

# Bless my homeland forever

I, too, will try to forget...

A2 (Alit Kreiz / Anton Mirto), Javier Bernasconi /  
Omar Estela / Marcelo Montanari / Marcela Oliva /  
Luciano Parodi, Stefan Constantinescu, Ger Duijzings /  
Rastko Novakovic, Yael Farber, Lamia Joreige,  
Werner Kaligofsky, Ioana Marinescu, Karoline Mayer,  
Lucia Nimcova, Cora Piantoni, Nada Prlja, Susan Silas

Concept and Organisation

Ioana Marinescu and Karoline Mayer

Konzept und Organisation

Ioana Marinescu und Karoline Mayer

## **KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE**

16 September – 16 October 2010

[www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at](http://www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at)

Tue – Fr 1pm – 6pm, Sat 11am – 2 pm

## Framework Programme

### 16 September 2010, 18:00

Panel discussion / moderation: Martin Fritz  
with Werner Kaligofsky, Ioana Marinescu, Karoline Mayer,  
Lucia Nimcova, Cora Piantoni, Nada Prlja and Susan Silas

### 17 September 2010, 19:00

“My Beautiful Dacia” by Stefan Constantinescu and Julio Soto,  
Film screening at the Romanian Cultural Institute Vienna,  
Argentinierstraße 39, 1040 Vienna.

## Catalogue

conceived and edited by Ioana Marinescu and Karoline Mayer,  
available at the exhibition office.

## Rahmenprogramm

### 16 September 2010, 18:00

Podiumsdiskussion / Moderation: Martin Fritz  
mit Werner Kaligofsky, Ioana Marinescu, Karoline Mayer, Lucia  
Nimcova, Cora Piantoni, Nada Prlja und Susan Silas

### 17 September 2010, 19:00

“My Beautiful Dacia” von Stefan Constantinescu und Julio Soto,  
Filmvorführung im Rumänischen Kulturinstitut Wien,  
Argentinierstraße 39, 1040 Wien

## Katalog

konzipiert und herausgegeben von Ioana Marinescu und  
Karoline Mayer, erhältlich im Ausstellungsbüro.

*...Bloss' of snow may you bloom and grow  
Bloom and grow forever  
Edelweiss, Edelweiss  
Bless my homeland forever*

(from the American Musical (1959) and Film (1965) "The Sound of Music")

To what degree is our identity shaped by the awareness of  
our history?  
In order to fully embrace the future do we have to understand  
the past and how it has shaped us?  
Is there, on the other hand, any legitimacy in the saying “to  
forgive and forget”?

*...Bloss' of snow may you bloom and grow  
Bloom and grow forever  
Edelweiss, Edelweiss  
Bless my homeland forever*

(aus dem amerikanischen Musical (1959) und Film (1965) "The Sound of Music")

Inwieweit ist unsere Identität vom Bewusstsein über unsere  
Geschichte geprägt?  
Um die Zukunft annehmen zu können, müssen wir die Vergan-  
genheit verstehen, und wie uns diese geprägt hat?  
Wie legitim ist andererseits die Redensart „vergeben und  
vergessen“?

## Lamia Joreige

### Objects of War 2-4

Type: Video

Medium: Video installation

Duration: no.2: 85 min (2003), no.3: 55 min (2006), no.4: 72 min (2006)

Date: 1999 - ongoing

Language: Arabic & French & English / English subtitles

Lamia Joreige reflects on history and its possible narration, and on the relation between individual stories and collective histories, underlining the process of memory and the impossibility of accessing a complete narrative. Lamia Joreige's work essentially centers on time: the recording of time, of its traces and its effects on us.

*Objects of War* is a series of testimonials on the Lebanese war. Each person chooses an object, ordinary or unusual, which serves as a starting point for his / her story. These testimonials while helping to create a collective memory, also show the impossibility of telling a single history of this war. Only fragments of this history are recounted here, held as truth by those expressing them. In *Objects of War*, the aim is not to reveal a truth but rather to gather and confront many diverse versions and discourses on the subject.

