

QUEER ENCOUNTERS ***VIENNA TRANS L.A.***

A group exhibition of artists from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
curated by Zoe Dewitt

September 25 – 29, 2017

California Institute of the Arts

School of Art D300/D301 galleries

Valencia (CA)

Florian Aschka
Pedra Costa
Zoe Dewitt
Andi Dvořák
Mirabella Dziruni
Veronika Eberhart
Julia Fuchs
Julia S. Goodman
Moritz Gottschalk
Larissa Kopp
Roberta Lima
Rini Mitra
Alfred Morina
Hyeji Nam
Danielle Pamp
Michal Rutz
Berivan Sayici
Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski
Marianne Vlaschits
Julia Zastava
Countess Cis Zoltowska

PREFACE

It is a rare occasion that student projects span the Atlantic Ocean and are done in an effort that resembles co-operations between big institutions. I am very happy that with this catalogue one such rare and precious initiative is documented. Zoe Dewitt realized the exhibition ‚Queer Encounters. Vienna Trans L.A.‘ at the California Institute of the Arts, CalArts. The contact with Kaucyila Brooke, visual artist and professor at CalArts, has been established during a class excursion of the Contextual Painting Studio in L.A. – but the connection between Kaucyila Brooke and the Academy has been a long standing one. As many as twenty years ago, Kaucyila Brooke started to exhibit in Austria frequently, also at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. More than ten years ago a teacher exchange was realized, and Brooke taught for one term at the Academy in exchange for Carola Dertnig teaching for one term at CalArts. Sometimes institutional co-operations are truly sustainable and get a life of their own.

We are very happy that this exhibition could take place at CalArts and that the group of students with Zoe Dewitt succeeded in securing the means, contacts and technicalities of this huge effort. The field of queer art has been an important focus of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna for many years and it is more than appropriate that the presence of the Academy at CalArts focused on this field.

We would like to thank project leader and initiator Zoe Dewitt for all her efforts, all the participating artists and of course Kaucyila Brooke for making this possible. We would also like to thank the Austrian Federal Chancellery and the Austrian Cultural Forum New York for their support for this project.

Eva Blimlinger, Andrea B. Braidt, Karin Riegler
Rectorate of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna



STRANGE PARTNERS

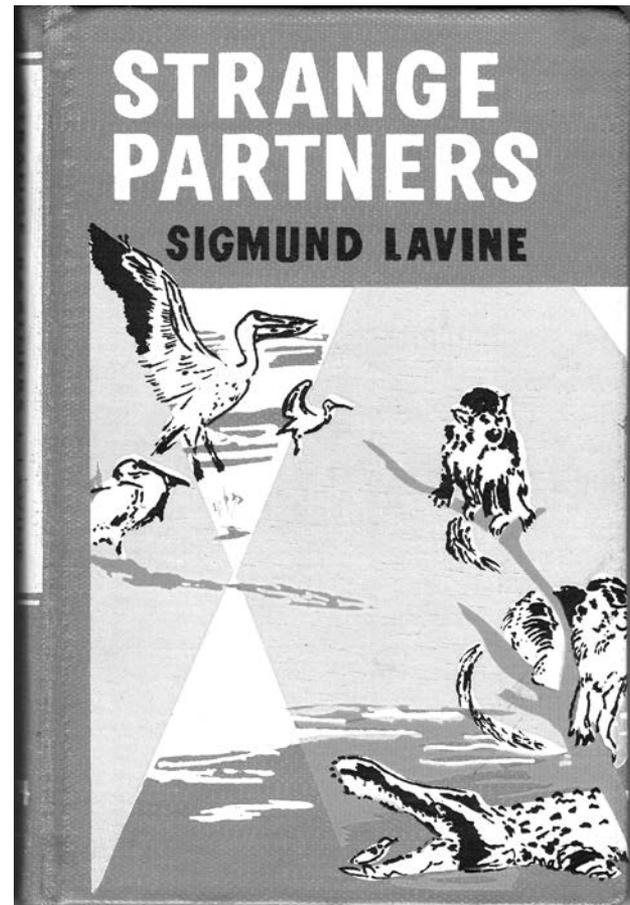
If you are reading this text it means that I am no longer alive. If you are reading this text it means that this text is alive. The death of the author emerged when all authorities fell under the questioning gaze of the renewed left in the aftermath of May 1968. Ultimately those of us who were so inclined came to question all previously organized orders; chains of command, phylum's and sub species were up for grabs in the new disordering of our own un-natural histories. Nothing was left undisturbed. Birds became dinosaurs. Dinosaurs became bigger, smaller, older, younger, warm-blooded and more peaceful vegetarians with each new revelation. Once the fog of power and control was lifted we could see that the survival of the species is not all that drives us to live and fuck each other. The universalities of desire are vanishing before us like relics of the enlightenment and humanism with its self-fulfilling categories of social order.

