. Just a simple observer.



Lucky Star  
Elizabeth Peyton: Eventyr  
Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg  
27 July – 25 August, 2018

by Anna Remešová

The paintings of Elizabeth Peyton suit this space perfectly. Her current solo show at the private Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is airy, bright and straightforward, as the gallery rooms themselves are. The atmosphere of the setting (the tourist-filled Mirabell Garden, with its streaming fountain) and interior (elegant and tidy light-grey walls, nineteenth-century staircases that look freshly renovated) gives visitors a very summery, leisurely impression. There is a lot of space, one small painting for one wall, not overcrowded. Evidently you can make a lot of money with just a little.

In the Villa Kast – the oldest of the five venues Galerie Ropac handles – Peyton presents parts of her work, mostly from this year, in which, working primarily in oil, she depicts either well-known celebrities or her friends. Her strokes are loose and don't dwell on details; sometimes the piece looks like sketch for an expressionist painting. Like it's not finished yet, only indicating a shape or hint of a smile. The faces look directly at the viewer or off to one side, waiting. No action is present in Peyton's paintings. A few still life scenes – flowers, for example – complete the set.

Peyton portrays famous faces that she knows from media – such as the pianist David Fray, skater Yuzuru Hanyu, fashion designer Sander Lak, and the lovers from the American movie *Call Me by Your Name*. Queen Elizabeth, Prince Harry, Jackie Kennedy, Kurt Cobain or David Bowie are not present in this show, but they're part of her portfolio too. Her style, in a palette of pink, violet, light blue, yellow and grey, can be defined as an echo of the new figuration in painting that emerged as an answer to post-war abstract art in the 1960s. Today's contemporary art frequently takes a different direction, using new digital media including virtual reality, but it seems that the art market doesn't care if the medium is new or not. Some of Peyton's images look like pinkish ghosts of real people, and the small frames are very intimate, reminding one of religious icons of celebrities in teenagers' rooms. Yet Peyton has been unquestionably successful in her approach, exhibiting in MoMA, Guggenheim, Royal Academy in London, Whitechapel Gallery, and selling her works for hundreds of thousands of dollars.



But let's be frank. What do these paintings really tell us? And what does the success of Elizabeth Peyton in the art world say about the current state of art and affiliated institutions? Her work doesn't require much attention or deep knowledge, it's very accessible for everyone, like a piece of pop music. "Come on shine your heavenly body tonight, 'cause I know you're gonna make everything all right. You may be my lucky star, but I'm the luckiest by far," Madonna sang in 1983, a year before Peyton started to attend the School of Visual Arts in New York and produced her first portraits. Peyton's *Eventyr* proves that nothing has changed since then.

Peyton is known as 'the artist of portraits' and that's how she got into the mainstream. To show her during summertime in Salzburg can always bring you a great deal of business when one is running a private gallery. No context is needed: everyone will recognise portraits of Western world stars such as Kurt Cobain or Angela Merkel. That is actually how Peyton started – her breakthrough came in 1993 during her second solo show, in a room at the Chelsea Hotel in New York – and she continues making portraits up until the present. The way she idealises her idols doesn't stem from their real personality, rather from painter's own relationship with them. She's been very direct about that, saying: "I really love the people I paint." But does this visual pleasure work when one is *not* in love with them?

Essentially, Peyton doesn't add anything to the media pictures of celebrities she depicts. They are mostly taken from paparazzi photos and they should have stayed like that. Peyton replicates their faces, but without the critical undertone we can observe in Andy Warhol's work. The key difference is one of media. In Warhol's case the print – as a repetitive, reproduced image – is crucial, but Peyton's oil paintings are just oil paintings, similar to portraits of members of high-class society 150 years ago. Moreover, they aren't even good. The colours, naïve positions and looks of portrayed people or sloppy spots of paint are actually rather kitschy. Even if we tried to catch some of the mood or warm relationship that Peyton senses in all the people she portrays, even if we admitted that kitsch can be valuable and inclusive, it's still not clear what kind of a message her work is sending to the world. Maybe she wants to say "look at them, everything is alright". But what we really get, in a cynical testimony to the superficiality of the art world, is "I'm the luckiest by far".



# Extraterrestrial Fantasies and Earthly Delights. Performance Night at Kunstverein Salzburg 1 August, 2018

by SW

Take the bearded lady's hand and follow her lead. Occupying various floors, galleries, and hallways of the Kunstverein Salzburg, this show encompasses 18 performances by different artists, all taking place over the course of one evening. Armed with nervous fans and high-piled wigs, five figures scurry from room to room, coyly whispering and guiding the audience from one performance to the next as if chasing after the palace's hottest gossip. Should you find yourself reminded of the fickle court ladies and the flippant exuberance in a Molière play, then the corresponding undercurrents of critical subversion and biting irony await.

Perched on the wide stairs leading up to the main gallery stands a tiny cardboard castle by the Russian artist Maria Anne. The castle, embellished with golden loaves of bread, serves as the stage for Anne's performance *Hlebland* (all works 2018, *bleb* meaning bread in Russian). Equipped with a crown of buns and a baguette sceptre, the artist orders audience members into the castle where they then become initiated into her glutenous cult. But once the door shuts behind the viewer-turned-subject, the interior offers a completely different vision that contrasts with the innocent playfulness of the initial setup: painted slogans covering the walls announce the totalitarian rules of the supposed fairy land. The performance parodies the discrepancy between a country's official narrative and its lived reality, and how political critique is limited to the confines of the private/interior sphere.

Anne's staging of subversive fantasies and the notion of art's sheer *bathos* in the face of political oppression finds its counterpart in Saeed Alizadeh's neighbouring video installation *A delicious dish*. Here, the artist has his spectators respond to questions shown on two screens, overlaid with various TV clips. The questionnaire quickly moves from benign to essential, leaving the interviewed incapable of giving adequate response to the charged images. Suddenly you realise that the artist has put you on a stage, exposed to the spotlights, performing the performance. A similar concern for the intersection between performance and installation is also central to Marcelle Demertzi's *En-counterpoint*. The sound installation uses multiple tall audio speakers, not unlike stunted mountain pines, scattered across the centre gallery and playing an ephemeral overlay of fleeting sounds. Walking through this sonic forest, the soundscape slightly changes according to the audience's position, again redirecting the viewers to their own subjectivity as a performative element.

While Alizadeh's and Demertzi's works focus on the relational potentialities of performance art, Colin Chrichton and Laura Volgger take a different approach in *Breaking (b)orders*. Donning white overalls, Chrichton and Volgger dance to the lyrics of a song that the two produced while bombarding each other with paint-filled-balloons. In what looks like a Keith Haring painting come to life, the lines separating painting, music, dance, and the two artists themselves begin to blur. If the performance's carnivalesque exuberance seems overbearing, then it is specifically by way of this emotional surplus that the artists aim to crack the resistant classifications between genre, media, and gender.

Theatre, sound, video, and dance: All of the above pieces are geared towards pushing established boundaries of performance art by way of oscillating between different formats. The show offers insight into some of the more recent tendencies in the field of performance art. Other than the exponents of early performance art in the 1960s and 70s, who were trying to establish performance as form of artistic expression in its own right, the artists performing here aim to mesh performance art with other genres and bring them in conversation with each other. Or, in other words, rather than separating performances from the non-performative objecthood of other media, their aim is to carve out the inherent performativity of all art forms.

The evening event nestles the performances amid the Kunstverein's current group show *20 Propositions*, which again references a previous exhibition, namely Hildegund Amanshauser's *40 Tage 20 Ausstellungen* from 1998. Like a rich mille-feuille pastry, the show(s) layers stacks and stacks of different art. Yet it is not the embedding in this saturated background that marks the specificity of the evening, but rather the way it skews temporality. The show sees multiple performances overlap and take place simultaneously, which in turn makes it impossible for the viewer to see all the pieces. In a seemingly arbitrary decision process, the spectator is encouraged to follow his own trajectory while inevitably missing out on some of the works. This specific framing of performative synchronicity has become increasingly popularised in recent years by performance artists such as Ei Arakawa, who is a tutor to all of the artists exhibited here.

However, is it not just the audience that is absolved of their duty to see everything, but also the artists from the imperative of having *to be seen* at all times. In a way, this signals the partial freeing of the performer from questions that are at the centre of countless performance art debates: "Does a performance need an audience to gain validity and meaning?" and "Would you perform in an empty room?" By pulling her neck away under this figurative sword of Damocles, the performance artist suddenly gains the liberty to look towards new horizons. Susan Sontag once mused that sensibility (as distinct from an idea) is one of the hardest things to talk about. And yet, a new sensibility marks the Kunstverein performances and how they manage to embody elusive truths. Embodiment, of either the artist or viewer as subject, is extremely complex and remains elusive in terms of what it means in terms of human experience and the relationship to the world. Thankfully, exhibitions like these seduce us to revisit these weighty questions by laying bare the pure vitality that lie behind them.