*Objects of War* was first shown in 2000, assembling the testimonials of eleven persons. It continued in 2003 with *Objects of War n°2*, recording seven additional testimonials. This time, however, and since then, the recorded material is left unedited, shown in its integrality. The work of collecting and assembling these stories continued with *Objects of War n°3* and *n°4* (2006).

**Lamia Joreige** (1972, Beirut, Lebanon) studied cinema and painting at the Rhode Island School of Design, USA. She presented her work in various film festivals and venues: The Images Festival, Toronto; Harvard and Columbia universities, USA; The Rencontres Internationales Paris / Berlin; La Cinemathèque, Paris; The Rotterdam International Film Festival; The Mediterranean Festival of Cinema, Montpellier; La Caixa Foundation, Barcelona. Selected group exhibitions include: 52nd Venice Biennial; *Rumour as Media*, Akbank Sanat, Istanbul; *Coding Decoding*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde, Denmark; *Out of Beirut*, Modern Art Oxford, U.K., INSA art space, Seoul; *Present / Absence*, Tanit Gallery, Munich; *Laughter* (in LIFT), London; *Possible Narratives* (in VideoBrasil), Sao Paulo; *DisOrientation*, House of World Cultures, Berlin. Selected solo exhibitions at ACAF & Townhouse gallery, Egypt, 2004; Nicéphore Niépce Museum, France, 2003; Nikki Marquardt Gallery, Paris, 2000; Janine Rubeiz Gallery, Beirut, from 1999 to 2004. In 2009 she co-founded the Beirut Art Centre and has been one of the directors since then.

## **Yael Farber**

### **Amajuba - Like Doves We Rise**

Type: Theatre Play

Medium: Recording of 2005 Performance

Duration: 90 min

Date: 2000 – 2005

Language: English

Yael Farber conceived, wrote and directed *Amajuba – Like Doves We Rise* commissioned by the North West Arts Council during a six week residency in Mafikeng, South Africa. The play [as it appears in this footage] is based on the lives of the five cast members, Tshallo Chokwe, France Conradie, Bongeka Mpongwana, Philip “Tipo” Tindisa and Jabulile Tshabalala, the Arts Council’s resident actors assigned to Yael Farber, who tell the stories about their growing up in Apartheid South Africa. As in many of her plays Yael Farber uses theatre as a witness, stating:

“...We cannot move forward until we truly, and with great integrity, look back. We cannot go forward until we know where we come from. The simple act of acknowledging our past is a step away from denial towards the possibility of healing...”  
Between 2000 and 2007 the play toured extensively - first South Africa, and then internationally. During these years, two cast members were replaced. Due to its biographical nature, this required substantial changes to the text with each replacement.

**Yael Farber** (1971, Johannesburg, South Africa) is a playwright, director and the founder of her theatre company “The Farber Foundry”. Following her studies at the University of Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) she directed several multi-award winning productions. In the years thereafter - she began to

write the plays she directed. Her productions *A Woman in Waiting* (1999), *Amajuba* (2000), *He left quietly* (2003), *SeZaR* (2002) and *Molora* (2003) have won international awards and toured England, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, USA, Canada, North and South Africa, Australia and Japan. Yael Farber is a past invitee of New York's Lincoln Theatre Director's Lab; developed a new text at Sundance in Utah, USA; and was a resident artist at Mabou Mines in New York. She is currently the Head of Directing at The National Theatre School of Canada.

## **Nada Prlja** **Advanced Science of Morphology**

Type: Installation and Walks  
Medium: Installation  
Date: 2006

In *Advanced Science of Morphology* Nada Prlja is leading national identity ad absurdum by morphing the flags of the countries of former Yugoslavia while dealing with issues of similarities and differentiation.

