

a work that can't shake off what it reflects.

**Debating and contesting continuities and ruptures of
colonial, fascist and Nazi practices in Austria.**

Exhibition: 17 March–20 April 2011

Opening: Wednesday, 16 March 2011, 7 pm

An exhibition project by and with Petja Dimitrova,
Lina Dokuzović, Eduard Freudmann, Can Gülcü and Ivan Jurica

with Ljubomir Bratić/Richard Ferkl, Christian Gangl, Nina Höchtl,
kegnschtelik – Yiddish Resistance 3.0, maiz – Autonomous
Center by and for Migrant Women, Marcel Mališ, Ivana
Marjanović, MigrafonA, Katharina Morawek, Platform
History-Politics, Research Group on Black Austrian History and
Present/Pamoja, Marika Schmiedt.

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Tue–Fr 1 pm–6 pm, Sat 11 am–2 pm

EVENTS

Wednesday, 23 March 2011, 7 pm

Workshop presentation: *History-Political Publics: "Türk_innenritte" (Turks Astride) in and around Vienna*

Wednesday, 30 March 2011, 3 pm

Tour through the exhibition with participating artists

Wednesday, 30 March 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

Der Drang nach Osten – Historical and Contemporary Austrian Policies of Expansion

Tuesday, 12 April 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

Postcolonialism vs. Post-Shoahism? On Attempts to Lever Out Competitions of Memory

Wednesday, 13 April 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

Seavas Abi and Sista, Build Communities of Resistance! "Kanak_innen Rap" as an Intervention into Debates on Policies of Migration?

Departing from Austria's involvement in colonial practices, in both the present and the past, as well as its crossovers to imperial and fascist policies of expansion, the exhibition collects artistic positions that examine these practices and oppose them through resistant strategies. Multi-dimensional perspectives on interwoven pasts should thereby challenge existing competitions of memory and open up spaces of action for contemporary processes of political and anti-racist self-empowerment.

A work that can't shake off what it reflects is what Astrid Messerschmidt describes as a memorial work, which debates and contests the eliminatory systems of violent oppression, such as colonialism and Nazism, whereby their similarities and differences, their continuities and ruptures, are taken into consideration – always under the premise of clarifying the incompleteness and inconcludability of history as a field of constant debate. This denotes a memorial work that strives to avoid the relativization of genocides and the creation of competitions of memory, in which histories of victimization are played out against each other. Instead, the triggering of narratives is intended, which do not define themselves exclusively as the continuation of existing concepts of history or as the dissociation from them, but rather enable multi-dimensional perceptions on interwoven histories.

A work that can't shake off what it reflects also implies the debating and contesting of the effects of colonial, fascist and Nazi practices and their interrelations with present-day racisms and mechanisms of exclusion. Each memorial work, which is simultaneously post-Nazi and post-colonial, should serve for investigating existing policies of disfranchisement, precarization and exploitation and should thereby consider the manifold practices of resistance against them. It is a work which opens spaces for political action to yield processes of anti-fascist and anti-racist self-empowerment.

Furthermore, *a work that can't shake off what it reflects* represents the attempt to assemble interwoven, uncompleted and contradictory artistic positions. The works represented in the exhibition investigate processes of transition and their interlinked neocolonial structures in post-socialist countries (Ivan Jurica, Marcel Mališ), analyze Austrian colonial histories (Nina Höchtl, Katharina Morawek), politics of memory (Christian Gangl, Platform History-Politics) and refer to the relations between nation-state constructions of identity and racist objectification (Petja Dimitrova, Research Group on Black Austrian History and Present/Pamoja) and position themselves against the medialization and normalization of their discrimination (Ljubomir Bratić/Richard Ferkl, Can Gülcü, kegnschtelik - Yiddish Resistance 3.0). They show potentialities of collective and self-empowering strategies for action, such as self-organization and self-historization (MigrafonA, Marika Schmiedt), develop

strategies against normative stereotypes of class, gender or migration (Lina Dokuzović, maiz) and depict the intersection between art, theory and activism as the point of departure for political intervention (Eduard Freudmann/ Ivana Marjanović).

