



RIJEKA 2020.eu

Port of Diversity



EUROPEAN  
CAPITAL OF CULTURE

**OSTRALE**

Centre for Contemporary Art



## **OUT of OSTRALE O20, Watergate** **from water to land, from land to water**

**Digital exhibition of contemporary arts  
in the framework of the Rijeka 2020  
– European Capital of Culture**



RIJEKA 2020.eu

Port of Diversity



EUROPEAN  
CAPITAL OF CULTURE



## Watergate – Foreword

### **Andrea Hilger – Director OSTRALE – Centre for Contemporary Art**

With " Watergate " a close relationship is established between the guiding principles of the OSTRALE Biennale O19 and the conceptual agenda of Rijeka 2020. "Watergate: from water to land, from land to water". A reflection on water as a gateway to humanity, as a basis for settlement, as a vehicle for migratory movements and yet also as a gateway for the economy and its ecological challenges.

### **Bernard Koludrović – Program Advisor, RIJEKA 2020**

During 2016 Rijeka was selected to be the European Capital of Culture in 2020. A year that was marked as a kickstarting year for the city, clawing at the remnants of its industrial and maritime history. The city flourished on the labour of its workers, migrating to the city from all parts of former Yugoslavia, Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy, with the Adriatic Sea as the most important bridge to the rest of the world. The program of Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture was based on three concepts – work, water and migrations – creating a new way of looking back and dreaming forward.

One of the program elements was the exhibition WATERGATE, produced by OSTRALE, that was planned to be hosted in an unexpected venue of a closed Rijeka oil refinery. The industrial setting, amidst the burners, chimneys, hangars and tanks, with a pedestrian access crossing the obsolete rails, hoped to bring a new context for contemporary art reflections and trigger ideas of how to use vast portions of the former industrial area, unlikely to have a future with the same purpose. The planning of the exhibition took place during 2019 with the OSTRALE team's visit to Rijeka and the scouting of locations and several meetings with the Rijeka oil refinery management.

In this uncanny situation for the company, it resurfaced that art was a significant part of the workers' life in the refinery – in the middle of the complex there is a metal sculpture, a sphere-shaped expression of workers' creative drive. An idea of art already existing in the refinery entrenched our vision of that space being a perfect scenography for the exhibition and the idea of European Capital of Culture as a method of spotlighting the possible future of Rijeka.

Hibernation and the reshaping of the program, just over a month after the Opening Ceremony on the 1st February, brought new challenges. Epidemiological restrictions, implemented to reduce and control the pandemic spread of COVID-19, had a massive and paradigm-shifting effect on culture – how it is produced and how it is accessed. The financial and logistical obstacles to Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture focused the program, but had a crushing effect on the possibilities of production, with the Watergate exhibition being delivered only in digital form.

The necessity of collaboration is more obvious nowadays than ever before. In the same light the collaboration of OSTRALE and RIJEKA 2020 continued, bringing forward this digital exhibition, to show that art and culture will and must continue to overcome obstacles and open gateways to possible futures. The three themes of Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture highlighted our vision, something we strongly share with OSTRALE and other national and European partners – something we hope that would be the path of our joint future.



## ***Migration - MigARTion***

### **Stef Fridael & Wim Vonk**

\* 1957 (NL) & 1950 (NL)



### **Babelonië, a Metaphysical Installation (AIR) | 2018**

Container | Installation | 259 x 605 x 243cm

In studying the theme of the Artist in Residence program, Fridael and Vonk asked themselves the following questions: “What has disappeared from our lives since the advent of (social) media? What are the things we have stopped doing and what will never happen again? What does our life look like after the recent developments of (social) media? What does our social life look like after the digital media revolution?” The answers to these questions arrived in the form of an installative artwork that can be best described as: Registration of Seals from Analog to Digital. The idea to link two completely different artists, unknown to each other, to create a high-quality artwork together, has come into its own here. Both artists have managed to find each other excellently in the intellectual, emotional and artistic fields.



## Hanna Nitsch

\* 1974 (DE)



### meaning of aspects #1 (AIR) | 2018

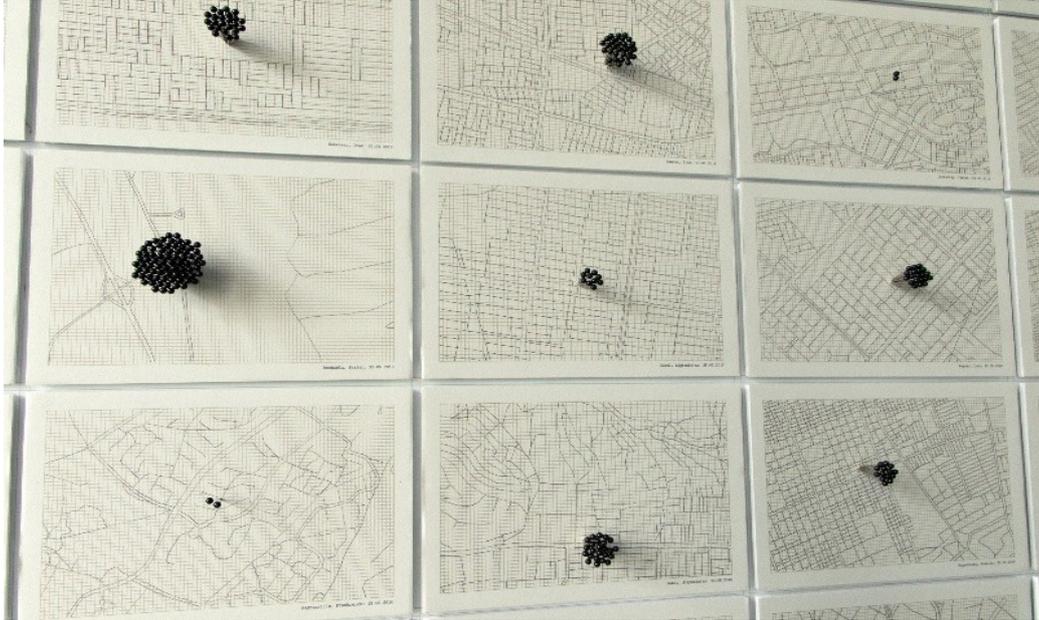
Container | Film, Installation (with sound) | 259 x 605 x 243cm

In the project meaning of aspects #1, Hanna Nitsch deals with role models, fragmented identities and physical perception in an increasingly digitized world. This is a very personal confrontation with the question of our justifications to exist and the possibility of being many different people and yet none at the same time. Are we creating digital identities because we can never fulfill them in real life? Do we lose ourselves in the thousand variations of our own ego? During the intensive work process, the container has lost its anonymous functionality and became a projection screen for individual desires and needs. The result is a special form of “digital self-portrait”, which questions artistic existence as well as the fragility of human life in general, incorporating the container as a kind of “third place”.