*"Advanced Science of Morphology* is a site specific public art project that questions the possibility of unity in Europe by reflecting on the changes that have happened to the countries that once made up Yugoslavia. The 26 [now 28] combinations of the national flags of the states that once made up Yugoslavia is a timely artwork that replaces the flags of the EU member states in Marble Arch Park in London. The morphing of national identities aims to question the goal of unity in Europe and invites us to reflect on the roles we play in making and breaking dreams of European togetherness." (Sophie Hope, B+B)

The project was commissioned by B+B curatorial partnership and exhibited as a public art project at London Marble Arch and as an installation at the Space Gallery, both in London (2006). It was also shown at ORF Radiokulturhaus, Vienna (2008). Additionally, Nada Prlja staged two walking performances – in London (2006) and Zagreb (2007). The planned installation in Rijeka/Croatia (2007) was prevented by the authorities.

**Nada Prlja** (1971, Sarajevo; Macedonian artist) studied at the Academy of Arts, Skopje, Macedonia and at the Royal College of Art, London. Since 1999 she has been living in London, where she founded the Serious Interest Agency (SIA). Her work was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei; INIVA, London; TATE Britain, London; David Roberts Art Foundation, London; OPTICA 2007, Spain; Museum of Contemporary Art and National Gallery of Macedonia, Skopje. In Austria she exhibited at the Open Space, Vienna (2008); <rotor>, Graz (2008 and 2010); Kunst Pavilion, Innsbruck and had a solo show in April 2010 in Lakeside Kunstraum, Klagenfurt. She also realised the public art project *Advanced Science of Morphology* for the Balkan Express Series at the ORF (Austrian State Television), Vienna.

**Javier Bernasconi, Omar Estela, Marcelo Montanari,  
Marcela Oliva, Luciano Parodi**  
**autores ideológicos**

Type: Installation  
Medium: Photographic Documentation  
Date: 2003 – 2006

Ford Falcons were used by the military dictatorship in Argentina in the seventies in the abduction of people. At the same time they were the favourite car of the “Argentinean family”, middle and upper class, direct or indirect supporters of the government, who years later initially denied what really happened, and then tried to represent themselves as victims. To bring a Ford Falcon to the artistic experience is a gesture that transforms its specificity, a criticism not settled in the narrative, but implanted in the object in which several episodes occurred; a question that tries to unearth a part of Argentinean history; an act that brings to the present a past through its objects.

The installation was shown at Memoria Abierta, Buenos Aires, Museo de la Memoria. Rosario, Station “TRONADOR” (Line B), Centro Cultural Paco Urondo dependiente de la Secretaría de Extensión Universitaria de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras (UBA), Centro Cultural Recoleta - Junín 1930 and UNSAM (Universidad Nacional de San Martín) between 2006 and 2009.

**Javier Bernasconi** (1975, Buenos Aires, Argentina / sculptor), **Omar Estela** (1950, Buenos Aires, Argentina / sculptor), **Marcelo Montanari** (1976, Haedo, Argentina / builder), **Marcela Oliva** (1978, Banfield, Argentina / sculptress) and **Luciano Parodi** (1976, Junin, Argentina / architect) are a group of independent artists and craftspeople who teamed up exclusively for the project *autores ideologicos* between 2003 and 2006.

**Ger Duijzings and Rastko Novakovic**  
**Lebensraum | Living Space**

Sound: Mark Durham

Type: Video  
Medium: Sound installation and books  
Duration: 73 min  
Date: 2010  
Language: English

*Lebensraum | Living Space* is based on the 1992 diaries that anthropologist Ger Duijzings kept during his fieldwork research in Yugoslavia. The edited diaries were performed by Duijzings as a public reading on the streets of London. Filmed by 9 filmmakers, this material forms a large scale moving image work. Presented here is the reading, interspersed with the sound scape of the different London spaces Duijzings is moving through. The sounds of normality were all recorded in London streets which carry histories of war, racist attacks and terrorist bombings. At different points in the gallery the audience encounters a book about the ex-Yugoslav region and its wars. In contrast to the inertness of the books and bodies of knowledge, the audience is presented by Duijzings’s embodied, wandering narrative. Neither the film of the book, nor the soundtrack of a film, *Lebensraum | Living Space* is a living telling of everyday histories and everyday places.