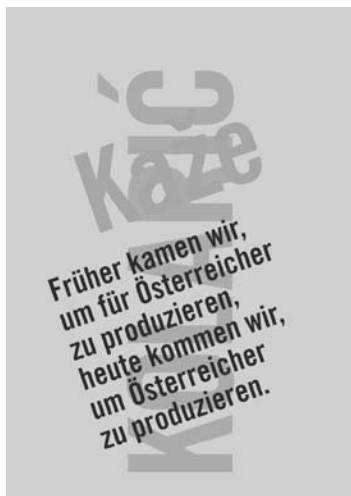
The exhibition, *a work that can't shake off what it reflects*, has been organized by a group of artists and cultural workers who are linked through a common history of artistic, theoretical and activist, thereby political, analysis and debate.

Ljubomir Bratić / Richard Ferkl

Kolarić – Partisans, Kolarić – Democracy, Kolarić – Producers

Posters, 2005/2006/2011

The poster works, *Kolarić*, refer to a long history of ascriptions and inscriptions, which have functioned since 1973 as a constitutive part of the self-understanding of the Austrian state. On the one hand, it is about the debate with the subject that speaks, about its description and its positioning, and on the other hand, it is about the language it speaks, its contents, message and the orientation of its focus. The discourse on political anti-racism, referring specifically to the Austrian situation, bases the work.



Petja Dimitrova

Blue Card for Keti

Video (45 min.) and poster, 2009/2010

The work, *Blue Card for Keti*, follows the story of a migrant from Bulgaria who has been living in Vienna since 1989. In the form of a (video-)installation, drawings and a book, Keti's living and working conditions are presented, which are exemplary for the struggles of migrants against precarization and racism in Austria and show strategies against the hegemonic regulation of the population and restructuring of the European border regime since the fall of the "Iron Curtain." Her biography is thereby linked to the history of migration in Europe and demonstrates those gender-specific, emancipatory practices which are incorporated in collective processes of resistance.



Lina Dokuzović

Sex Works

Internet browser video, 18 min., 2008



Sex Works explores and exposes the position of being prevented from working legally as a non-EU member, and finding a narrow legal loophole in which to be able to do sexually-oriented labor and its implications. This is possible due to the internationally flexible “artist’s contract,” which individuals in this position possess. The work examines how class, gender and migrant issues overlap and originate from the same source of sovereignty, which can produce knowledges and discourses that reproduce prejudice, discrimination and marginalization. Conceived to be watched in an internet browser window, the spectator views the work from the perspective of a customer in order to simultaneously reverse the gaze, being forced to analyze their own position within the social context.

Eduard Freudmann and Ivana Marjanović

Uglyville – A Contention of Anti-Romaism in Europe

Video-film, 57 min., 2010

The film represents a critical analysis of the interrelations of racism and capitalism in the so-called “New Europe,” but also an analysis of strategies of resistance to its necropolitical governance. The starting point for the film was the demolition and fencing of a Roma slum next to “Belville,” a residential area erected to accommodate the guests of the international sports event “Universiade Belgrade 2009.” At the same time, Serbia held the presidency of the “Roma Decade.” For that year, one would expect Serbia to make serious efforts towards improving the discriminated position of Roma and decreasing the effects of a policy of anti-Romaism that has lasted for centuries in the region. The opposite was the case.



Christian Gangl

Conglomerate of Repression

Spatial installation, video, photo montages, 2010/2011

Conglomerate of Repression is a media installation, which makes the persevering historical images of Nazi “performance of duties” visible. The ancestral wall of a staged living room does not show the typical family photos, but images of warrior memorials from the so-called Second World War, which refer to – through inserted texts – perpetrator’s perspectives on post-Nazi majority society. The displayed history-political continuities are, to the same degree, reference points for conservative bourgeois discourses on memory as being pivotal for neo-Nazi practices. Positions which further develop the contention of menacing soldier monuments are shown on the hacked TV program.