## Anja Sonnenburg

\* 1969 (DE)



### **Brennpunkte I 2017**

Installation, Drawing I 184 x 271 x 10cm

The artwork documents all the recorded terrorist attacks of 2016 with a precise map location for each place. Pins mark the exact number of people killed in each case.



## Robert Kunec

\* 1978 (SK)



### **The architecture of violence / Suicide Bomber I Jahr**

Installation | 120 x 300 x 300cm

After 9/11, there was an almost inflationary attempt within the contemporary art world to evaluate the images of this singular event that had been so aestheticized by the media. Robert Kunec's work, which deals with the phenomenon of suicide bombing, is convincingly independent. It delivers an impressive image of the inner workings required to take absolute control of the subject. It asks: „What role does the person behind the uniform play in a religiously motivated conflict?“ The image that Kunec has found oscillates between a building kit and a bomb. These are both of a mechanical nature and they illustrate the complex idea of subjectivity within intercultural context using one of its most extreme examples. Man as toy soldier, a subject deprived of its will, or a believer ready to make the ultimate sacrifice. (Prof. Dr. Eugen Blume)



## Dariusz Sitek

\* 1966 (PL)



### Objekt I & Objekt II | 2017

Object I 44 x 103 x 72cm & 57 x 170 x 72cm

The idea behind this series of works is an attempt to look critically at a very disturbing situation that has been observed for some time in the majority of Polish media including the press, the internet and television. The constant scandalous revelations, sensational and excessively violent, especially those involving families and the guardians of children - the issue of abandoning children - provoked the artist to take up this topic. But he did this not as a reporter but as an artist using the language of artistic description.

Through this artistic cycle, the artist would like to persuade the viewer to reflect critically on the sad fact that in the modern world, the issue of abandoning children occurs everywhere as an example of the objectification of human beings, the heartless treatment, the lack of respect for the value of human life.



## Alexandra Slava

\* 1996 (UA)



### **At The Edge I 2017**

Sculpture | 64 x 23 x 24cm

For Alexandra Slava, the biggest excitement of sculpting lies in studying the form and finding its distinct path in space. And so, she is deeply committed to the careful observation required to transform nature into a more universal and transcendent artistic form.

It is believed that what is most personal is also most universal. So, in order to try to achieve an honest portrayal of human existence, the artist finds it necessary first to engage with her own private experiences through self-portraiture. While relying on her own features is often central to her creative process, she doesn't limit self-portraits to mere images of herself, but include all subjects so long as they have been filtered through her own aesthetic perception. In this way, each new piece becomes another chapter, and an open display of honesty for both herself and the viewer.



## Jana Rinchenbachova

\* 1988 (CZ)



### Waving Memories I 2019

Installation (with sound) | 220 x 35 x 35cm

This work is a real-time installation in which Rinchenbachová reproduces a whirlwind. The movement of the whirlwind is controlled in real time according to changes in air pressure (the movements of cold and warm fronts) around the weather station nearest to the OSTRALE exhibition. With only a slight exaggeration, one can say that the installation is commanded by the air itself, and it remains a mystery as to what happens in the next second. Standing in contrast to the industrial container, the feathers represent transience and freedom, and humankind's unfulfilled dream of unassisted flight. The whirlwind of feathers symbolizes the uncontrollability of nature, and the smallness of human beings.



## Brele Scholz

\* 1959 (DE)



### Je suis | 2015

Installation | 28 x 18cm

In the week of the attack on Charlie Hebdo and the Koscher Supermarket in Paris on the seventh of January 2015, the artist drew 77 self portraits entitled „Je suis“. Triggered by the murderous attacks and the increasing attacks on Jews in Europe, she found herself on a rollercoaster of emotions. She poses questions in the installation which arise from her own background and from German history. There is a shallowness in our democracy. We measure in double standards when our western interests are to be enforced. The artist asks herself: At a young age, would she have ended up in the RAF and did she avoid it only by sheer luck? Would she have become a Nazi as her mother did at a young age? Or would she have been in the resistance like her grandfather? What brings young people to do such radical things? Are the various motives comparable? Where does hatred come from? Where does the temptation lie?

**Studio Kawakeb****(Hussein Nakhal, David Habchy, Christin Skaf)****(LB)****Sorry I drowned I 2017**

Film (with sound)

The world has catastrophically failed the millions of people currently fleeing war, persecution and despair. The politics of calculation won out over the moral and legal obligations to offer protection and assistance to those in need. Like a contagious disease, walls, fences and restrictive border measures rampantly spread, causing countless thousands of people to die on land or at sea. This animated film, created by the Beirut-based Studio Kawakeb and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), is inspired by a letter allegedly found on the body of someone who drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, a victim of the prevailing cynical politics of our day. While we may not know of the truth behind the letter and who wrote it, we do know that what it depicts is a reality. This reality cannot continue. In 2016, more than 20,000 people were rescued by MSF.



## Adnan Softić

\* 1975 (BA)



### **Bigger Than Life I 2018**

Film (with sound)

In Skopje, there is a government plan costing several hundred million euros to create a brand new, ancient city center. The project is called „Skopje 2014“. So far, some thirty government buildings and museums, as well as countless monuments in the classical style, have been erected in the Macedonian capital, in an attempt to put Skopje on a par with Rome and Athens. A city looks for a future in history – Macedonia is inventing itself as a nation with historical status based on a model of a sense of antiquity that is largely fictional. Would that be something new? Will we buy that (hi)story?