**Ger Duijzings** (1961, Maastricht, The Netherlands) is Reader in the Anthropology of Eastern Europe at the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies in London. He published widely on the conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia, and is author of monographs on Kosovo and Srebrenica, and co-editor of a volume on post-war Bosnia. He also worked as a consultant for the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia. Recently

he has started collaborations with artists, resulting (amongst others) in *Lebensraum / Living Space* (2009) and *The Geopolitical Everyday* (2010), with Rastko Novakovic. He also organised two editions of *Cities Methodologies*, in London and Bucharest, a cross-over between an exhibition and a workshop focusing on experimental and innovative methodologies in urban research, with contributions from both artists and academics.

**Rastko Novakovic** (1981, Belgrade) is an artist whose current practice is an exploration of cinematic and social space. He is a founding member of bashta, Lab no.w.here and Free Cinema Seven. He holds a BA (Hons) in Contemporary Media Practice from the University of Westminster and an MA from the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College. He has authored and co-authored 25 moving image works and has completed work commissioned by ArtLink (Serbia), Newham Council, Lewisham Council, Arts Express, London Southbank University. He has lectured on the theory and practice of experimental film and video as well as being a CRB checked workshop leader and assistant. He is currently Leverhulme artist in residence at UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies.

**Mark Durham** (1981, Norwich, UK) graduated in 2008 with a degree in Sound Design from Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication. During his studies Mark was involved in sound design across film, documentary, radio and live performance. He was also a volunteer during this period at Resonance FM. Since graduating Mark has divided his time between freelance sound design projects and music composition, and is currently employed as an Audio Designer in the video game sector. Recent work is based on the construction of generative music systems and procedural sound design, field recording and physical computing.

## **Karoline Mayer** **Catalogue of Austrian War Memorials**

Type: Photography  
Medium: Photographs, Texts  
Date: 2005 – ongoing

In her ongoing project *Catalogue of Austrian War Memorials* Karoline Mayer creates a photographic archive of War Memorials erected to commemorate the dead of the 1st and the 2nd World War in Austria. The majority of these memorials seem like physical manifestations of denial in the way they convey a selective, constructed or at least highly uncritical version of Austria's recent past. Only slowly does the evolving rhetoric used for more recent inscriptions demonstrate the development of a changing historical awareness. The significance of these memorials within the village context is revealed by their positioning – either on the main square, next to the church or in a prominent position at the cemetery.

In her photographs Karoline Mayer shows the reality and ubiquity of history and through their repetitiveness aims to reduce the prevalent need for denial and defensiveness to absurdity. *Catalogue of Austrian War Memorials* is a silent criticism of the persistent selectivity employed not only in the Austrian culture of commemoration.

In her initially random trips across Austria she inevitably stumbled upon her own childhood and her family's past in Lower Austria. Since then she has concentrated her research on places that have an autobiographical meaning to her.

**Karoline Mayer** (1975, Vienna, Austria) studied architecture at the University of East London and the Royal Academy of Arts in Copenhagen. After graduation she worked as an assistant for the London based architectural photographer Helene

Binet, where she also met Ioana Marinescu. She taught several workshops and modules on architectural photography at the London Metropolitan University, Kingston University and University of East London. Since 2002 she has been working as a freelance photographer. She exhibited her project *grenzRaum* at the Zukunfts und Kulturwerkstätte, Vienna. She collaborated on the organisation/curating/design of exhibitions at the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt; Michael Hoppen Gallery, London; MUMOK, Vienna. Her work is published regularly in books and magazines.