# Standing after Renée Green's Space Poem #5

by Jess Clifford

AFTER I AM DEAD DARLING  
AFTER MELVILLE  
AFTER THEIR QUARREL  
AFTER THE LAST COLD MOUNTAIN  
AFTER THE LISTING OF THE MIST  
AFTER THE RUMBA AND  
AFTER THE LIGHTS AND  
AFTER THE BOURBON  
AFTER THE QUARREL IN THE HOUSE  
I WALKED IN THE GRASSES OF THE FIELD  
AFTER THE REVOLUTION CAME THE FUEHRER  
AFTER THE CRISIS  
AFTERWARDS  
AFTER YOU FINISH YOUR WORK  
BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN

The 28 banners of Renée Green's *Space Poem #5 (Years and Afters)* are strung up across the atrium stairwell of Museum der Moderne Salzburg: seven rows of vibrant, dual-colour fabric squares, four apiece – like Tibetan prayers flags fluttering in its triple-height concrete apex.

Each banner alternately lists a series of 'years' and a series of 'afters', the years running a decade a time from 1887 to 2015 (the year of the work's creation) in stacked, centred blocks of text. Where these demarcate time in orderly, ordered legibility, the so-called 'afters' err towards the poetic, phrases of language that build in semantic immediacy. They display a mix of shifting references and cultural markers – the personal (After the quarrel in the house), political (After the revolution came the Fuehrer), literature (After Melville), and popular culture (After the rumba), to convey a sense of history and of time passed.

*Space Poem #5* both opens and closes *50 Jahre Generali Foundation*, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition of works from the insurance magnate's collection. The show has been organised around 'a dialogical engagement' with the years 1918, 1938 and 1968 as watershed moments in the history of the modern Austrian state and ones that, despite obvious differences, precipitated radical political and social change.



Invited to respond to the exhibition, the historians Albert Lichtbau and Marcus Weiglein compiled a series of contemporaneous public statements that reflect various points of view on the events of 1918, 1938 and 1968, which now trace the edges of the gallery walls and cornicing in bilingual textual fragments. Like the collective voice of the chorus in Greek tragedy, they mark out an elusive, polyphonic narrative of modernity as defined in relation to these specific chronological markers. In 2018, moreover, Lichtbau and Weiglein ask: “Where do we stand today?”

Incongruous then, perhaps, to bracket such a temporally oriented show with a work that echoes 1887. Yet the sliding textuality of Green’s banners manages to evoke private emotions and memories, as well as a sense of public exposition and communication, a dualism that continues throughout the show. In the sense that their slogan-like texts recall protest flags, the role of civic space in the constitution of the political self is repeatedly refracted and distributed throughout the presentation, in which works by Hans Haacke, Marcus Geiger, Valie Export and Allan Sekula, among many others, present conceptually undergirded responses to the historical, political and institutional absurdities of 1918, 1938 and 1968. Each depends upon the notion of oppositional exchange in the public sphere, of art as a statement in relation to or against a public that has, in one sense paradoxically, been brought inside the marble-clad walls of the institution. *Space Poem*, however, refuses any sense of calcification. Within the architectonics of the museum, the stairwell is a space of movement and transition that has been put to work.

The banners are set in relation to two further video works by Green: *Climates and Paradoxes*, and *Begin Again, Begin Again. I. 1887 – 1929*, their companion piece from 2015, created for Green’s solo exhibition at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture in Schindler House in Los Angeles. Rudolph M. Schindler was a Viennese architect who immigrated to the United States in 1914, settling in Los Angeles in 1920. The two works that Green produced for exposition at his ‘Kings Road House’ trace the thread begun a decade earlier in *Climates and Paradoxes*, of the lives of Albert Einstein and architect Konrad Wachsmann – both German émigrés to the United States – as representative of modernism as a condition defined by (artists in) exile.

As *Space Poem* #5 sets Schindler’s biography (he was born in 1887) against the artist’s own, *Begin Again, Begin Again* interweaves his manifesto-like essay ‘Modern Architecture: A Program’ (1913) with elements from literature – Paul Bowles’ poetry and excerpts from Thomas Mann’s *The Magic Mountain*. Schindler’s text contains motifs of inside and outside, shelter and enclosure, construction and purpose, all declaimed in staccato-like statements – numbered and organised into stanzas as if the auditory counter to the space poem’s concrete, typographic experimentation.

Their lines develop in intensity, and move from Schindler’s essentialised understanding of architectural components of form, frame and structure –

1. the cave was the original dwelling
4. empty shells for human shelter

– to what might be considered its condition under Green’s expanded, global modernism:

85. his home is no longer a timid retreat

86. the Earth has become his home

Interspersed with historical documentary footage that maps its way from 1887 to 2015, Green’s constellations of splintered imagery construct liquid, underwater visions that test Schindler’s spatially grounded propositions against legibility and semiotic coherence. *Begin Again, Begin Again* expresses a repeating doubling in its conception of narrative (Schindler/Green), time (then/now), and space (the Schindler house in Los Angeles and a shifting, urban ‘elsewhere’). In this sense, the work is both a meditation on the experience of migration as framed by modernism, and its mediation as an ongoing process in relation to the peripatetic precarity of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century artist, of which Green herself is a notable example. Against the conditions of an exhibition that transforms a private art collection into a century of political and social insurrection, architectural stability is replaced by aquatic volatility, from cave to globe and back again.

#### AFTER I AM DEAD DARLING

At the end of this perambulatory loop, one that closes and opens, we return to the banners:

#### AFTERWARDS

#### AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR WORK

As artists have positioned themselves ‘after’, in relation to, against, 1918, 1938 and 1968, Green’s works are themselves sited in relation to, against, but decidedly not ‘after’.

After all of the afters, the work isn’t done. We must, as they implore:

#### BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN AGAIN BEGIN AGAIN



David Lamelas

Gente di Milano (People from Milan), 1970

by Faith McKie

The constant whirring of David Lamelas's *Gente di Milano (People from Milan)* is heard long before it is visible. A 16mm coloured film is projected on the gallery wall and, to accompany it, a series of 11 photographs displayed on the opposing wall. Here, Lamelas records people walking along a Milan street in 1970 for a period between 11:58am and 12:02pm. Both are shot at the same static angle, so the camera never moves but people and traffic constantly change. Noise from the projection, rather than the film audio, overflows into the wider retrospective exhibition *Generali Foundation: 50 Years. In Dialog with 1918 1958 1968*, to disrupt other videos, and guides you curiously towards Lamelas's work.

Couples, businessmen and mothers clutching their children bustle past Lamelas's cameras, rhythmically moving around each other creating a continual flow of bodies that becomes hypnotic. Very few people attempt to avoid the camera or take notice of its presence, instead quickly walking in and out of frame. For a few seconds the projection goes black, allowing a peaceful interlude before the endless movement returns.

Expanding outward from the film, the photographs extend the frame to show a wider view of Milan and its people. Taken at regular intervals for the duration of the film the photos are displayed chronologically in a grid with corresponding time stamps underneath. When followed in order, no person has been captured by Lamelas more than once, in order to focus on people's identity over their movement. This aspect gives every person a personality that is otherwise missed during the fast pace of the film. Although depicting the same time frame, the work has been curated so that neither the film or photographs can be viewed simultaneously. Turning around is pointless. There is not enough time to view the photos in between breaks of the film, forcing you to look at each piece individually.

Rather than a documentation of Milan's people, *Gente di Milano* is closer to an early form of surveillance, and within the exhibition setting the work is also subject to – as is nowadays – the gallery's own cameras. It mirrors the current state of affairs: how we cannot escape from being constantly watched and surveilled in everyday life. As time moves forward, the meaning associated with a work of art alters and, in the case of *Gente di Milano*, as society changes. As a conceptual artist of the 60s, Lamelas used video as language to present an introspective commentary on society. He describes his early work as “quite separate from fiction”, instead wanting to document

factual life and embody the data it collected. It's worth mentioning here that from the late 1960s to the early 1980s Italy had numerous cases of political unrest and domestic terrorism. Historically contextualising the work provides an understanding that harks back to the time of its creation; a society in upheaval and an anxiety towards new forms of technology. Re-exhibiting the work in 2018, meanwhile, places it in a different context: becoming more than just a permanent record of existence, it is a visual census stalking your every move to now reflect a growing paranoia of artificial intelligence.