In „Bigger Than Life“, present-day Skopje becomes an archaeological dig. We can follow in real time how history is made, how antiquity is constructed, how historical singularities are manufactured via mimicry, and how the boundary between truth and falsification becomes blurred the minute something is recorded often enough on postcards.



## Ad Van Aart

\* 1953 (NL)



### No Title 2018 I 2018

Object (with sound) | 256 x 150 x 135cm

Ad van Aart creates spatial objects. He works with a variety of materials and uses various techniques. He recently made a series of sound objects with which he produces soundscape performances. Essential in his work is the combination of intuition, attention, perfection, and humor. This particular work is made out of organ pipes, a vacuum-cleaner, band tubing and a motor. The public can press a button to turn on the sound and movement of the soundobject.



## Marie-Christin Rothenbücher

\* 1988 (DE)



**! | 2015**

Painting | 80 x 60 x 4cm

An artist is always part of the world he or she lives in and thus artists are also part of the world's -isms and their associated dogmas. In Rothenbücher's works, it is often the case that these -isms, which flow into the artist through the current time window, are subliminally present. Her works do not show this confrontation at first glance. She wants the viewers of her works to take time, as a contrast to everything the present epoch stands for. The work „!“ stands for dogmatism as meaning the uncritical adherence to certain views. It is semi-transparent, showing only a barrier tape.



## **Work – WomanISM**

### **Nancy Mteki**

\* 1989 (ZW)



### **Honai I 2015**

Photography I 70 x 100 x 2cm

Nancy Mteki works on the axis of self-exploration in a society that simultaneously shames sexualises and objectifies the black female form. Using the juxtaposition of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', she sheds off each piece of clothing, debunking the gender myth and releasing herself from the yoke of oppression. Her body transcends space, encountering and challenging the public gaze, revealing her vulnerability and displaying her power. Equipped with a camera and the experience of rejection, motherhood and loss, she invites the audience to her reawakening. Boldly she stares at you against the backdrop of domesticity, rewriting history and challenging the narrative of black African female voicelessness. (Tawanda Appiah)



## Sonia Barrett

\* 1975 (JM, GB, DE)



### Chair No. 33 | 2015

Object | 80 x 60 x 140cm

"I saw the body in the chair. It was just a process of making explicit the meta-narrative of the chair. The chairs are in gentlemen clubs, a good cigar or whiskey might be enjoyed in them or a "fireside chat." They are in places where "old boys" network. I feel it. is a very British thing.

Interestingly in Germany, they are called "ear chairs" referring to the protection they afford your head and hearing. This piece is for me a radical departure from other work I have made to date. The space between the ears of the chair was for me the space between the breasts of this figure. For her to claim her joy now, it seemed the best thing she could do was stop cushioning resting male bodies in the club-room and lie down and rest herself.



## Annalena Maria Bichler

\* 1999 (DE)



### **Mutter 1 | 2018**

Drawing | 218 x 176 x 4cm

„Mother 1“ is the result of an examination of the role of mother, gained from the personal experiences of religious, forced constellations. Using her whole body, the artist first applied spontaneous forms with pencil, acrylic and ink to the paper lying on the floor. With an expressive style of hands, feet, arms and knees, the form, which is reminiscent of Christian portraits of the Virgin Mary, gradually became concrete in the course of the creative process.



## Usha Seejarim

\* 1974 (ZA)



### **Domestic Disagreement I 2015**

Object I 131 x 91 x 46cm

The trajectory of my work shows an allurement with the everyday where the preoccupation is perhaps a search for the value of what lies behind and beyond that which is ordinary.

Henry Lefebvre, in *Clearing the Ground*, 1961 describes a housewife as being immersed in the everyday, needing an escape, and a mathematician being distant from and needing a return to the everyday. This phenomenon of “escape from” and “return to” the everyday co-exist in my life as a home-maker and artist. The duality of this relationship informs my work.

As my process of making shifts from a mind/thought centered approach to one of spontaneity and allowing, quotidian objects seem to direct their appropriation as simple configurations make complex statements and mundane elements become monumental forms.



## Carolin Koss

\* 1986 (DE)



### **Growth (Environmentalism) I 2015**

Film, Installation (with sound) | 80 x 150 x 150cm

Koss' work is characterized by a subtle reinterpretation of references to art history and contemporary culture. With a penetrating gaze, Koss examines a highly complex form of subjectivity. She interrogates the mechanics of humanity and ecology, sociological questions pertaining to the human condition, as well as the dynamics of power in today's society. Koss' works generate a multi-layered, lyrical, euphoric and yet thought-provoking energy going far beyond conventional video and digital artistic working methods and they are often presented in the form of an installation. (Art Productions, New York)



## Ryan Falzon

\* 1988 (MT)



### **Ġiġa I 2017**

Painting, Collage I 190 x 190 x 7cm

On the evening of 23 July 1960, the body of an 8-year old boy named Twannie Aquilina was discovered in his mother's apartment at a Valletta slum in Malta. The boy died after almost being beheaded with a bread knife. His mother and stepfather, Ġiġa and Leli, were accused of the murder. Both were found guilty. Leli was sentenced to 20 years in jail, while Ġiġa was sentenced to death, which was later reduced to 10 years in jail. Characters from the case turned into sensations, with holy memorial pictures of the boy making the rounds. Copies of this image of Twannie are used by Falzon as an understated background for this work. The pastel drawn image of a twin tub washing machine of the period refers to the urban legend that the victim was murdered by being forced into a running tumble dryer, partly because significant evidence was lifted off the machine.



## Ramona Seyfarth

\* 1980 (DE)



### **OVER\_THE EDGE I 2020**

Installation | 0 x 750 x 350cm

While "THE EDGE", 2015, was the answer to the mean, rational handling of fates and their possible connection with our own way of life, "OVER\_THE EDGE", 2020, asks for an attitude of European politics towards sea rescue and the associated protection of universal human rights. Instead of building bridges, Europe builds camps and tries to remove THE boats completely from the Mediterranean Sea. The surface of the plates bear witness to this process. The installation assigns an undefined space above the sea to the boats torn from the sea and seeks to form a body that commemorates those who actively build temporary islands.