On Saturday, I met friends visiting from San Francisco at the Huntington Gardens in San Marino in the Los Angeles area. Michele is a professional gardener and knows the Latin names and growth habits of most plants that we came across. But that day we were in the Australian section of the garden and there were some that refused to reveal their nametags and they had her stumped. In Australia, thrashing around the overgrown shrubs at bases of some tall Brachychiton trees, I was distracted by a loud birdcall in the canopy of the trees above us. The call was familiar but I couldn't place it. Unfortunately, I'm a lazy occasional bird watcher and only recognize common songs from mockingbirds, chickadees, red winged blackbirds and a few other obvious ones like the ravens or blue jays. It was the middle of the afternoon and not a time when birds are usually so active but knowing that wasn't helping me either. We moved on to the cactus and succulent gardens. I often get exhausted wandering around in the desert without the shade of the trees but this time

Kaucyila Brooke and Ashley Hans Scheirl with students of the contextual painting class at the California Institute of the Arts, May 2013, Valencia, CA (photo: Zoe Dewitt).

my friends felt it sooner and decided to go find a shady place to rest. Michele and I moved slowly looking at colors, patterns, textures and the fantastical shapes of these plant creatures when the flock of birds singing that same song went skimming past us into the Aloe Trees. They perched and fluttered from one cactus branch to another just staying out of my vision.

We were still. Eventually they began to flit a bit closer to us. They had black topknots that went straight up into a point, not like the comb on a blue jay's head. They wore it punk style with a dramatic black and white mask around their eyes. They flicked past and under their tail feathers I saw a flash of coral or red or maybe more of a blush orange. What were they? Was it a migration? I have seen migrations before. One afternoon in Tucson, Arizona a tribe of Cedar Waxwings arrived and covered all the trees outside my window for a few hours allowing me watch them up close until my eyes ached from not blinking. Looking around I saw a couple with binoculars and asked them if they recognized the birds. She said that she thought they were feral and from South Asia. I didn't know immediately what she meant by feral but if they were from South Asia they wouldn't be migrating. I realized that she meant some sort of escaped pet birds. Around the edges of my brain I kept seeing the name bul bul or bulbil. Finally it floated across my frontal lobe and I said "There is a bird called a



bul bul or bilbul or something...” Michele look startled and I really have no idea how that slipped into my mind. Had I seen it in a David Attenborough nature program? Did I read about them in Tim Birkhead’s Bird Sense: What it’s like to be a bird? Did I watch them singing on You Tube? Or had my memory retained it from just looking through bird field guides or books of Audubon’s illustrations? I looked it up on my iphone and it was indeed a Red Whiskered Bulbul – native of South Asia – where they keep them in cages to enjoy their songs. Later I confirmed that there is a flock of them in Pasadena and they have set themselves up in the habitat of the Huntington Gardens.

The artists of Queer Encounters flew in into the Cal Arts habitat cross breeding their ideas and spawning any new species that they desired. They brought their buttocks, manifestos, nakedness, pigs, monkeys, nipples, toenails and tendrils, future sea creatures, sacred marijuana forests, strange invisible rituals and unimaginable flights of fancy. Carried in on the feathers of these escaped exotics, an odd assortment of body parts, genitalia and plant materials mixed and matched in tumbled magical brews. Strange partnerships were forged. The artists banded together in cooperative relationships like the barnacles that hitch a ride on whales coming together (cum) to share a meal at the same table (mensa). They reached the status of commensalism. Like the moth with the long proboscis that is fitted to the long nectar producing spur of the Madagascar orchid, these symbiants band together to engage in the life of the artist. Parasites on the art world’s back, these artists multiply and hitch rides to make art in the detritus left by greedy belching globalized gallery markets. These relationships are often camouflaged in the success-is-dominance competitive capitalist model where we view symbiosis and parasitism as negative or non-productive. And yet in the margins of the un-natural world of queer encounters these strange partnerships allow off-springing art to thrive. Who knows what kind of hybrid flaming creatures will show up after the inappropriate gestation periods that have been generated from their cooperation?

Kaucyila Brooke, Faculty

Program in Photo and Media, School of Art, Cal Arts



QUEER ENCOUNTERS – VIENNA TRANS L. A.