What has changed in the 48 years since 1970? For one thing, more cameras. In 1993, after the first attack on the World Trade Centre in America, the Municipality of Milan devised a programme to create a city-wide CCTV system to protect citizens from potential threats of crime. By 2008 a thousand cameras were monitoring the streets of Milan; there's an aim to total more than four thousand by early 2019. Under surveillance 24 hours a day no one can escape the watchful eye of the government. Privacy no longer exists.

"I think art is useful because it anticipates the future," Lamelas noted in one interview. Could *Gente di Milano* have been a warning of the heavy surveillance we now experience? Certainly, it accurately predicts the manipulation of technology to control people and blur the boundaries between public and private life. An encounter with Lamelas's work forces you to actively participate in the cycle of surveillance. As you watch, the gallery watches you. Someone is always watching.



# Insert Possibly Ironic Title Here

by Max

The Thaddaeus Ropac gallery looks like a fancy hotel. It's freshly renovated, the rooms are airy and full of light and the materials look expensive. The front-desk staff at the reception tells you where to go and soon you discover small-sized paintings by Elizabeth Peyton.

She is the ultimate portrait artist. Her subjects have always been symbols of glamour. Taking this celebrity aura and rendering it into ghoulish, pink, generic bodies, her charming, but clumsy and art-school-ish glaze technique is transforming photographs into pop-cultural seduction. Made with thin oil paint applied to board, both sturdy and soft. Most of them are small, implying intimacy but, in their air of impersonality, delivering distance.

The reviews of her exhibitions are highly polarizing; some critics are captured by her works and love them, while others are outright hateful. For example, Donald Kuspit's review on Artnet is called 'FAME-FUCKING AND OTHER FRIVOLITIES'. The general objection seems to be how shallow, celebrity-consumed and superficial her painting and her methods are. Elsewhere, Peyton has been praised for her approach to issues of representation, photographic imagery, celebrity, media and a sense of the sacred in pop-idol worship. Yet the questions surrounding these issues are continuously answered with a simple, "I love the people I paint." These responses seem largely insufficient.

I think it's interesting to compare Peyton to other two artists exhibited in the gallery: Andy Warhol and Anselm Kiefer. Both have also been confronted about their unresolved attitude toward their works. To what extent are their pieces ironic? What is the window of interpretation? For a long time, Kiefer was viewed as *the* conservative reactionary artist. Even the infamous Arthur C. Danto described his work, in one of his reviews, as 'a sustained visual lament for a shattered Vaterland'. Danto outright refused the possibility of multiple meanings rubbing against each other with considerable critical friction; he saw only a single meaning, and he was not alone in this. Warhol also divided art theorists in his intentions. Does the usage of images of *popular* culture in art emphasise the banal or kitschy elements of a culture? Does it contain a subversive element?



Peyton, for her part, seems to give almost no clues about potential other critical interpretation being present in her work. Asked in an interview if her works are ironic, she answered bluntly “At first. I remember this great moment after we hung the first show with Gavin – it was mostly all paintings of Kurt Cobain. A collector was getting a preview and asked “so, what are those?”” The only way to be sure that a statement was intended ironically is to have a detailed knowledge of all the references of the speaker and his audience. But what about all those other instances we also interpret as ironic, but might find no evidence for their being intended as such?

Anselm Kiefer is a nice case study in guessing ironic intentions. His works have this strange character: he uses Wagnerian allusions, as does Peyton, and even Nazi images in his work; but perhaps not, as some have argued, in order to reveal himself as a proud fascist. Read without irony, the provocative work can be and has been interpreted in this way. This has always been the risk of using irony. Interpreted through irony, Kiefer’s engagement with Nazi-related iconography is a way to confront the inescapable fact that, as a German artist today, Kiefer cannot avoid dealing with the Nazi aestheticization of politics. What he can do – and what I feel he has done – is turn that aestheticization against itself through irony, and thereby also accept responsibility for the past. According to this reading, he refuses to pretend that while National Socialism obviously happened, it had nothing to do with him.

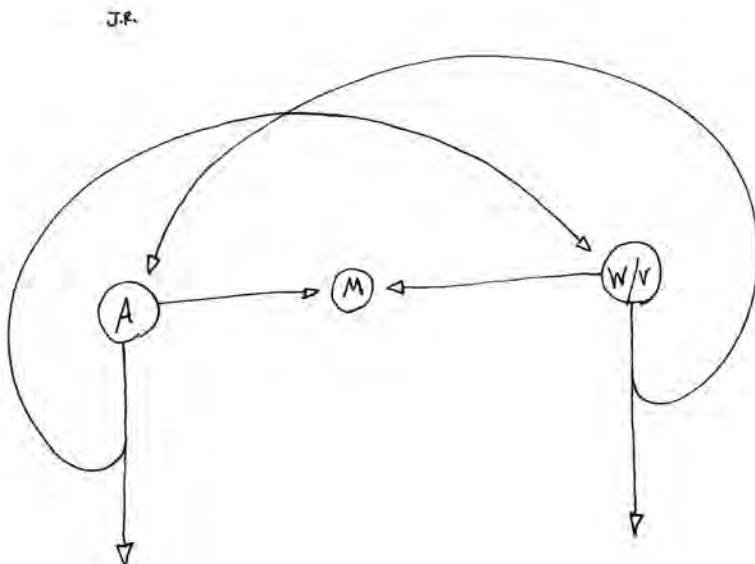
Linda Hutcheon, in her 1994 book *Irony’s Edge*, describes how irony works and how it might explain even Peyton: ‘It is possible to think of irony not as saying one thing and meaning another, but, instead, as a process of communication that entails two or more meanings being played off, one against the other. The irony is in the difference; irony makes the difference. It plays between meanings, in a space that is always affectively charged, that always has a critical edge.’ So is it possible to apply the notion that the unavoidable aestheticization of celebrity culture which Peyton is performing might have some subversive edge? Maybe there is a refined joke in being an artist who paints fictional gay lovers and Sid Vicious, and elsewhere refers to Wagner. What if Peyton’s cute little picture of Prince Harry as an angel in a crowd is just a funny, absurd statement? You could so easily believe it. Mightn’t these be *deliberately* kitsch? Does she really and indiscriminately revere all these people, or is it some next-level satire?

# The State of the Lecture Performance (notes for a lecture performance)

by Nathaniel Katz

My father used to tell the story of how his brother avoided being drafted into the Vietnam War. When my uncle was called for a psychological evaluation, he entered the office in a panic and started shuffling through the papers on the psychologist's desk, mumbling "this is not it, this is not it." He picked up papers frenziedly, briefly looked at them, threw them to the floor, turned over the wastebasket, and continued repeating the phrase. The psychologist, concerned that my uncle was suffering a delusional episode, sat down and typed a letter of exemption. He signed it and handed it to my uncle, who looked at the paper and said "this is it!" I was reminded of this while attending the – lecture-performance heavy – 6th edition of the Live Works Performance Act Award in Centrale Fies, Northern Italy. I kept waiting for the "it".

Part of the Drosdesera festival, since 2013 the prize has augmented, and acted as a reflexive provocation to, that historic Italian avant-garde theater expo, now in its 38th year. Here, in her lecture performance *Rock and Clay Improvisation*, German artist and author Judith Raum recounted a period in the British colonialist history of Iraq through a biographical account of British explorer Gertrude Bell. The story was complemented and paralleled by a continuous action of arranging and cleaning stones. The performative construction of academic expertise reinforced the hierarchical mechanisms of power that eventually integrated Bell's work into men's work and erased her from history.