## Gyula Varnai

\* 1956 (HU)



### **Rainbow I 2017**

Object I 150 x 300 x 5cm

Composed of vintage pin badges arranged into a colourful arc according to the colour spectrum, the installation „Rainbow“, by evoking past utopias, reflects on the hopes of humanity rising to solve its ethnic, political and religious conflicts. Their small metallic painted surfaces displaying symbols of events, the party, ideological goals, and state enterprises: these kind of badges were remarkably popular items across the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc.

In European culture, the rainbow is the symbol of hope, and so Várnai's rainbow also addresses our faith in utopias. (Zsolt Petrányi)



## Iwona Rozbiewska

\* 1980 (PL)



### Untitled I 2017

Installation | 200 x 150 x 220cm

“They stood on the seashore / Wishing to walk through it and they only had a spoon / To drain it.” (Bertolt Brecht) The absurdity of the situations described in the poem inspired Iwona Rozbiewska to do further artistic research. She wants to highlight her opinion that the spoon is an image of reaching impossible goals, crossing borders and looking for one’s own place... It is hung at an angle, and in this static way she wanted to make the impression of motion: a surreal, abstract element, so to speak. This minimalistic, simplified form of a spoon, perfectly cut in metal and welded, stands in contrast to the bricks. The bricks are completely hand-made and represent a significant step in the beginnings of civilisation. There are no two identical bricks. Hand-made bricks are like a shadow of human individuality. They differ because they occupied different spaces in the brick kiln.



## Thomas Agrinier

\* 1976 (FR)



### **Bye \_ Chute d'homme (2nd version) \_ De justesse | 2017**

Painting | 200 x 250 x 3cm | 200 x 250 x 3cm | 200 x 160 x 3cm

Convinced that negative denunciation, criticism and representation have their limits, the artist has chosen to celebrate what is positive and to go on a kind of forced march of optimism. In a recent interview, George Condo suggested that artists should „try to find a way into their culture. A pinhole is enough space. If you can get through that pinhole, you can open up a very large territory of new and undiscovered aesthetic or de-aestheticized universe. You always find a big universe through a small little aperture.“ Likewise when one looks at a work, it is often a detail that brings us into it. Elements borrowed from popular culture juxtaposed with others from art history can create this opening. An element becomes an entry point for others and allows you to enter into the narrative.



## Wolfgang Bittner

\* 1947 (DE)



### Stehle\_Fabrik\_Torhaus II | 2015

Sculpture | 50 x 15 x 16cm | 40 x 18 x 19cm | 40 x 18 x 18cm

The simple formal language of the sculptures seems familiar: stairs, balustrades, passageways, ramps, openings as doors and windows. However, the sequences of rooms chosen by the artist have nothing in common with the known or usable reality. One enters them intellectually. It is very doubtful whether you come out as the person you were before. On the surface there are air pores, cement streaks, traces of the shuttering or a painterly patina caused by water seeping through. The natural ambivalence of the material has nothing to do with our daily view of concrete surfaces; they are not brittle, repellent or impenetrable. The surfaces are alive and natural. The sketched design work on paper preceding the concrete casting is the actual artistic creative process. This is followed by the creation of the mould for the sculpture. These two creative processes, however, remain hidden from the viewer. The sculptures have their own aura.



## Franz Ehrenberg

\* 1987 (DE)



### **Bewahrt I 2017**

Painting I 140 x 160 x 2cm

In Ehrenberg's works, the traditional painterly motifs of the human form and space meet free of rules and patterns and as equal agents in seemingly theatrical snapshots. The human form and space are consciously staged and inseparably linked elements of a story. Man explains space, space explains man. The bizarre and surreal moments release the agents from their predictability. They are disturbed by the unexpected intimacy of the moment, of the pause and the vulnerability.



## Fürjesi Csaba

\* 1969 (HU)



### Promenadenkapitän I 2016

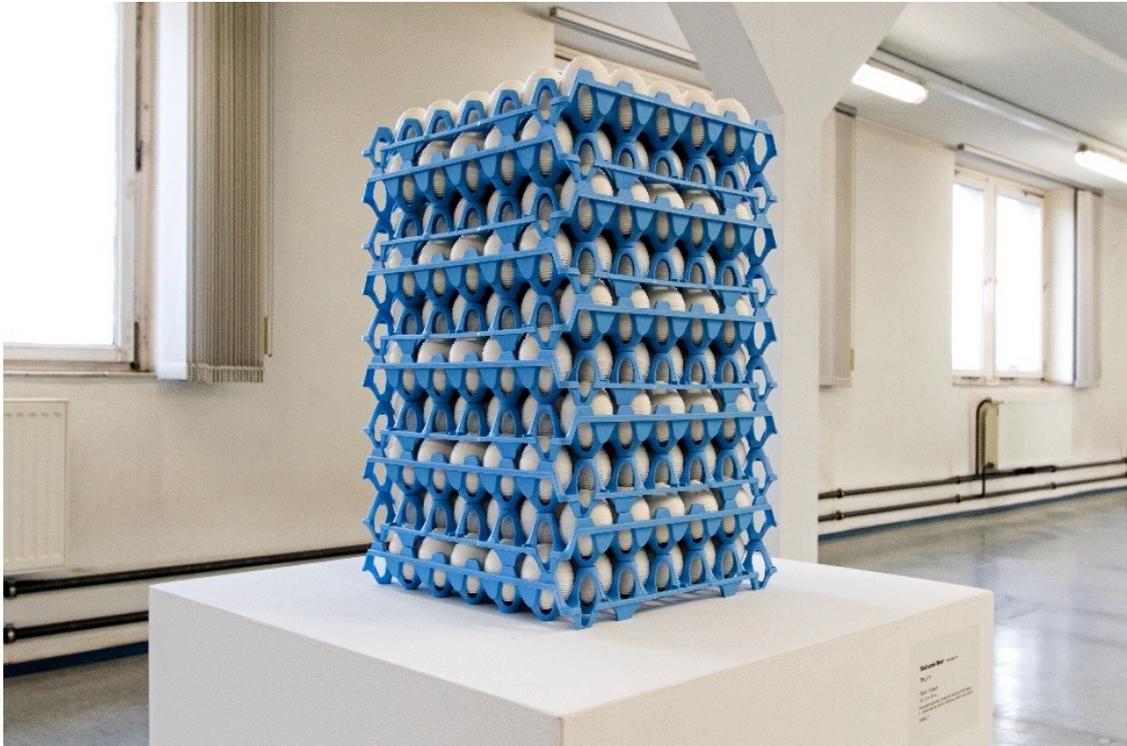
Painting I 150 x 150 x 5cm

The works of Csaba Fürjesi inhabit the realm between the real and the surreal. His pictures consist of elements that come from a concretely representable world, but that are nevertheless suitable for posing further questions in their combination. In emphasizing this duality and clarifying it motivically, he blurs the space-time relationship and creates a special visual tension. His work thus has many interpretations and multiple meanings in local and global social space. It reminds us of recent collective historical memory, and awakens our deepest memories. This dialogue with a subjective past, however, focuses on the present. He suggests that we should recognize and study the events and occurrences of our pasts, as we can only interpret ourselves through this continuity.