Can Gülcü

Handapparat Migration

Installation, 2010/2011

Handapparat Migration is an anti-racist intervention into existing knowledge structures. It consists of texts, media reports, studies, flyers and correspondences, which gather stories from migrants about their presence in Austria, which has been imprinted by racism, discrimination and exploitation on the one hand and identify their resistance, such as strategies of mobilization and emancipation against existing power structures, on the other. Thereby the question arises within the project as to how artistic strategies can make concealed histories accessible and contextualized through historization of those exclusions which are produced by economic, political and ideological power institutions.



Nina Höchtl

Super Devolución / Super Restitution Copilli Quetzalli – Part 1

Installation, 2010/2011

The feathered crown of “Penacho de Moctezuma,” known in Nahuatl as the “copilli quetzalli,” is not only witness to the heyday of the Mexica, but also to conquest and colonization, as well as to its aftermath and continuities. For decades, Mexican initiatives have been demanding the return of the feathered crown, which was, in their opinion, stolen and unrightfully brought to Europe during the conquest of Mexico. The feathered crown is currently in the collection of the Museum of Ethnography in Vienna. The luchador (wrestler) “Super Restitution Copilli Quetzalli” will appear in a staged fight, “Penacho vs. Penacho,” for the feathered crown in spring 2011 in Mexico. The feathered crown can at least be won back symbolically in this fight if “Super Devolución” is unmasked in the process. Who will the outcome of the match benefit?



Ivan Jurica

1989–2009: Look Back! Boys from Town Healing the Grief of Beautiful Girls

Video, 18 min., 2009

Boys from Town Healing the Grief of Beautiful Girls is the title (translated into English) of a song, well-known in (former) Czechoslovakia in the 1980s, performed by the popular Slovak singer and “national hero,” Karol Duchoň. The lyrics and the singer represent national and gender stereotypes, which in 2009 – over 25 years after its release – perfectly hit the nerve of the current sociopolitical and cultural situation in Slovakia. In combination with known images/videos from the history of Western popular culture (“Don’t Look Back,” Bob Dylan, 1967), the artist re-contextualizes their meaning, putting them into the current context, and thus comments on the economic and social transformations in Eastern Europe of the last 20 years on the one hand, and on the constellation of the relations between East and West on the other hand.



Kegnschtelik – Yiddish Resistance 3.0

Vienna Must Be Matzo Again!

Slide projection, 2011

The third generation Shoah survivors have made a formation in order to oppose victim-ascriptions and intervene into hegemonic history-writing. 65 years of post-Nazi anti-Semitism is enough, now sophistication will be put aside in order to break the rules of the game. In reference to the Yiddish resistance of the first and second generation, the third is lining up and intervening where comfortable silence has occupied space. Nothing escapes the Yiddish Resistance 3.0 and the sweet taste of our “payback.”



maiz

Austria We Love You, We Will Never Leave You!

Video, 8 min., 2009/2011

The video documents the actions of the association, maiz, over the last 15 years and shows the massive, provocative presence of maiz in the public. The film relates connections from colonial rule to current migration in Austria, the daily experiences of exclusion and the racist, chauvinist and sexist experiences in Austria.

Concept and realization:

Marissa Lôbo and Annalisa Cannito



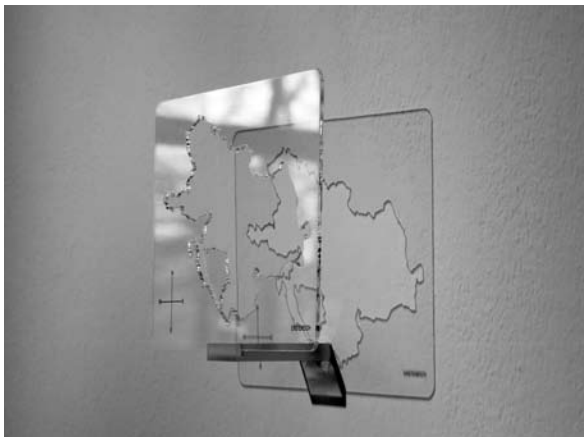
**UND ES WURDE AUF DER STRASSE
ÖFFENTLICH DEKLARIERT:
AUSTRIA, WE LOVE YOU!
WIR WERDEN DICH NIE VERLASSEN!**

Marcel Mališ

Erstereich

Perspex, inkjet print, 2009

The Austrian “Erste Bank und Sparkasse” has acquired several bank branches, which operate within the territory of the former Eastern Bloc, over the last decade. Thus, the area under the “Erste Bank’s” influence morphologically re-connects to the borders of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The maps of the old Monarchy and the current *Erstereich* are almost identical. An object in the form of a geographical maquette comments on that fact.