## **Werner Kaligofsky** **Trafficways 1 | Verkehrsflächen 1**

Type: Installation  
Medium: slide projection, video projection (CCTV)  
Date: 2001-2010

In his project *Trafficways 1 | Verkehrsflächen 1* Werner Kaligofsky photographically documented streets and squares in Innsbruck that were renamed since the 1980s after opponents and victims of National Socialism, recording not only the biographies of the people remembered but also the chronology of often fierce resistance by the locals to the renaming.

## **Trafficways 2 | Verkehrsflächen 2**

Type: Photography, Installation  
Medium: 9 colour inkjet-prints on paper, 2 b&w gelatin silver prints, 1 street sign, text, Date: 2002-2010

Renaming and re-signing of a square and two streets in Erlauf/Lower Austria for the duration of the exhibition *Erlauf erinnert sich... 2 (Erlauf remembers... 2)*.

“Werner Kaligofsky temporarily renamed squares and streets of the Lower Austrian community Erlauf, turning them into memorials. His work was the result of research in Erlauf on the Holocaust and the resistance against National-Socialism, and drew both on oral sources and documents: “Niederndorferstraße” was renamed “Familie-Brod-Straße”; and “Molkereistraße” was renamed “Familie-Weiner-Straße”. By doing so, Kaligofsky commemorated the displaced and now mostly forgotten Jewish families that lived in Erlauf until 1938/39, when they were forced to leave.

While carrying out research in the *Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstands* (DÖW - Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance) Kaligofsky also came across an important figure in the local history of antifascist resistance: the work of an Erlauf citizen Josef Munk, a railway man and member of the KPÖ (Austrian Communist Party), is recorded there. His name is a symbol for the discussion of resistance in Erlauf. Until the end of the exhibition, Erlauf’s “Marktplatz” was renamed “Josef-Munk-Platz”. During the renaming, Kaligofsky’s findings on the Jewish families and on Josef Munk were displayed on A3-sized panels in the display window of what was formerly the shop belonging to the Brod family.

Werner Kaligofsky planned 9 new street signs and 23 new house numbers. In the end, 8 street signs and 17 house numbers were put up. Owing to protests by the house owners, Marktplatz 6, Marktplatz 8 and Niederndorferstraße 7 were not renamed.” (Hedwig Saxenhuber)



**Werner Kaligofsky** (1957 Wörgl, Austria) studied at the Grafische Bundes, Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. He participated in group exhibitions at the Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna; Secession, Vienna; Generali Foundation, Vienna; Klemens Gasser and Tanja Grunert Gallery, Cologne; Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig; Camera Austria – Kunsthaus Graz; Wien Museum, Vienna; Museum auf Abruf, Vienna and held solo exhibitions at the Galerie Grita Insam, Vienna; Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, Galerie Fotohof, Salzburg and Galeria Museo Bolzano. Kaligofsky participated at the Liverpool Biennial 2004. In 1992 he received the Austrian State grant for Fine Arts and in 1999 for Photography.

### **Susan Silas** **Helmbrechts Walk**

Type: Photographic Installation, Book  
Medium: Photographs, Text, Slide Projection  
Date: 1998-2003

Susan Silas' work *Helmbrechts walk*, 1998-2003, is a memorial testament to the forced march of 580 female Jewish prisoners at the end of the Second World War. The march began on April 13th, 1945 in order to evacuate Helmbrechts, a small satellite unit of the Flossenbürg concentration camp, before American troops arrived. *Helmbrechts walk* is a visual representation of the act of walking through a landscape marked by the historical specificity of that forced march. Her portfolio of 48 archival colour prints is a document of that endeavour -- walking for 22 days and 225 miles in Germany and the Czech Republic on the fifty third anniversary of those events. The images, contextua-

lised by Silas' commentary of her own experience, are paired with evocative news clips from the same days in 1998 thus drawing a connection between the violent events of the Second World War and those being witnessed in the present. This series is compiled in a limited edition unbound artist's book. A historically accurate reconstruction of the march route was possible with the help of the German trial transcript of Alois Dörr and historical maps housed in the New York City Public Library.