## Stefanie Herr

\* 1974 (DE)



### **Oeufre I 2017**

Object I 50 x 30 x 30cm

Today's commercial laying hens have been selectively bred for hyper-production. Reduced to mere production units, some „enhanced“ breeds can lay over 300 eggs in a year - almost an egg a day.

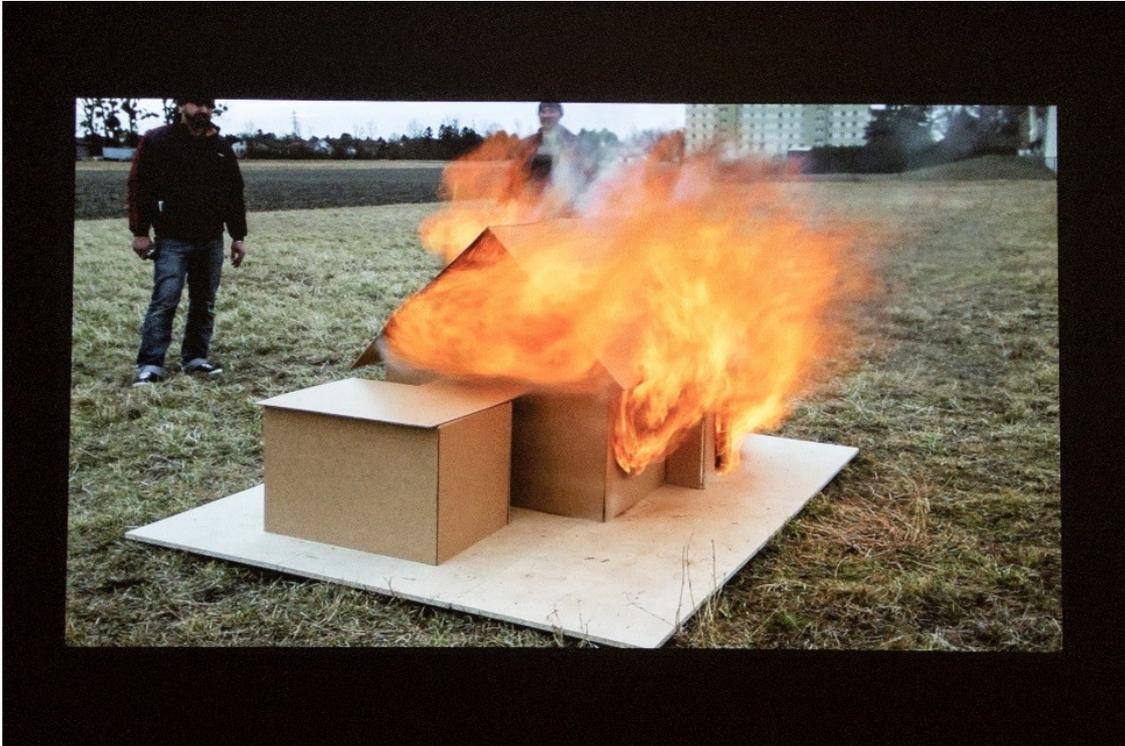
„Oeufre“ aims at illustrating the absurd existence of the oppressed and exploited individual and exposing the perverse excesses of a profit-driven society through the example of the egg industry. Determined to match the annual egg production of an industrial laying hen, the artist subjected herself to the repetitive and exhausting task of manually producing one cardboard egg almost every day throughout 2016. Each piece took her about three hours to craft, making it as individual and unique as a bird's egg.

Thus this work not only scrutinises the prevailing mode of production that encourages uniformity and monoculture solely for the purpose of maximizing profits, but also aims to confront a culture that relentlessly pushes ever more individuals into precarious working and living conditions, and, all too often, confuses quantity with quality, production with creation and price with value.



## Michael Heindl

\* 1988 (AT)



### Budget Rebellion I 2017

Film (with sound)

The starting point of Heindl's work is an examination of the characteristics and parameters that determine human action in our postmodern society. As a result, public space is an important working environment for him, physical urban space as well as media and virtual space. He is interested in these places as spaces for negotiation where all sections of a society meet. These are environments where people have to decide continuously on the nature of their coexistence. Prevailing laws and structures are intended to simplify individual decisions and make them more predictable.

The artist tries to create moments that result in an interruption of conventional processes. In this way, for the most part, he implements his ideas in the form of targeted actions and interventions.



## Daniel Mullen

\*1985 (GB)



### **White Series I 2017**

Painting I 190 x 200 x 5cm | 200 x 190 x 5cm | 180 x 160 x 5cm

By applying glazed layers in combination with hard-edge painted lines, Mullen creates layered images that figuratively communicate abstract concepts. When creating illusionistic forms he can, to some degree, illustrate an abstract idea or phenomenon, turning abstraction on its head.

Mullen creates a complex affect that manages to suggest the incarnation of something grand and vast yet also perhaps just that; a suggestion and not a reality, an illusion, and not the truth. As a devoted craftsman who meticulously creates all of his work without digital or mechanical aids, he still manages to create the impression of reproducibility, which is precisely what he seeks to highlight in an era of mass consumption.