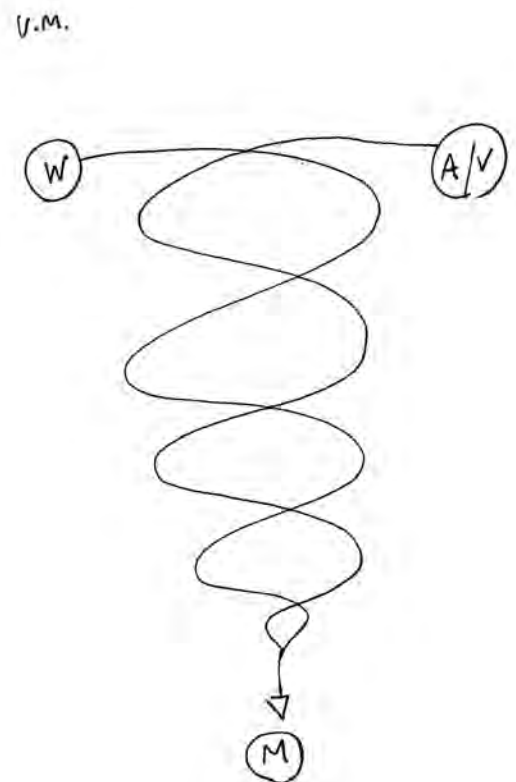


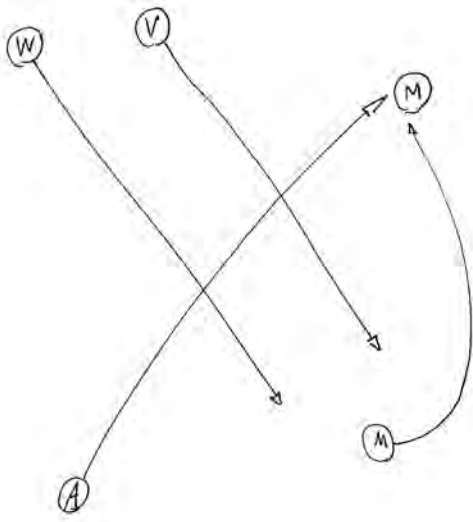
The lecture performance as a performative strategy has its roots in performance and conceptual art of the 1960s. When, in 1965, Joseph Beuys performed *Explaining Pictures to a Dead Hare* – in which the German artist carried a dead rabbit in his arms while explaining to it the meaning of pictures in a gallery – he opened up the pedagogically subversive potential of performance in art. Two developments in contemporary art over the past 15 years have led to this ‘expert’ format gaining both increased popularity and wider critical recognition. The first is the professionalization of the artist as researcher, the more artists themselves become expert scholars on a specific topic, the more important it is to make visible in artistic practice the original scholarship and approaches to scholarship developed.

A second factor is the growing emphasis on live-ness that results, in part, from a shifting of relevance from studio practices to knowledge production. Consequently, performance-based art comprises essential elements of the programming of institutions. The above-mentioned reasons have spelt the increasing popularity of lecture performance, because the already-recognized-in-academia research of the artist can be presented and acknowledged as artistic practice without the need to create a tension that live performance relies on.

For example, in Centrale Fies, Austrian filmmaker Ursula Mayer’s lecture performance *COCCYX* employed the historical performative device of nudity as a representational component. The strikingly nude performer Jade Montserrat traced fragments of text about the commodification of black women’s bodies onto large canvases with charcoal, before reading out of the same text. The performance purposefully implicated all gazes while contemporaneously attempting to construct a future speculative narrative of the body.

While several artists have looked to reinvent, subvert and challenge the conventions of the lecture through their performances, a few basic formulas do exist for these live works. For example, as per the diagrams here, it is important to talk (Words=W) about something that you know about or have researched while introducing a symbolic, metaphoric or parallel performative gesture (Action=A), and/or showing slides (Visuals=V) that expand on, or act as divergence from the topic being discussed, thus creating meaning (=M). Or to perform an A and a W that when read together create M; or to use an A to counteract or contradict the proposed M of the W; or to have the A and V inform the W which then create M; or to present a lecture about something that you don’t know very much about, (W+V) but use the authority and perceived expertise of the format (A) to comment on knowledge production (M). The lecture performance is an exercise in either content  $W+A+V=M$  or form  $(W+A+V)=M$  in the construction of meaning. Has this performative genre reached a saturation point, where works are pointing at their own limitation?

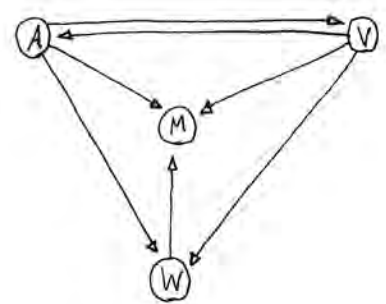




Brazilian filmmaker Beto Shwafaty's lecture performance *No fear of the raw (or), how to reverse one's own gaze* demonstrated academic scholarship in the obscure Latin American 'pornomiseria' film movement from the 1970s, through the screening of a film he produced on the topic in Cali, Colombia. Watching the video exposed several questions about the artist's own exploitation of poverty. Mr. Shwafaty confronted this by shifting the blame, pointing a live camera at the viewers and projecting them on screen for a simulcast of audience watching itself while also watching problematic outtakes from the film.

The lecture performance *I... Cognitive Maps\_chapter 1* by Lebanese artist Ely Daou employed cognitive mapping techniques as a structure for storytelling, in which he reconstructed his childhood through the various apartments his family lived in during the Lebanese civil war. Mr Daou utilised an overhead projector to scribble on sketched blueprints, and introduced excerpts from a Skype interview with his father that further challenged the subjectivity of the memories recounted.

E.D.



Simultaneous with the rise of performance art as a radical rejection of materiality is its absorption into the art economy through its materialisation in documentation. An inherent contradiction can be posited for the lecture performance, in its challenging of the production of expert knowledge with its relocation to the material value of the artist's presence in cultural spaces. Concurrent to Beuys' emphasis on the co-presence of artist and event other artists in the Fluxus movement worked on their invisibility through the performative potential of text. Scores and instruction works, when remaining in their state of latent potential, refuse a co-presence; perhaps here is a model for future lecture performance. American artist Bici Forbes was particularly innovative in constructing performative possibility with instruction works such as *Become Invisible* (1966):

- a) by hiding
- b) by divesting yourself of all distinguishing marks
- c) by going away
- d) by sinking through the floor
- e) by becoming someone else
- f) by concentrating so hard on some object or idea that you cease to be aware of your physical presence
- g) by distracting everybody else from your physical presence
- h) by ceasing to exist

After that, she was never heard from again.

Der lange Schatten  
Marisa Merz. Il cielo è grande spazio /  
Der Himmel ist ein weiter Raum  
Museum der Moderne, Salzburg  
24 May – 4 November 2018

by Katja Stecher

Eine Frau sitzt an einem Küchentisch. Sie öffnet eine Konservendose und entnimmt vorsichtig eine Erbse nach der anderen, die sie, geduldig zählend, auf einen zunächst leeren Teller legt. Diese Tätigkeit wiederholt sie insgesamt 54 Mal, dann beginnt das Video von vorne. Zu sehen ist die Arbeit *La Conta* (1967) in der aktuellen Ausstellung *Der Himmel ist ein weiter Raum*, mit der das Museum der Moderne Salzburg der Künstlerin Marisa Merz (\*1926 in Turin, IT) eine umfassende Werkschau widmet.

Möglicherweise wird dieser Schwarz-Weiß-Film kaum wahrgenommen, nicht nur wegen des kleinen Bildschirms im letzten Raum der Ausstellung, sondern weil er eine geradezu banale Tätigkeit dokumentiert. Es bedarf einer gewissen Ausdauer, die repetitiven Gesten drei Minuten lang zu betrachten. Gleichwohl ist *La Conta* ein Schlüsselwerk der Retrospektive, da es auf wesentliche Aspekte im künstlerischen Schaffen von Marisa Merz verweist: Sie befasst sich eingehend mit der Rolle der Frau, die sich in den 1960er-Jahren vorwiegend auf Haushaltsführung und Kindererziehung beschränkt, und thematisiert dabei gleichermaßen ihre eigene Lebenssituation als Frau, Mutter und Künstlerin.

Im Hintergrund des Films sind Details der Arbeit *Living Sculpture* (1966) zu erkennen. Diese überdimensionale Installation entstand jedoch nicht im Atelier, sondern in der Küche – dem angestammten Arbeitsplatz der Hausfrau. Marisa Merz vernähte unzählige Aluminiumstreifen zu wuchtigen Röhren, die von der Decke hängen. In ihrem Arbeitsprozess greift sie immer wieder explizit weiblich konnotierte Tätigkeiten auf und überführt sie in die Kunst. Dieser Kategorie gehören auch die aus Kupferdraht gestrickten Objekte an. Angeordnet auf einem niedrigen, runden Holztisch (Ohne Titel, 1977) in dessen Mitte ein weißes Einblatt (*Spathiphyllum*) prangt, wirken die kleinen Schuhe, Schüsseln und Quadrate wie Dekorationselemente, die das häusliche Umfeld schmücken. Ebenso erinnert die Art der Präsentation von 27 kleinformatigen Porträtzeichnungen (Ohne Titel, undatiert) an Familienfotos, die wie persönliche Erinnerungen an der Wand arrangiert sind. Die Retrospektive versammelt kleinteilige Objekte, Zeichnungen sowie Gemälde aus fünf Jahrzehnten, die überwiegend installativ präsentiert sind und aufgrund ihres referentiellen Charakters einen poetisch-sinnlichen Eindruck vermitteln.