**Susan Silas** (1953, New York City) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her BA from Reed College and her MFA in Fine Art from California Institute of the Arts. Her work has been exhibited in numerous group exhibitions including White Columns, New York; The Renaissance Society, Chicago; The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and Kunstverein Graftschaft Bentheim in Neuenhaus, Germany. Her solo exhibitions include *fiction/nonfiction*, New York; Galerie Antoine Candau, Paris; Koffler Gallery, Toronto; Hebrew Union College Museum, New York and CB1 Gallery in Los Angeles. Her writings have been published in *ArtNet magazine*, *Podium* and *Exquisite Corpse*. Silas has received residential fellowships from the Ucross Foundation and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. She taught at New York University and at Cooper Union.

## **Ioana Marinescu** **Remember Bucharest**

Type: Installation

Medium: Drawings, video *Off the Map. In Bucharest* (2006, with Robert Fearn),

24 min

Date: 2002 – ongoing

Language: English

In the 1980's, one third of central Bucharest was demolished to make place for Ceausescu's "People's Palace" and the "Victory of Socialism Boulevard". Although the scale of the operation was gigantic, very little is still known and documented about it. Since she moved to London in 1996, Ioana Marinescu continued to travel to her hometown, obsessed with recovering fragments of its lost past. She collected maps, images, memory drawings and took interviews with former inhabitants of demolished houses. These people, deprived of their homes, had not shared their memories of displacement before.

The premise was to tell the story of this part of Bucharest that gradually falls into oblivion. What is left when there is nothing left? Does it persist in people's memories, in their consciousness? What are the consequences of the lack of knowledge and collective memory? This experience forms the basis for the 24 min. documentary *Off the Map. In Bucharest* and of a book of interviews *Remember Bucharest* (in progress).

**Ioana Marinescu** (1973, Bucharest, Romania) studied architecture in Bucharest and London, where she has lived since 1996. Currently she works as a photographer and teaches architecture at Greenwich University. Ioana participated in group shows in the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Romania and Italy and held solo exhibitions at the Architectural Association, London; Espace Paragon, Luxembourg; RIBA, London.

She organised group exhibitions at the Association Paris Historique; Royal Institute of British Architects, London; Viewfinder Gallery, London, Institute of Contemporary Art, Bucharest. The documentary film *Off the Map. In Bucharest* won the Silver Category Prize at the Festival of Nations, Ebensee, Austria in 2007.

**Robert Fearn** (1956, UK) is an artist and film-maker. He studied fine art and media at Bath Academy of Art and at The Slade School of Fine Art, where he also worked as teaching assistant. In 1986, he set up Forge Projects together with his partner, Angela Cockayne. Robert Fearn is currently Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Bath Spa University. His artistic practice ranges from video to photography and public sculpture. His work was shown in UK, France, Holland, Hungary and Romania.

## **Stefan Constantinescu**

### **Dacia 1300 – My Generation /Archive of Pain / The Golden Age for Children**

Type: Video installations and Pop-up book

Duration: 62min, 2hr 26min

Date: 2003, 2000, 2008

Language: Romanian with English subtitles, Romanian and English texts

*Archive of Pain* examines Romania within the 1945 - 1965 timeframe, investigating through interviews the traumatic experiences of former political prisoners. In this exhibiting the artist is showing 3 of the total of 12 interviews. The project was executed together with the film director Cristi Puiu and the graphic designer Arina Stoenescu.

While *Archive of Pain* is based on the experiences of the generation of his parents, *Dacia 1300 – My Generation* is more autobiographical, concentrating on the period between 1968 – 2000. The film investigates what it was like to grow up and live under a totalitarian regime, what childhood was like during Ceausescu's "Golden Era". The discussions initiated by the artist revolve around the "Dacia" – the car brand of communist Romania during Ceausescu that became a symbol of complete freedom. The film contains old archival footage, propaganda material and interviews, which were conducted with former neighbours from the Colentina district in Bucharest where the Constantinescu family lived.