## Roman Zaslouov

\* 1962 (FR, BY)



### **The Sandlot I 2017**

Object I 200 x 100 x 100 cm

The merging of personal experience, once heard or seen, together with monolithic civilization alluded to in the form of urban myths and the array of art in general, transforms, in the perception of a personality, into a certain semblance of the TABLEAU, which exists on its own in a timeless and spaceless world. Each and every event, an act, a picture of the tableau is inherently representing a hyperlink that refers to certain memories and associations and evokes an emotional response. The installation is intended to demonstrate the symbolism of the world reflected in consciousness, where the fundamental notions, such as love, hatred, fear, hunger, pleasure merge together with personal fantasy experiences into a fancy cocktail. They are in a simultaneously joint and separate existence within a certain subjective personality-microcosm.



## *Wasser – Naturalism*

### **Vince Briffa**

\* 1958 (MT)



### **Fomm ir-Riħ I 2018**

Installation, Object (with sound) | 150 x 90 x 90cm

This work's aesthetic separates the two main components of the spoken word, the sound and the wind, and confronts them, revisiting the divine notion of the word as the breath of life. The work also challenges the power of the word and plays on the way we conceive confrontation. On a more playful level, the work also questions the ultimate destination of language, symbolised by our own speech. Playing with the science behind this issue, it asks: if our spoken words, as sound waves, are reflected, refracted and ultimately decay, having their energy dissipated as heat, what happens to this heat when it meets with a cooling fan that is activated every time a word or phrase is uttered?



## Manja Barthel

\* 1972 (DE)



### Umlaufbahn I 2018

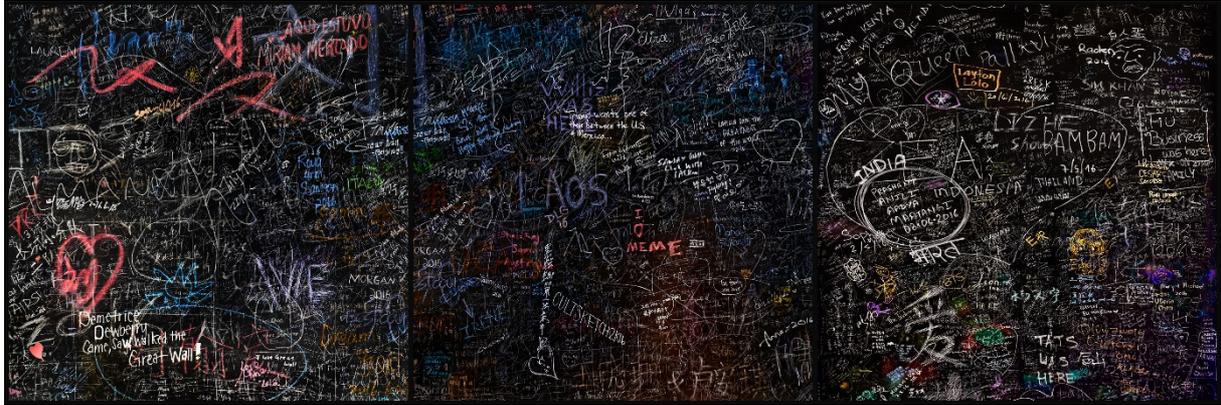
Painting | 139 x 159 x 4cm

Manja Barthel develops compositions of color and texture. These free abstractions are vaguely suggestive of real places, objects or situations. In her work, we find chaos, near-symmetry, geometric forms and delicate nuances in color - parameters of tension and balance. In her collages, jagged, transparent and delicate formations overlap to form accumulations or curvy lines. The results are three-dimensional worlds that recall reality in fragments and play with an abstract three-dimensional illusion of depth.



## Alex Attard

\* 1955 (MT)



### Love Great Wall I 2016

Photography | 85 x 255 x 5cm

The Wall That Would a Canvas Be – Walls have been observed by art photographer Alex Attard as ways of highlighting what is often overlooked or seen as less than extraordinary. The graffiti at the Great Wall of China is one such inspiration. The Great Wall, that was originally designed to protect and keep people away, today exists for the opposite reason, that of welcoming people. The designated graffiti zone is a confirmation of this and of the spontaneous random expressions of visitors.



## Austin Camilleri

\* 1972 (MT)



### Bandiera Bianca I Jahr

Installation, Film | 240 x 560 x 355cm

The work has been created in 2018 and first exhibited in my solo show WHITEFLAG at the Visual Arts Gallery, New Delhi. It stems from my long-standing research in the manifestation of power, the limits and concessions that power exerts and the fallibility of its dogmatic notions. It is part of my ongoing series of works, both sculptural and on paper that deal with the migration and divide. In a crucial time for the mediterranean and the diplomatic stresses it creates, Bandiera Bianca is a work that metaphorically captures both the wait and the loss. It juxtaposes found and newly produced footage to create tension, both visually and poetically, by merging opposed associations. The video work is in constant dialogue with the sculptural object, Hope, a propeller gilt in 22crt gold. The latter is an authentic propeller of a sunk migrants' boat.



## Aleksandar Radan

\* 1988 (RS)



### **this water gives back no images I 2018**

Film, Installation (with sound) | 221 x 450 x 550cm

In Radan's works, one often encounters stereotypical, pre-programmed gestures of digital avatars that oscillate between the authenticity of life and the artificially unhinged. These are manipulated in game mods and supplemented by an improvisational moment: Radan's films are mostly played live in altered computer game environments that the artist has previously and deliberately altered or designed as his „stage set“. By intervening in the game software's databases, game modding makes it possible, for example, to rewrite the visual surface textures or the sound of a game, thus transforming it into an artistically malleable material. In Radan's experimental short films, the programmed meets the improvised, the preset is confronted with the spontaneous action of the artist - who is also the player - in the virtual environment.