Katharina Morawek

"If No: Then Which Conclusions Would You Draw from It?"

Video, 21 min., 2011

The Habsburg Empire participated in colonialism in various ways – although the historic self-image in Austria tells a far less harmful story. This participation is expressed in “exploratory”-predatory expeditions, artistic research on the “exotic,” cartography or militant expansionism. Colonial artistic research, image and knowledge production (such as in the “Brazil Expedition”) and racist displays in various Viennese museums are closely interlinked. The remains of Jews murdered in the Shoah were on display in the so-called “Race Hall” of the Viennese Natural History Museum until 1996, which was eventually closed in reaction to a parliamentary request. The history of colonial imagery and knowledge production still has effects today and is intertwined with political debates on “Fortress Europe.”

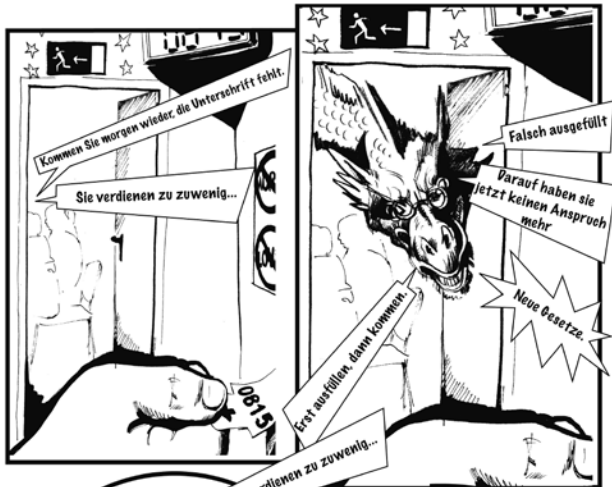
Frage 14:
Hier ist die Rede von
"entdecken", "gut gemeinten
Maßnahmen" und "Kontakt mit der
Zivilisation". Halten Sie diese
Verharmlosung der historischen
Tatsache der sukzessiven
Ausrottung für eine korrekte
wissenschaftliche Beschreibung
des Geschehenen?

Migrafona

*The Glorious 7 / Die glorreichen 7 / 7 тръзват по
широкия свят / 7人のごうけつ*

Copies, booklets, 2011

How can as many people as possible be confronted with the realities of migration policies, nation-state identity structures, historical continuities of oppression and exploitation, along with migrant struggles for equal rights, self-determination and an improvement of educational, working and living situations? Austria's racist consensus – which among others, is manifested in the so-called "foreigner laws," hegemonic production of knowledge and values as well as historiography – is intervened into through the narrative and illustrated form of a (comic) book. The story stands in connection to current processes of the transformation of wage labor, borders and nation-states, precarization, impoverishment as well as control and disciplinary measures that affect a broad portion of society.



Platform History-Politics

Intervention, please! A Database for History-Political Sites, Plans and Actions

Interactive database, 2011

The work gathers problematic historical and political manifestations in public space and makes related information available on the Internet. The entries in the database are sorted according to various criteria, such as formation period and type of manifestation, as well as whether an intervention has already taken place or is still pending. The contents of the database are created by people and groups that do critical work concerning historic and political manifestations in public space. In addition, the viewers of the exhibition are invited to enter contributions. The collection and publication of forms of hegemonic histories and activist counter-strategies should give impetus to direct interventions.