*The Golden Age for Children* illustrates the period of Ceausescu's regime in Romania known as *The Golden Age*. It is an interactive book done in a pop-up book manner featuring the artist's biography intertwined with highlights from the grand narrative of the country's past, thus creating a story which covers 20 years of Romanian contemporary history.

**Stefan Constantinescu** (1968, Bucharest, Romania) is a visual artist and a film director. He lives and works in Stockholm and Bucharest. In 2010 he participated at the Bucharest Biennial 4 with the installation *An Infinite Blue*. In the same year *The Seductiveness of the Interval* was remade and exhibited at the Renaissance Society Museum in Chicago. In 2009 he represented Romania at 53rd Venice Biennial with the films *Passagen* and *Troleibuzul 92*. In 2009 he co-directed with Julio Soto the film *My Beautiful Dacia*. The film premiered at the Montréal World Film Festival, in 2010 it was awarded the second prize at the Documenta Madrid Festival. In 2008 he conceived the pop-up book *The Golden Age for Children*. In 2007 he had a solo exhibition at the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest. Selected group exhibitions include: *The social critique 1993-2005*, Kalmar Konstmuseum Sweden, 2009; *Dada East? Romanian Context of Dadaism*, Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw, 2008; *indirect speech*, Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, 2006.

## Lucia Nimcova UNOFFICIAL

Type: Installation  
Medium: Photography, HD Video,  
Date: 2008

"For her extensive project *UNOFFICIAL*, she spent two years doing in-depth research into the history of her birthplace, the town of Humenné in eastern Slovakia, combing the official picture archives as well as pictures made by amateur photographers for historical documentation of the everyday world. Using her hometown as an example, Nimcova creates a historical panorama and a time slice of the current post-communist situation that sidesteps the frequently all-too-simple documentation of an "ex-communist identity". A central core of her work is the selection she made from a compendium of photographs which she discovered in the archive of the Regional Cultural Centre in Humenné: These officially commissioned photographs present aspects of communist life, but above all semi-official cultural events – such as local assemblies, choir performances, sports activities or regional festivities.

...Having subjected the extensive pictorial material to a protracted process of analysis and interpretation, Nimcova made a narrow selection, with the result that the found footage is given a sense of Nimcova's personal authorship. Here and there the artist brings herself into play as a protagonist, for example by marking her own image in a photograph of the children's choir *Nezábudka* ("Forget-me-not") with a red cross, thus identifying herself as a historical witness, or by integrating private family photographs from her childhood into the selection. Nimcova causes a discourse to unfold in pictures, a discourse which puts collective and personal memories in a metonymic relation to one another and closely interweaves "identity" with the process of remembering." (Heike Eipeldauer)

## Lucia Nimcova Double Coding

Type: Video Installation  
Medium: Four Channel Video  
Date: 2010

"I have analysed banned Slovak films. It was a new world for me, which I was able to experience from a distance. I worked with 40 films made between 1968 and 1989. There was almost no logic as to why they were banned. All the rules were very subjective, usually depending on committees during the whole film-making process. There is even the question of how it is possible for these films to come into existence – paid for, paradoxically, by the state. Directors had to convey their messages between the lines, in unimportant moments that were not too visible, but present. This inner story line was most important and exciting for me. I became an analyst of sketches. My idea was to subjectively select and create a piece, a small visual labyrinth open to imagination and interpretation." (Lucia Nimcova)

**Lucia Nimcova** (1977, Humenné, Slovakia) studied photography at the Silesian University, Opava and Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam. She lives and works in Amsterdam. She has contributed in numerous group and solo exhibitions, amongst which Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Mucsarnok-Kunsthalle, Budapest, Hungary; Aarhus Kunstbygning, Aarhus, Denmark; Tresor Kunstforum, Vienna, Austria; Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, Italy; Prague Biennial. She won several prizes, including Oskar Barnack Award and ECB Photography Award, Germany; Oskar Cegan Award, Slovakia.