## Patrick Fenech

\* 1957 (MT)



### **Me and My Favourite Insect - Displacement series I Jahr**

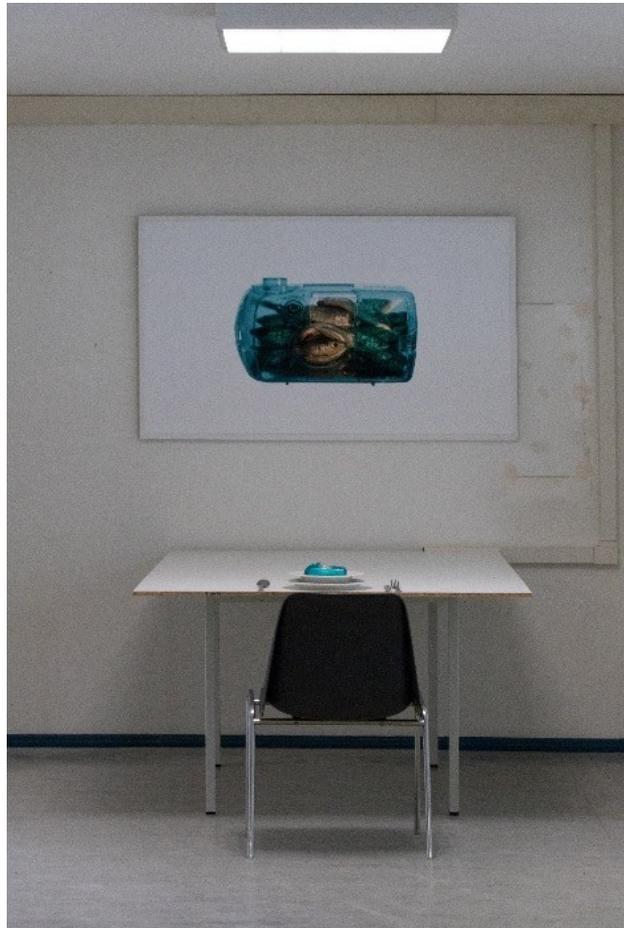
Installation | 85 x 60 x 5cm

This work, consisting of portraits of African refugees in Malta holding endangered insects, deals with the uprooting of people from their country of origin. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* tells the story of how humankind, in the form of Adam and Eve, was expelled from the original paradise in which they lived. If, like Eve (tempted to sin by the thought of what we could become), we forget, even for a moment, that we still need our roots to keep our place on Earth, what will then happen to that place? Milton's answer is that this place will be lost for ever amid the wounds of our uprooting. This loss is represented by the removal of access to the tree of life.



## Patrick Fenech

\* 1957 (MT)



### **Disruption and the Ecological Conundrum I 2018**

Installation I 81 x 136 x 2cm | Installation 2: 136 x 81 x 0cm

This work deals with the pollution of the sea and the disruption of our ecosystem. The role of a discarded plastic underwater camera is portrayed in its dual function as perpetrator and saviour. The changing role of the camera and its ubiquity has made photography the most influential medium for environmental awareness.



## Achim Riethmann

\* 1979 (DE)



### **GM 25/26/28 \_ Neon I 2017**

Installation, Painting, Drawing | 146 x 500 x 5cm

Exceptional situations form the thematic starting point of these works. These can be scientific investigations, accidents, natural disasters, social upheavals, but also armed conflicts. The fragments used are intended to create a field of tension for thematic and spatial interpretations, both in terms of content and form.

In this context, the sculpturally transformed helmets enter into dialogue with the artist's images shown behind them. Both in the sculptures and in the paintings we see masks and protective clothing that man has designed to protect himself. At the same time, they erase the identity of the wearer while giving him a new identity corresponding to the role in which the equipment places him.



## Gilbert Brohl

\* 1983 (DE)



### Playroom I 2018

Painting I 190 x 170 x 3cm

Gilbert Brohl's work spellbinds the viewer with large formats, fresh colours and narrative elements. The artist brings together traditional oil painting and street art. The combination of objects and genres from different epochs is exactly as unfamiliar as the motivic contrasts in his work. The work of the artist shows traditional motives and structures paired with urban and even surreal worlds. There are references from contemporary film classics or human hybrids, of history and our mediated present times, coupled together. His works move both motivically and formally between tradition and innovation, between the aesthetic and the accidental. They are connecting opposing contents while provoking and amusing the viewer at the same time.



## Urban Grünfelder

\* 1967 (IT)



### **Mann frisst Anzug / "man eats suit | 2011**

Object | 100 x 80 x 80cm

Urban Grünfelder's visual language is based on an alphabet of 'bold figures' which embody the versatility of human existence. He speaks in a register of physical and emotional stirrings. [...] The figures are a reduction of the humanly possible: monochrome and graphic, symmetric and perfect. They are icons variably assigned." (Isabel Termini) His sculpture is a response to discredited humanism, humanity that wants to hide the obscene and perverse. In this way, it plays with social norms and common stereotypes; it is a mirror of society and its constraints and conventions.



## André Wagner

\* 1980 (DE)



### **Wave Breakers I 2013**

Photography I 100 x 300 x 5cm

André Wagner picks up real existing (light)situations and creates painting-like pictures through long exposures. With the camera, it is possible for him to expand his visual perception and pictorial context. Wagner's photographs reveal the process of artistic engagement with the contradictory nature of human existence: between a deep connection with nature and the culture of industrial progress. This is evident in his landscape portraits, which portray man and nature as manifestations.



## Ruben Müller

\* 1990 (DE)



### **Leviathan I 2018**

Painting I 175 x 420 x 3cm

Leviathan, the great sea monster from pre-biblical times is a symbol of the incomprehensible, against which man has no ways of opposition. Even Thomas Hobbes used the image of Leviathan for his writing about a theoretical state. Man is constantly confronted with abstract, unmanageable structures, and still has to develop strategies to help coping with them.



## Ulrike Schüchler

\* 1962 (DE)



### OM(G)\_2.0 | Jahr

Installation (with sound) | 267 x 265 x 402cm

ANAFORA is a Coptic monastic center in the northern desert area of Islamic-Arab Egypt, near Cairo. Terrorist attacks against the Coptic minority are frequent in the region. Despite these violent attacks, life in ANAFORA is led according to the concept of peaceful coexistence and tolerance. Every day at dawn in ANAFORA the songs of Coptic liturgy intertwine with the ancient call of the muezzin. This acoustic juxtaposition creates an impressive sound-space in which many visitors, villagers and employees participate. The video installation OM(G)\_2.0 takes up the interweaving and merging of the most diverse religious rituals, and places them in the context of increasingly uncompromising and violent attitudes.