Research Group on Black Austrian History and Present/Pamoja

Café Decolonial

Spatial and sound installation (9 min.), 2007

The installation is a strategy for rupturing the oppressed and repressed silence; an intervention in the Viennese coffeehouse tradition, which is filled with (neo-)colonial images. An integral component of this work is the audiotext, recited by resistant voices (members of the Research Group on Black Austrian History and Present/Pamoja). The work is part of the decolonization strategies of the collective.



Marika Schmiedt

An Undesirable Society

documentary film, 70 min., 2001

“This past projects into our present. Even if it is suppressed, distorted, denied, it is present.” The aftermath of the Holocaust affects the second and third generations of Roma and Sinti – daughters, sons, grandchildren – who have to live with the fact that their families were killed in concentration camps. The film “An Undesirable Society” shows the painstaking search that the director, Marika Schmiedt, goes on in order to find out about her relatives who were prosecuted during National Socialism. The audience is included in her research, thus challenged to share the weight of the destruction that so many Austrian people have been involved in, even if “only” through silence and/or passivity. The destruction lives on today: Prejudices invariably exist and influence the minds of the majority. Marika Schmiedt dedicated this film to her grandmother, Amalia Horvath, who was murdered at the Ravensbrück concentration camp.



EVENTS

Further information at the website:
www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at

Wednesday, 23 March 2011, 7 pm

Workshop presentation

History-Political Publics: "Türk_innenritte" (Turks Astride) in and around Vienna

Organized by Platform History-Politics, the Pressure Group for the Reconfiguration of the Lueger Memorial and AG "Nachdenkmal"

At the beginning of the workshop, which will span over several days, we aim to supply an overview of which historical images of the so-called "Turk Memorials" are represented in public space in Vienna. We will investigate to which extent contemporary discourse stands in relation to images of history as well as which roles those images play in the construction of present-day images of political enemies with the help of the so-called "Turks Astride" (a historical procession for the defamation of the Ottomans in Vienna-Hernals), which was abolished under Joseph II and reanimated in the 1980s by an ÖVP district council. Furthermore, artistic positions will be gathered, which make those continuities visible both spatially, socially and content-wise and which intervene into the construction of contemporary racialized and ethnicized stereotypes in public space.

Wednesday, 30 March 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

Der Drang nach Osten – Historical and Contemporary Austrian Policies of Expansion

The history-writing in Austrian society, media and education has asserted that Austria has not been involved in colonial practices. That claim is unfounded in light of Austria's practices of dominating Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe over the centuries. "Der Drang nach Osten," implies expansion that has spanned from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to an appropriation within Nazi expansionism, but which can also describe current neoliberal market appropriation and resource expropriation in the same regions. How are the histories of the Habsburg Monarchy, Nazism and the contemporary globalized neoliberal market related, how have they been written and where is their comparison applicable or even implausible? In these conditions of transition and "development," who are the profiteers and at which cost? How are art, education and culture implied in these complex relations?

Tuesday, 12 April 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

Postcolonialism vs. Post-Shoahism? On Attempts to Lever Out Competitions of Memory

Where the social recognition of historic crimes is fought for, the danger exists of linking the corresponding claims and demands to the accusation against other victimized groups for being over-represented in discourses on memory. "The remembrance of colonial crimes can be used within the German context for the relativization of the Holocaust and the repudiation of its memory in favor of the neglected histories of other victims," claims Astrid Messerschmidt, outlining conflicts in memory politics, describing them as "competitions of memory."

To which degree is the thesis on competitions of memory relevant for local relations? Which means are necessary for the establishment or sharpening of the awareness of the history and presence of the various policies of oppression or crime stemming from Austria? Which meaning does the alleged existence of competitions of memory have for artistic, activist and theory-grounding practices? And how urgent is it to undertake attempts to lever them out? History-political activists and theorists will approach these and related questions within the panel discussion.

Wednesday, 13 April 2011, 7 pm

Panel discussion

***Seavas Abi and Sista, Build Communities of Resistance!
"Kanak_innen Rap" as an Intervention into Debates on
Policies of Migration?***

The so-called "Kanak_innen Rap" is street culture, performed by migrants and inscribed by their living circumstances, which deals with stories of "reality" and dreams, and criticizes exclusion and social problems. To this day, it has presented a central tool for emancipatory processes and self-definition, protest and a (counter-) knowledge mediation that enables the taking over of spaces through language, the body and awareness, despite pitfalls such as projections of consumerism or the reproduction of conservative gender roles.