Trotz dieser eindeutig feministischen Aspekte, die aus heutiger Sicht und im Vergleich zu Arbeiten von Künstlerinnen derselben Generation weniger gesellschaftskritisch und radikal sind, wird Marisa Merz nach wie vor als einzige weibliche Vertreterin der Arte Povera gehandelt. Eine Tatsache, die vermutlich lediglich dem Umstand geschuldet ist, dass ihr Mann Mario Merz (1925 – 2003) ebenfalls Künstler und Teil dieser losen, von Männern dominierten Bewegung war. Die Bezeichnung Arte Povera wurde vom Kunsthistoriker Germano Celant geprägt und bezieht sich auf die Verwendung von alltäglichen, kunstfernen Materialien. Dabei ist das Spektrum der Arbeiten sehr disparat und weist eindeutige Parallelen zu anderen Kunstrichtungen der späten 1960er-Jahre, wie der Konzeptkunst oder der Land Art, auf. Gemeinsam ist ihnen ein visionärer, kulturkritischer und anti-nationalistischer Charakter – die Rolle der Frau steht jedoch nicht im Mittelpunkt des Interesses jener Künstler.

Nichts desto trotz rühmt sich das Museum der Moderne im Ankündigungstext damit, dieser „außergewöhnlichen Künstlerin [...] als erste Institution in Österreich und seit über zehn Jahren im deutschsprachigen Raum“ eine Ausstellung zu widmen. Eine späte Anerkennung für eine Künstlerin, die aufgrund ihres berühmten Mannes zu lange übersehen wurde? Oder ist es vielmehr ein Klischee, dem sich Institutionen und KunsthistorikerInnen gerne bedienen? Denn bei einer genauen Analyse der Biografie fällt auf, dass Marisa Merz bereits 1967, zu Beginn ihrer Karriere, eine Einzelausstellung in einer Turiner Galerie hatte und im darauffolgenden Jahr in der von Germano Celant kuratierten Gruppenausstellung *Arte Povera + Azioni Povere* vertreten war. Ab 1972 nimmt sie regelmäßig an Großausstellungen wie der Biennale von Venedig oder der Documenta in Kassel teil und wird seit den 1980er-Jahren auch immer wieder in den USA gezeigt. Daher stellt sich unweigerlich die Frage, ob es nicht langsam an der Zeit ist, die diskriminierende Mär von der im Schatten ihres berühmten Mannes arbeitenden Künstlerin zu überwinden und ihre Arbeiten als eigenständiges Werk innerhalb des Kunstkontextes zu verorten.



# Valeska Gert – posing as a body and wearing it on your sleeve

by Edith Lázár

How can I make myself known to you, if not through masquerading? Contradictory as this might seem, don't we often relate to things that, familiar at first, become something else, even if only slightly, when our attention gets caught between anticipation and presence. Masquerading isn't always a game of pretense: it can equally function as a mechanism of becoming who one really is.



But how does one navigate such a line? And to where? The introduction we are given to Valeska Gert's work in *Resonance of Exile* – a show that elsewhere strikes the viewer as a rather dull, documentary-driven exhibition – follows this thread of moving from the everyday to something like a provoking thought. This Berlin-born dance-performance artist was of Jewish descent and from the 1920s onward, developed a carnivalesque body of work. The cubicle-like exhibition space within a space is constructed like a recollection of images across different media, from photographs to short films and cut-outs from magazines, and it is always through others' lenses that we get to see Gert. Yet in what is otherwise a commonplace practice related to performativity, what is interesting are the mix-ins and mix-ups between her portraits, scenes from different events, magazine pages, and her performing (on film). In them, Gert flows between the familiar and the spectacular, her body morphing at once with her characters, in costumes there to fit and unfit, to create and distort, a certain sense of representation. A screen revolves through projections of the 30s uber-feminine diva, the model, the ingénue, the harlot, the boxer, the beggar, funny-faces and street people, which remind one of Charlie Chaplin's old snapshots in conveying an actress's theatrical act.

Yet slowly they start to fall out of the frame, giving way to a drag act where gender is bent. The performer takes the role of a 'trickster' exaggerating the rules in order to expose their order. A woman playing a woman acting, a boxer or a kabuki dancer in scenes that appear somewhere between a comedian entering the stage and a performer confronting the audience. Moving across different media and recordings generates a time-lapse: here Gert is young, here contorted, orgasming or laughing her heart out in a filmic series, glamorously staring from a portrait facing herself acting. The artist might as well be playing all those characters and gestures all over again until they've given a hint of our own everyday masquerade and social stereotypes towards others. Just like in dancing, her body always undergoes postures; and like



in dancing, it manages to confuse the music with the performer until they become one. Performance images, we're reminded, are a deliberate way to offer the body for circulation.



One floor below, in another historical display (from the Generali Foundation archive), Valie Export lets herself be touched or exposes her body, legs apart, in *Action Pants: Genitalia Panic* (1969). Nearby Carolee Schneemans' *Fuses* (1967) exploring the intimacy of a sexual act according to a woman's gaze. Gert's *Canaille* (1921), her prostitute dancing in full possession of her sexuality, opening her legs and mocking eroticized pictures, produces a similar reflection of the body as an instrument of critique, able to create frictions within the norms that assess and condition female bodies. Looking at Gert's work in an extended context might offer a better understanding of her subversion of socially imposed hierarchies, following a contemporary rereading that tackles which bodies count and which are deemed to be ridiculed. But the exhibition offers too little of that, caught in its own construction of historical frames that seeks to underline points of contagion between artists of more or less the same generation, which have dealt with forms of exile on the verge of both cultural liberation and then the social and political clash of the Weimar Republic. This static historicization stays quite in contrast to recent institutional tendencies that blur the line between display and (archival) performative acts by proposing something like an event-based approach. Here, however, the archival input overrides the performative one, making it just another image that visitors could cycle through. Then it goes on to engulf even the political strength of the show.

For all the focus, in this show, on connections between artists in exile and their mirroring through artworks, it is worth mentioning that the notion of immigrant here focuses on the Jewish one before and after post-war Germany, all explained in lengthy texts for which the artists' works become no more than exhibits of historicity. Less grounded in visual representations that are easily reclaimed by texts, Gert's poetry piece, 'The Re-migrant' – speaking of uneasiness and dislocation even when homecoming – actually manages to tackle the tricky nature of the word, and somehow relates it to the current state of affairs. We traverse territories and borders all the time, yet not all of us are affected by its politics. Migrants are never themselves, they are always what another imagines them to be, whether in the good-bad binary, or received in the name of an elusive 'freedom'. Most of the time they continue to be outsiders compelled to perform themselves.

In this sense, *Resonance of Exile* seems more like a reheated soup, highlighting the recovery of female and less visible artists without extending or actually engaging with the problematics this process proposes. And in this sense, Valeska Gert's undisciplined way of performing, acting and dancing gets shoved under the carpet. A late interview she gave for a German television, showing her still talking through body expressions, might have given more viewers a glimpse into her understanding of performance as a way of life, if it wasn't for its easy-to-miss positioning. Looking at Gert's work, it appears that sliding between characters, masquerading, might serve as a way to accommodate oneself without getting reduced by others' imaginaries.

Resonance of Exile, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg

# The audience of art

by Teresa Retzer

We know that the majority of the production of the art of the upper classes [...] never were afterwards either understood or valued by the great masses of mankind, but have remained, what they were at first, a mere pastime for the rich people of their time, for whom alone they ever were of any importance. [...] [T]his art is not produced by these masses, nor even chosen by them, but is energetically thrust upon them in those public places in which art is accessible to the people.

Lev Tolstoi: *What is Art?* (1898)

Martha Rosler characterized art's actual audience in the late 70s as 'those who "understand" and own art artifacts'. She understood this distinction as a political decision that helps to 'keep people in their place', so that they will not (or will only seemingly) participate in high culture. The show of recent paintings of Elizabeth Peyton and the collection that was on in Galerie Thaddeus Ropas in Salzburg confirms what Rosler observed back in the late '70s. While the response of ordinary people to Peyton's paintings might be positive, approving their being colourful in a decorative way and their narrative content, gallerists and potential collectors and agents from institutions – the fundamental part of the 'real art audience' – praises or disregards the work for its market value, or the position Peyton might have established in her career. Less economically driven academics and experts will start their discussions about the works by smoothly framing it within the history of painting; they will value it for its social relevance or its production aesthetics.