## Praxis für alternative Handlungen (Oertel, Lucas / Schmöller, Heinz)

\* 1983 (DE)



### Interventionen in der Peripherie I Jahr

Installation (with sound) | 250 x 500 x 15cm

This video installation is the result of several trips to the countryside at the edge of town. Locations discovered in the process were staged using materials available on the site as objects or installations. The screens, positioned together, visibly connected with cables and equipped with media players, show several of the staged locations and interventions as moving and fixed pictures (video loops). The different situations of light and natural sounds intensify the connection to the different scenes. Looking at the screens, you can observe them as if through the windows of a technical control room.



## Andreas Hildebrandt

\* 1973 (DE)



### Drift I 2017

Painting I 240 x 170 x 3cm

Andreas Hildebrandt's painting derives from his visual and intellectual fascination with textures, grids, structures, patterns, symbolism, geometry and ornamentation. In the process of an experimental discovery in pictures, he explores how his material behaves under the conditions of classical painting. Routine and curiosity, composition and chance go hand in hand in counterpoint. In the dialogue of found and free forms, of reproduction and invention, of repetition and mutation, visual transformations articulate themselves. Firmly joined, technical forms erode into the naturally shapeless: surface patterns condense into plastic-figurative assertions, letters turn into empty ornaments, organic structures suddenly seem symbolic. (Mathias Wagner)



## Philipp Gloger

\* 1983 (DE)



### **Insel cres I 2013**

Painting | 200 x 150 x 2cm

Gloger is focusing on the penetration and transformation of the environment by man and man's infrastructure. The originally intended recreation in nature is more and more replaced by a kind of automatic amusement. In today's tourist areas, people are more exposed to a high-tech entertainment machine than they are to the forces of nature. Gloger examines the extent of mass tourism in an ambivalent way.



## ***The artistic direction and the curators***

**Andrea Hilger** is founder and artistic director of the OSTRALE - Centre for Contemporary Art and main organizer of the Womanism project. Born in Leipzig in 1970, she is the founder of TANZart Dresden (1997), HILLUMINATION - Light + Stage Design (2001) and member of the board of Tanzbühne Dresden e.V. Since 1999 she has been a dancer in numerous German opera houses, including the Semperoper Dresden to this day, as well as a set and costume designer at numerous theatres throughout Germany. 2009 winner of the Sponsorship Award of the City of Dresden and member of the organisation team of the Conference of Competitors in preparation for the European Capital of Culture 2025.

**Syowia Kyambi** is the main curator of the Womanism project from the African side. She is a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has received several awards and scholarships. Her work explores how our contemporary human experience is influenced by constructed histories by creating installations that include a performative practice of telling stories and activating objects; exploring cultural identities and linking them to issues of loss, memory, race and gender. Syowia Kyambi practices both artistic and curatorial practice. Her work has been shown in museums in Belgium, Finland, Kenya, Mali, Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Zimbabwe, France, South Africa and the USA. Syowia Kyambi was also part of the curatorial team that selected the artists for the OSTRALE Biennale O19.

**Antka Hofmann** is an artist, cultural manager and curator. Born in 1977 in Großenhain, she lives and works in Dresden and Heiligendamm. She studied painting and graphic art at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts (1996-2002), where she also completed her master class studies (2002-2005). After a research and teaching scholarship (2002-2003) she was a member of the producers gallery Komet Berlin (formerly Rakete Berlin 2007-2009). She is co-founder of the OSTRALE, member of the board and since 2013 part of the curatorial and development team. As an artist she had solo exhibitions in Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden as well as various group exhibitions in Germany, Poland, Russia, Belgium, Spain and Malta. She was also part of the curatorial team that selected the artists for the OSTRALE Biennale O19.

**Toni Sant**, born in Malta in 1968, has been Artistic Director of Spazju Kreattiv, the national centre for creativity in Valletta, since 2014. He is also Director of Film and Digital Media at MediaCityUK at the University of Salford in Greater Manchester. Prior to that he was based in the coastal town of Scarborough at the University of Hull in England, where he was Director of Research and Enterprise for the School of Arts and New Media. This was followed by a period of study at New York University between 1996 and 2003, which ended with a doctorate in Performance Studies, focusing on the impact of legal and economic developments on the creative use of the Internet. He is the author of *Franklin Furnace and the Spirit of the Avant-Garde: A History of the Future* (Intellect, University of Chicago Press, 2011) and *Remembering Rediffusion in Malta: A History without a Future?* (Midsea Books, Malta, 2016), and is co-editor of the *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media* (Routledge) and editor of *Documenting Performance: The Context and Processes of Digital Curation and Archiving* (Bloomsbury, London, 2017). Over the last two decades he has lectured extensively on media



RIJEKA 2020.eu

Port of Diversity



**OSTRALE**

Centre for Contemporary Art

archaeology, with a focus on performance arts, contemporary art archives and digital preservation.

## Impressum

This publication is published on the occasion of the OUT of OSTRALE O20, Watergate - digital exhibition - in the framework of European capital of culture Rijeka 2020

© OSTRALE – Centre for contemporary art

OSTRALE: eingetragener Verein VR 4922  
Rethelstraße 45 / D-01139  
www.ostrale.de / post@ostrale.de

Artistic director, Artistic Codirector  
Andrea Hilger, Antka Hofmann

Financial management  
Marion Spakowski

Judicial, funding and contract matters  
Dr. Bernd Kugelberg

We would like to thank all those mentioned and unnamed who contributed to the success of the 2020 digital exhibition:

Press and public relations | Tobias Blaurock / blaurock brand communication  
Project Management | Mátyás Dunajcsik, Benjamin Gruner  
Workshop | Bernd Hartmann, Dietmar Bunk, Uwe Taubert  
Technology and Logistics | Paul Michel, Kay Kaul, Gerhard Swiatopelk-Mirski  
Federal Voluntary Service | Giulia Deidda  
Intern | Lisa Uhlig  
Database | Sven Dämmig  
Representative of the Sponsoring Association | Franz Jakob Leyser  
Photographer | Peter Fischer  
Editor | Published by OSTRALE - Center for Contemporary Art  
Texts | Artists and Curators / Mátyás Dunajcsik  
Translation | Benjamin Gruner, Mátyás Dunajcsik  
Design | Benjamin Gruner, Lisa Uhlig  
Exhibition photography © Peter Fischer