## **Cora Piantoni**

### **Wir waren das Kino / We Were Cinema**

Type: Video and Interviews

Medium: Video

Date: 2010

A lot has been reported about the fall of the Berlin Wall. The main focus of this film is the period before the event, which was affected by discontent with the outdated political system, hope and a sense of impending change. Everyday life in the cinema was different from that in West Germany. The cinemas were often economically unprofitable, employees however were frequently cinema enthusiasts. Those who had political problems often found employment in the cinema, in less qualified positions though, as stokers or ushers.

*Wir waren das Kino* addresses the time before 1989 from the viewpoint of the cinema staff, their view of the events, the social and political changes that were happening outside the cinema doors, the position of those sitting and discussing in the foyer, in the gap between fiction on the screen and reality beyond the cinema doors. Former theatre directors, film projectionists, cashiers, ushers and caretakers who used to work in cinema in Dresden in the period before 1989 talk about their experiences during that time.

Topics of conversation besides the films were the obsolete political system and the utopian idea of changing the system from within. How political events manifest themselves in everyday life, how small changes and incidences announced the *Wende*.

**Cora Piantoni** (1975, Munich, Germany) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver and at the University of Art and Design, Zurich. She lives and works in Munich and Zurich. She has exhibited her work internationally, amongst others at the Galerie Royal, Munich; Les Complices and Helmhaus, Zurich; f.a.i.t., Krakow; Entrance Gallery, Prague and Kunsthalle Basel. She was awarded the HWP-Grant by the Bavarian Ministry for Research and Art, Bavarian State Sponsorship Award for Photography and artist in residencies in Klenová/CZ and Dresden.

## **A2 company**

### **I would like to say sorry...**

Type: Performance

Medium: Recording of the 2004 London Performance

Duration: 45min

Date: 2004 – 2009

Language: English

Saying sorry, an act we cannot contemplate, let alone perform, in solitude, emerges not as an agenda offering closure, but as a form of personal, social, historical, legal, political, psychological, artistic, environmental, religious and ethical awareness, and engagement. What do we anticipate whilst embracing saying sorry? What, do we forget or fail to think through, whilst rejecting it? Can apologizing truly address questions of justice and change?

A performative sound installation; a continuous, choreographic whispered text of portable apologies, recognizing a need to take responsibility, in order to effect change; a review,

as well as a critique, of our uncertain times. In confessing their very own failings, A2 question the myth of the “good” and the “bad”, and create a space of personal and collective reflection on what matters, the big and the small.

A2 is concerned with the meaning of choice in the everyday construction of the environment, communication, existence and dreams. Its influence on human personality, experience and behaviour. What informs the destiny of each moment? What are the means used to persuade us? Do we have a choice at all?

**A2 company** (London, UK)

A2 (Anton Mirto and Alit Kreiz) create original experimental performance and installation projects, often involving ordinary people, which aim to interrogate and reflect the human experience, whilst exploring new personal, social and emotional language forms. Venues in which their work has been produced and shown include: The Linbury Studio - Royal Opera House, London; Kapelica Gallery, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Grec Festival, Fast Forward, Barcelona; Off limits Festival, Dortmund, Germany; WUK, Vienna; Tmu-na theatre, Israel; Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London; Hoxton Hall, London; The Place, London.

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Note: The opinions expressed in the different works of art included in the exhibition and the catalogue are the views of the artists and those interviewed and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the curatorial team.

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## KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE | WUK

Währinger Straße 59/2/1, 1090 Vienna, Austria

[www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at](http://www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at)

[kunsthalle.exnergasse@wuk.at](mailto:kunsthalle.exnergasse@wuk.at)

+43 1 4012141/42

Tue – Fr 1pm – 6pm, Sat 11am – 2 pm

Director: Andrea Löbel

Media & Exhibitions: Klaus Schafler

Exhibitions: Lina Leonore Morawetz

Technics: Ernst Muck

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