Prior to my inaugural job in the art world, the first thing my boss pointed out in the interview was the importance of art education. She understood her role as a gallerist as that of a mediator. When listening to her way of speaking about 'the' audience as a whole, the picture of a herd of sheep popped up in my head. Her idealistic speeches about bringing the alien quality that contemporary art emanates closer to the people meant creating an environment for shepherds, who need sheep in order to call what they do a profession.

At Ropac, another commercial gallery, class distinction is treated as a necessity, as the social value of high art depends absolutely on the existence of a distinction between



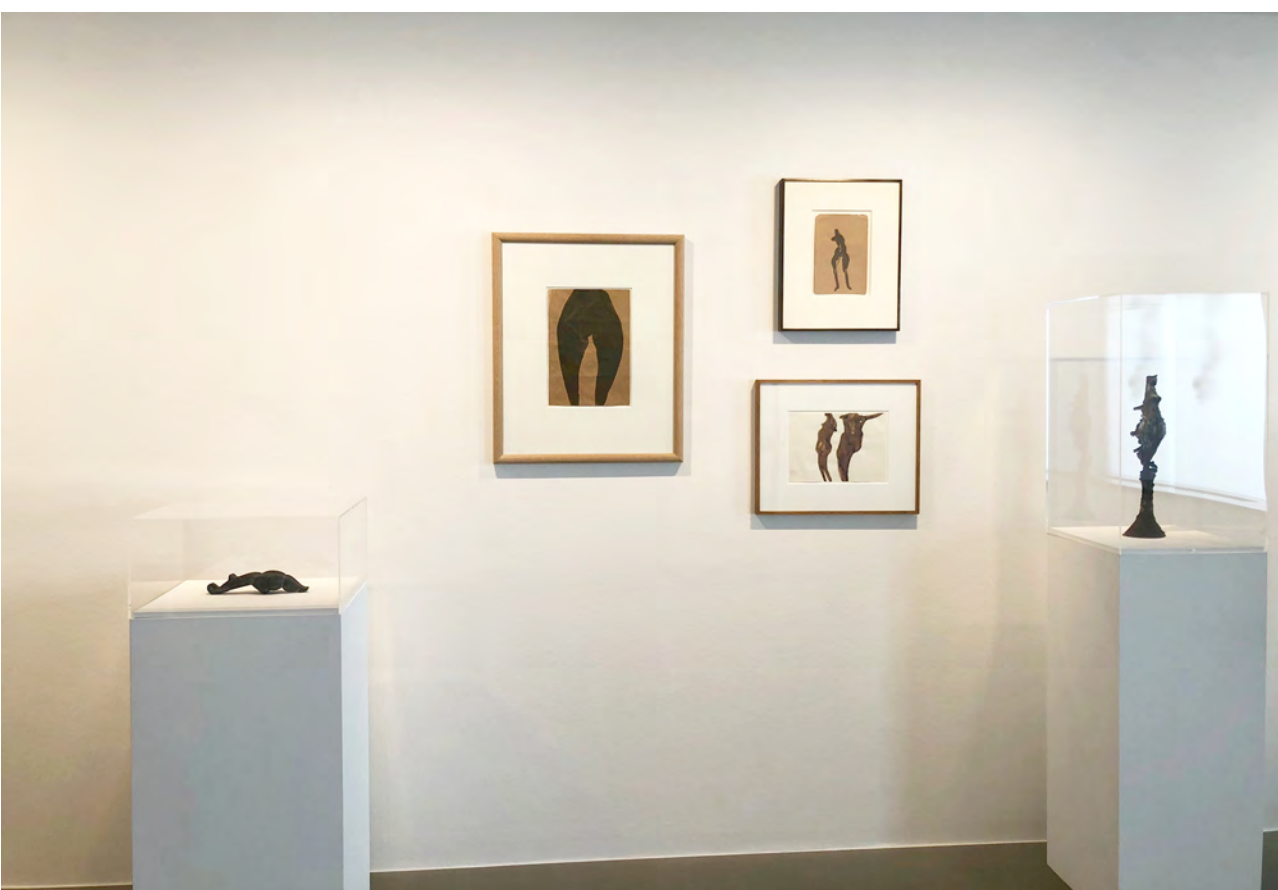
a high culture and a low one. It is the unquestioned continuation of these conditions in here that makes these paintings, and the rest of the exhibition, physically available and emotionally inaccessible at the same time.

Moving through the temporary display of works from Ropac's artists, a display of early works by Joseph Beuys – mostly from his time as a student in Düsseldorf – puts my unease with this entire, all-too-common setting into a nutshell. Cast bronze sculptures of Jesus on the cross are attached at the wall to the right, opposing faded watercolour paintings of nudes; gauche Madonna figures are proudly presented in glass vitrines. Beuys' references to Christianity, the female body, horses and medieval production processes are quite clear. His message, though, is vague. There is no big secret behind these early artistic attempts: they anticipate a certain formal vocabulary he elaborated later, though nevertheless it is neither the topics nor the formal concepts that brought him here. Rather, he became an avatar of the most exclusive spaces in the art world for his political ideals to develop a socially expanded concept of art, saying things like "every human being is an artist" and "a total work of art is only possible in the context of the whole society".

What is the connection between Beuys' urge to reform art and open it up to the society as a whole, and the pieces in here? The clerical chamber in the historical Villa Kast, where the Beuys works reside, serves as the optimal environment for pretending that there is a link. The house, constructed to thank the chamberlain Maximilian K. L. O'Donnell for saving the life of an Austrian emperor (Kaiser Franz Joseph I), preserves these objects like magical artefacts. But only the rest of Beuys' lifework, and predominantly his political activities, make it possible to mystify the bold and simple. And mystery is appealing.

Before the moment when Beuys landed in places like this gallery – of the type that he had criticized all his life – stand a few decades in which opinions coming from the connoisseurship world affirmed the existence of his movement and declared his art worth buying. Art which wants to be recognized by those who understand it must respond to the zeitgeist but mustn't get along with it too easily. Van Gogh, they say, was anticipating the zeitgeist of his time, whereas actually he was responding to the ordinary because he was not being able to connect to the elites. However, if Van Gogh hadn't been such a scary creep his art might now be warehoused in European collections, standing for no more than the representation of another artist who painted portraits, landscapes and still lifes. His paintings would probably still stand out for their amplified use of yellow next to various Jans, Piets and Maartens, but within the salon he would never have fought against the current for recognition by speaking the voice of the powerless; it's the unconventional in his voice that was interesting, discussed up by the experts and bought by the collectors, which formed the canon of art history. While Van Gogh processed his own paradoxical reality in his work, most of the Jans and Maartens in Reichs Museum and Van Beuningen open windows into nostalgias for a past that never had existed, not in the head of a stranger. The ideological purpose of pre-modern art requires art that only exists in a perfect world where the sun shines golden, a truth which the modern age cannot deny any longer. And paintings that show a sun that burns the unprotected skin of farmers become another reality in the museum.

Beuys' yellowed paper and the dusty bronzes reminded me of the bloody stretchers that flanked the wall in the meeting room of the Viennese gallery I had worked for. One of them says it's a piece of art that represents performances in the 1960s, actions later labelled as the *Orgies Mysteries Theatre of Viennese Actionism* under the command of Hermann Nitsch. Most people, though, just see linen sheets soaked in blood, straddled over a wooden frame.