Which potential for politization does hip hop have in Austria and to which extent is it involved in current debates on migration policies? Which emancipatory rap projects exist beyond the reproduction of sexist, macho and homophobic imagery? How do they communicate anti-racist awareness, and to which extent are they identified as part of migration struggles? *How does the park groove and what's the message?* These questions outline the field of investigation for the panel discussion which will gather anti-racist rap artists and activists.

BIOGRAPHIES

Ljubomir Bratić is a philosopher and works at the Integrationshaus in Vienna. His most recently published book is *Politischer Antirassismus (Political Anti-Racism)*, 2010, Löcker Verlag, Vienna.

Petja Dimitrova is an artist and has lived in Vienna since 1994. She is the chairperson of the "IG Bildende Kunst", editorial member of "Kulturrisse" and member of "Migrafona". She teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Lina Dokuzović is an artist and PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her work analyzes mechanisms of appropriation, privatization and militarization of education, culture, the body and land. She is a researcher on the "creating worlds" project of eipcp.

Richard Ferkl is a graphic designer and works on artistic and political projects.

Eduard Freudmann researches and intervenes in the intersection between art and politics, power relations and social contexts, contemporary history-politics and media mechanisms, strategies of exclusion and the commodification of knowledge.

Christian Gangl studies Conceptual Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and defines himself as an activist in the battlefield of history-political art production.

Can Gülcü is an artist and lives in Vienna. His practice lies between visual art and political-participative cultural work. His work focuses on the questioning of social, political and societal power relations. He teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Nina Höchtl, born in 1978, spends most of her time in Mexico City. Her projects deal with identity, language, communication and employ various media.

Ivan Jurica, born in 1972 in Bratislava, (Czecho-)Slovakia, is an artist and art educator. His work focuses on the connections between image/text/meaning and their relations to the dominating global neoliberal ideology.

Kegnschtelik – Yiddish Resistance 3.0

A triple SHUT UP, SHUT UP, SHUT UP! to all eight million Austrian experts on the Middle East!

maiz is an independent association by and for migrant women with the goal of improving the living and working situations of migrant women in Austria and supporting their political and cultural participation, as well as bringing about change in current unjust social relations. It was founded in Linz in 1994.

Marcel Mališ lives and works in Bratislava and has been in the post-graduate studies program at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design Bratislava since 2009.

Ivana Marjanović is a freelance cultural worker and co-founder of the Kontekst Gallery in Belgrade. She is a PhD candidate and teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Migrafona is a collective of artists, cultural producers and activists, who work in the field of political anti-racism about migratory histories and politics as well as self-empowerment strategies of migrants (living in Austria).

Katharina Morawek is an artist and art educator and teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She works in the editorial collective of the magazine MALMOE as well as in "Platform History-Politics," which researches and intervenes in the questions of memorial and history-politics.

The working group, **Platform History-Politics**, is an open collective that originated in the context of the education protests in 2009 for critically reflecting and publicly discussing the participation of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in colonialism, (Austro-) fascism and Nazism. Through time, the activities of the group have expanded beyond the immediate context of the institution.

The goal of the **Research Group on Black Austrian History and Present/Pamoja** of breaking through invisibilities is inseparable from processes of self-definition and relations to (self-)defined strategies of making Black Austrian experiences and resistant presence and their inseparable global relations visible and audible.

Marika Schmiedt, born in 1966 in Traun/Upper Austria, is a filmmaker and visual artist. Since 1999, she has been researching on the persecution of Roma and Sinti. Dealing with the situation of the ethnic group of Roma before and after 1945 is one of the foci of her artistic work. She takes part in activities in youth and adult education.

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The following works are produced with the support of the Tiroler Künstlerschaft:
Petja Dimitrova, Lina Dokuzović, Eduard Freudmann/Ivana Marjanović, Can Gülcü



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