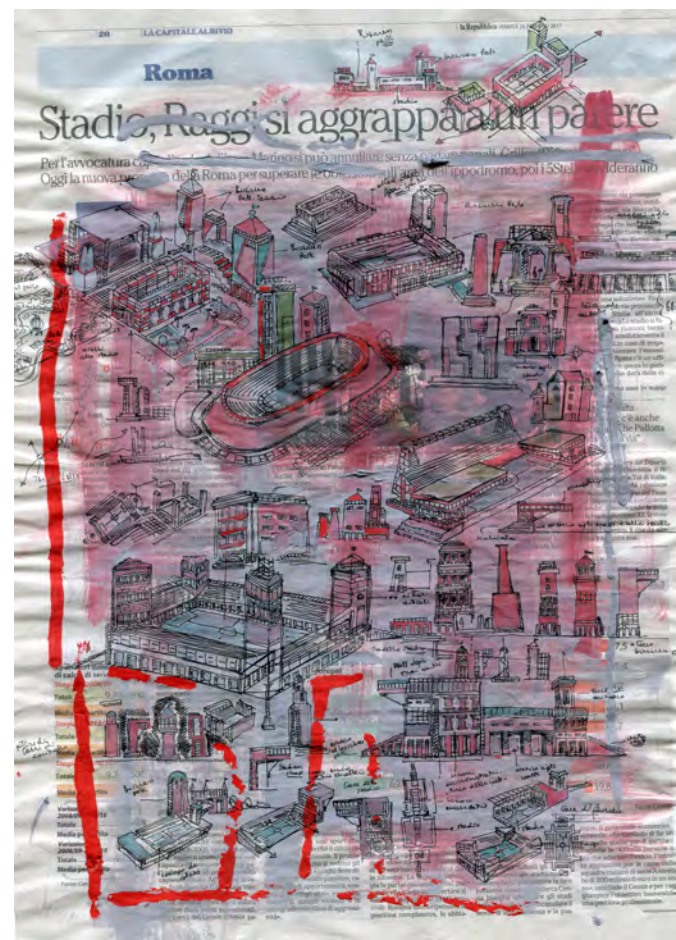


# Jacopo Ascari: a Journey through the Interiors of Exteriors

by Matteo Pace

Since humankind first started asking questions about the significance of its existence through the exercise of philosophy and literature, it has realised – dreadfully so – how ephemeral and maze-like its condition is. Therefore, art in all its manifestations has always been regarded as the key to access the Olympus of immortality. And of these, one of the most palpable and eye-opening expressions of art that we are confronted with on a daily basis is architecture. It demonstrates *physically* what has built up *mentally* in the course of centuries. It is an attempt at representing and defining mankind itself. It is the critical awareness and analysis of the surrounding environment that shapes, instigates and drives the highest achievements of beauty. It is the power of moulding the ambit and ambience in which man lives and seeks a definition for himself as well as for other creatures, all harmoniously echoed in the milieu of nature. In doing this, everything is neatly crystallised in the shapes of architecture. Man is silently caressed by a touch of the divine. He produces a hermeneutic act by creating, *ex nihilo*, an entire world from its meanings and definitions.

Historically, the medium of drawing in the field of architecture had only a practical purpose. A watershed moment in its history was reached with the work of Italian architect Franco Purini (1941): he was able to confer artistic dignity to architectural drawing by elevating his sketches to occasions of intense meditation. He is one of the main contributors of Italian *neorazionalismo* and, in particular, of so-called *drawn architecture*. In the contemporary scene, the young artist-architect Jacopo Ascari, based in Milan, constructs solid bridges between the external environment and his internal interpretation of it. Aged twenty-five, he uses mainly paper as a medium for his studies. The core of his work emerges from a precise surgical dissection of an architectural element. Colour



plays a significant role, conferring intimate personality to the work: dressing the austere black pillar-like lines of a visual structure with creative intellectual dreaming. In *Stadio* (2017) fine black traits constitute the skeleton of the work, red the blood that animates it, while grey reflects the uncertainty of the overall debate it reflects.

*Stadio* (2017) starts from the conception of architecture as the outcome of contemporary history: during the last two years in Rome, the construction of the new stadium for the football team has been highly debated, especially by the new mayor, Virginia Raggi, who eventually accepted and approved it. *Stadio* is 'forged' directly on the newspaper article that describes the evolution of the ongoing discussion. At the centre of the piece Ascari depicts his main rendering of the stadium, and then he re-proposes it under different visual perspectives. The viewer is placed in a privileged, empowering position of admiring the entire landscape: he or she feels like a powerful wandering eagle, able to zoom on the stadium and then, almost at the same time, stroll through towers, edifices, shops and maps. To complete and support his visual statements Ascari jots down directly on the work quick notes, explications and considerations of what his soul sees. He welcomes the observer into his inner world through the medium of drawing.

In addition to research on architecture Ascari offers his skills and studies to the art world, serving as a personal assistant to the Italian artist Chiara Dynys. Jacopo translates her concepts and ideas into visual stories through storyboards and drawing. He acts as a visual medium for her, starting from the definition of concepts through the use of language. The outcomes are sketches and then drawings which help technicians to metamorphose artist's ideas into physical artworks or installations. In this role he embodies what Degas once said: "Art is not what you see, but what you make others see."

Were his production to be read through the words of literature's *chef-d'oeuvre* it would unquestionably be Italo Calvino's book *Invisible Cities*: the triumph of imagination over experience. During the novel, the narrator behaves exactly like the spectator of Ascari's works: he is able to land on details and, in the very next gaze, shift to the global panorama.

*With cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a rebus that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else.*



# Eternal Youth

by Martin Titz

‘Be like an apple!’ Paul Cézanne reportedly told someone he was painting. As it took him years to finish a painting (if at all), the more appropriate command would have been ‘Be like Mont St. Victoire!’ Any painter of portraits has a different strategy to capture the looks of their models. In the case of Lucian Freud it was a gesture of aristocratic daringness – his model and biographer Martin Gayford describes him as an ‘ever young cavalier’ – postponing the finishing of the portrait over months and years in order to observe the model point-blank and to suck its liveliness right into the brush via the eye. Maria Lassnig painted the outside world only in the mirror of her inner self and her ‘body-awareness’. She uses the canvas to paint the unpaintable. She painted against the limitations of representation and she became desperate as she felt nobody might understand what she was trying to represent.

Elisabeth Peyton calls what she is doing “pictures of people” rather than portraits. Small-scaled, brilliantly colorful paintings and watercolors of ever-young people, many of them famous, some of them just cool, all with an air of easy living. The model is highly stereotyped when Peyton paints it. Likeness is never the main issue with her. Her brush puts a spell or a filter of youth on the sitter. They all are thin, have a pale complexion and red-painted lips, boys as well as girls. Youth, no matter if *jeneuse dorée* or existentialists, is the paintings’ live target.

On the small surfaces people appear extremely close and are strangely engrossed at the same time. They all have this introverted look that attains nirvana off the frame. Consequently Peyton uses this play with acquaintance and distance for her titles, which are just the first names of the celebrities. Looking at Kurt (Cobain) and Elvis (Presley) and Leonardo (di Caprio) and (Queen) Elizabeth, one registers that Peyton has spread her interests as a former chronicler of New York downtown. Now she fosters strong sympathy for celebrities worldwide. Inspiration and admiration and starlight, rather than a portrait commission, are Peyton’s motivation.

It was the time art discovered transgender in the 1990s, when New York gallerist Gavin Brown brought Peyton’s work to the Chelsea Hotel, where people like Keith Richards and Patti Smith had stayed. There, Peyton showed drawings of young Napoleon Bonaparte and Marie-Antoinette. Later on she incorporated Sid Vicious, Jonas Kaufmann, Georgia O’Keeffe, royals and even politicians in her painted high

society photo album. Why does a painter do such visual name-dropping? Does life write only in the faces of celebrities? Why not old and tired, ugly or dirty faces? Black people? Peyton does not look at people, as she maintains, she paints people's personas, faces as masks. Peyton's gaze at people is directed upwards to her heroes thus overlooking short people. It was Velazquez who painted his sympathies for all mankind, the royals and their offspring and the dwarfs.

It is revealing to look at the work of an artist not only in terms of his choice of subject, but also what he does not choose to show. And there is a lot of hidden painting in the work of Elisabeth Peyton. Her section of the represented world is extremely small. Her portrait gallery is like the Facebook account of a paparazzo. The extreme opposite to her I can think of would be Sebastião Salgado. When you hear him talk about his life and the moments, when he takes a photograph, it is so much richer in its diversity and empathy for nature and for people than Peyton's work is.

There was a time before people selected friends using social networks to get some of their starlight, before bodies were distorted to project perfect beauty through Photoshop and plastic surgery, it was when Yves Saint Laurent retired from the fashion business. In his last press conference, he said that the one person we all are life-long searching for, and most rarely find, is oneself. Might this help us find out what exactly Peyton wants us to show behind the skillfully made masks of melancholic ennui? Is there life behind the lifestyle disguise?

A portrait is a subjective document: a viewer often recognizes the artist first and then the sitter. This is true also for Peyton's 'pictures of people', as they are highly subjective. Her signature are bold, large-scale brushstrokes on small surfaces; color and light are her painterly interests. It is either the chromatic appeal or, as in the newer work, the electrifying interplay between big spaces of white gesso, strong colors and highly abstract brushstrokes that eventually and sparsely form the person. Each dash is tender and accurate at the same time.

Peyton says she is looking for the moments in which life creates fame, when a singular man reaches a crossroads that lead to eternal youth in the history books. After all, it is a fatalist's view to approach history as a fixed, one-way direction, not being aware of those manifold situations in which the match point of fame can drop on the either side of the net of historical facts. Again, Peyton's concept of fame is misleading: it is rarely discipline and hard work but more often publicity and irrational behavior that foster fame. Yet such thoughts already lead us too far away from Peyton's motives. For better or worse, her work is what it is: no mythologies, no heavy theorizing, pure painting.



# Contributors

## Karin Buchauer

is happiest when reading or writing, doing yoga or just looking at the world and its people.

## Christoph Chwatal

Christoph is an art historian and critic based in Vienna, Austria. He has published in art magazines such as Art Papers, Flash Art, Spike Art Quarterly, and springerin. In 2017, he was awarded the AICA (Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art) Austria Prize for Young Art Criticism. Christoph's current research circles around artistic practices that provide esthetically and politically promising interventions in the public sphere expanding from education to para-institutional and para-legal forms responding to lacks of visibility in a globalized world's post-democratic politics.

## Jessica Clifford

is a writer and sometimes editor from Wellington, New Zealand, currently based in London.

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Yinka is a writer and art critic living in Lagos.

## Martin Herbert

is a writer and critic based in Berlin.

## Nathaniel Katz

is an artist based in Düsseldorf.

## Andrea Kopranovic

artophile, architecture nerd, gallerina, PhD-writing victim, occasional art writer and curator. Lives in Vienna, was born and raised in Salzburg, lives between these two, Würzburg and Banja Luka. Hates asparagus.

## Edith Lázár

has a background in art history. She is currently enrolled in a PhD program in Philosophy at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj with a thesis exploring a philosophical theorization of fashion. Taking interest in contemporary artistic practices, she focuses on fictions, dissensus, and aesthetic politics; alternative structures of perception and forms of visibility and the imbrications between art, fashion, practice, and the everyday. She is an art writer for the international platform anti-utopias (in charge of its Fashion Series) and co-founder of Aici Acolo pop-up gallery – a project that reactivates unused or abandoned urban spaces in Cluj-Napoca by transforming them into temporary art spaces.

## Faith McKie

an art student trying to write.



Max

is a professional skateboarder.

Matteo Pace

student, took his BSc in Economics and Management to eventually dive into a MSc in Art Law and Business. He is fond of abstract art, learning foreign languages, reading poetry and watching ballets. In reading and writing he finds neat order to silence the fast chaos of everyday life.

Anna Remešová

is based in Prague and works as a curator (Etc. Gallery) and an editor (online art magazine Artalk.cz). She is mainly interested in institutional and political conditions of art.

Teresa Retzer

studied art history and philosophy. She wrote for several art magazines, including Spike Quarterly, Mousse Magazine and Art Papers. Her research is focused on contemporary art practices and media theory that engage with the influence of digital infrastructures on society such as discussing conventional and new strategies of knowledge production and representational systems within everyday media, politics, and art. Teresa interprets art writing as a possibility to engage with socio-political problems and, besides academic texts on art and criticism, she concentrates on right-wing extremist subcultures in former East Germany.

Katja Stecher

ist Projektkoordinatorin von studio das weisse haus und Kunstvermittlerin im Belvedere 21. Sie studierte Kunstgeschichte an der Universität Wien und absolvierte von 2012 – 2014 den Masterlehrgang für Ausstellungstheorie und -praxis an der Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien. 2016 war sie Co-Kuratorin von *AWAY – a project around residencies*, und ist wiederholt als Autorin und Redakteurin an unterschiedlichen Publikationen beteiligt.

Martin Titz

Martin lives in Graz (AT) and loves to travel with his daughter. He likes the simple things in life: art and tea.

Franziska Trembl

is: 27, Viennese, Journalism Student. Loves: art, literature, theatre, travels. Does: look at art, read books, go to the theatre, travel.

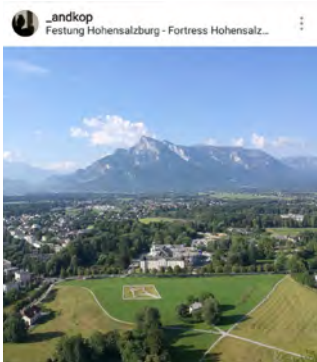
SW

is an art historian based in Zurich, where he is currently working on his doctoral thesis.

# Taxi drivers don't get taxi drivers' block

**Andrea Kopranovic**

art historian. architecture theoretician. SBG-VIE-WUE-BJL



**\_andkop** hello old friend. first day again at the @summeracademy.at  
#bestview #untersberg #mountain #salzburg #viewfrommyoffice #summeracademy  
#classofmartinherbert

**\_andkop**

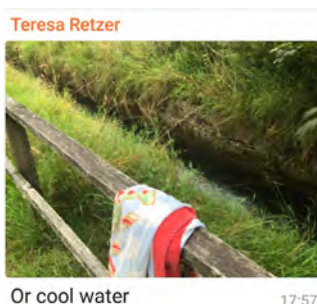
Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts



**\_andkop** we (or rather them, (co-)teachers and students are in the same boat but do have different struggles) have been working on assignments for six days now. the class has been struggling with writer's block over the weekend, so they came up with solutions. tip against writer's block no. 1: when you don't know what to write, you need some vegan ice cream to relax your nerves. yinka, you are so right!  
#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainwritersblock #veganiicecream

**\_andkop**

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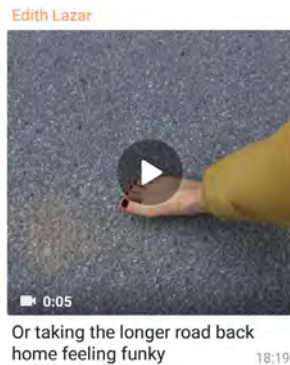
**\_andkop** naturally, the previous comment would trigger immediate responses. teresa,

who actually set up our common whatsapp group, fittingly called "salzburg writes", has another method of getting past block and heat. tip against writer's block no. 2: cool water helps.

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainswritersblock #swimming #water

**\_andkop**

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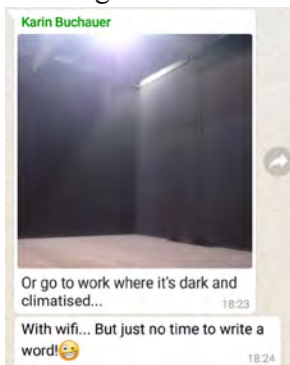


**\_andkop** when nothing helps, go barefoot like edith. tip against writer's block no. 3: take the longer road back home feeling funky. and dance in the streets!

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainswritersblock #barefoot #takeofyourshoes #alternativeroutes

**\_andkop**

Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts



**\_andkop** I imagine it can really help to just sit your butt on a chair. and write. letters, words, nonsensical phrases, typing on your keyboard like a cute little cat. meow meow hafhwaei,fdÖ--="?%\$"): ... it will look something like that. tip against writer's block no. 4: go somewhere dark (maybe not necessarily at night, right karin?), where it has a nice temperature and stable wifi. see you at starbucks then?

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainswritersblock #sityourassdown #tipping

**\_andkop**

Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts



**\_andkop** meanwhile, franziska, johanna and I were at a magical lake a little outside of

salzburg. I talked to the class before of how yoga helps me out when having writer's block, as does any kind of physical activity really. and I swear, we did do yoga and were swimming before this picture was taken! tip against writer's block no. 5: get drunk. there is this old rule for a reason: write drunk, edit sober.

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainwritersblock #yoga #drinking #hangover

**\_andkop**

Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts



**\_andkop** getting up and strolling through town for a little bit makes nathaniel's head clear again. there is something truly romantic about the symbol of the *flaneur*, although it can be incredibly pragmatic. tip against writer's block no. 6: follow the poor guy who collects the horse shit.

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainwritersblock #horseshit #flaneur #takeawalk

**\_andkop**

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**\_andkop** the one thing no writer can live without is their personal drug. in many cases it is coffee. tip against writer's block no. 7: get yourself a coffee. or two. or three (but never four in a row, it is going to make you nervous and dizzy). and then another one, in case you want to never sleep again. repeat endlessly.

#summeracademy #artwriters #classofmartinherbert #2018 #tipsagainwritersblock #coffee #nonaps #alwaysup





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- p. 12 (below) Elizabeth Peyton, *Elio, Oliver (Call me by Your Name)*, 2018  
Oil on board. © Elizabeth Peyton. Photo by Ulrich Ghezzi. Courtesy Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, London • Paris • Salzburg
- p. 15 (above) Jelili Atiku, *Aragamago Will This Land Off Terrorism*, 2016, images of the performance.
- p.15 (below) Günter Brus, *Vienna Walk*, 1965. b / w photography; © Günter Brus, Photo © Mumok Museum of Modern Art Foundation Ludwig Vienna, acquired in 1989
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Courtesy Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, London • Paris • Salzburg
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FORT

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