The group exhibition QUEER ENCOUNTERS – VIENNA TRANS L.A. which took place from September 25 to 29, 2017, at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Valencia, Santa Clarita (Los Angeles County), was in many ways an unusual one. Though it was basically part of an exchange project between two renowned art institutions, the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the CalArts School of Art in Los Angeles, this collaboration was not initiated by faculty members of the respective universities, neither was it part of any official teaching program; it rather was a self-organized student project that had been accomplished aside or on the brink of academic structures which, at least in the case of these two art academies, still offered enough freedom to be utilized by and for an ambitious exhibition project aimed at the presentation of around twenty Vienna-based international artists having emerged from a queer-feminist and decolonial background as well as at facilitating an artistic exchange between the participating artists from both sides. In that sense, the exhibition was something like a guerilla project, and it wouldn't have become reality without the openness and hospitality of our contact persons at CalArts: Kaucyila Brooke who is teaching in the photography and media program, as well as Tom Lawson, Dean of the School of Art, to whom both I owe my deepest thanks for making this exhibition possible. Similar thanks are deserved by Andrea B. Braidt, Vice Rector for Art and Research, who supported the project on behalf of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna by funding this catalogue.

The idea for this project goes back to an excursion by students of the Viennese Academy with Ashley Hans Scheirl (queer experimental filmmaker and painter, artist of *documenta14* in Kassel and Athens) to Los Angeles in 2013. As I thought it would be a missed opportunity not to use our stay at this place of myth and glamour for any kind of artistic intervention, I had in my luggage a foldable micro-museum which I had named The Museum of Contemporary Mind (MUCOM). I was at that time not aware that this venture had a famous precursor with Marcel Duchamp who had



The L.A. Show - Queer Art // Contextual Painting. Opening exhibition of The Museum of Contemporary Mind (MUCOM), presented at various public places in Los Angeles from May 8 to 12, 2013. *From above left:* The Museum of Contemporary Mind at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Venice Beach Boardwalk, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) and the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).

created his 'Box in a Suitcase' during the early 1940s. Unlike Duchamp's work, the Museum of Contemporary Mind was not intended as a personal artist's portfolio, but hosted a group show of around thirty artists who were participating in the excursion and contributed each one miniature work for the show. The Museum of Contemporary Mind was opened in Central Hollywood on May 8, 2013, and had been presented in the following days at various public spaces in L. A., including Venice Beach Boardwalk, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the California Institute of Arts (CalArts). During our visit to CalArts we met Kaucyila Brooke, who had good relations with the Viennese academy as she had been teaching there for one term in the academy's performance art class as well as participating in several Austrian art projects and exhibitions since the late 1990s. At a meeting with her students, both the American and Austrian artists presented their works and exchanged their experiences. This contact led to the idea of organizing an exchange project which should give the students of each institution the opportunity to show their works in a group exhibition at the other institution's spaces.

Unfortunately, the time of our stay in L.A. was too short to discuss the idea; so some further years went by until I met Kaucyila by chance in Vienna when she attended a gallery opening of befriended artists in the company of Ashley Hans Scheirl. I used the opportunity and talked with Kaucyila about my plan, who said that she considered it a great idea and would support the project. After she had talked with Dean Tom Lawson, we received the final okay in December 2016. There were nine months left to realize the project, which basically meant raising the funds in order to cover travel and transport costs for around twenty young artists and their works to L. A. Although the task seemed almost impossible to manage in the beginning, half of the money was raised with the help of students who had donated works for three art auctions that took place during academy events, while the other half came from public funding bodies like the Austrian Federal Chancellery and the Austrian Cultural Forum New York. The result of this meant that some months before the show we had collected enough money to cover travel costs for all participating artists. These were, for the most part, students, graduates or assistant professors of Ashley Hans Scheirl's 'contextual painting' class, which is known for its focus on gender and identity topics and follows an anti-discriminatory, queer-feminist and decolonial approach.

Related to this socio-political orientation, it stands also for certain *trans*-aspects in art (as in the transposition between artistic media, the transition between sexual categories, and the transgression of borders limiting the exploration of new libidinous economies etc.).

The positions united in this exhibition reflect this transitive aspect in various ways: the encounter of different cultural backgrounds with contemporary western subcultures and socio-political discourses, the shifting of set pieces of myth, folklore, high and low culture, trash and glamour, the exploration of alternate identities as a means of self-empowerment, the use of the body as a transmitter of personal and subcultural codes as well as the *prima materia* of artistic expression from which further alchemical transmutations of desire emanate. Terms such as intergalactic matriarchy, queer utopia, decolonisation of the body, postporn, LGBT-activism, non-binary event and club culture are just a few keywords which describe the artistic field presented in this exhibition.

As far as my own curatorial approach is concerned, I nevertheless was not so much interested in presenting art that could be seen as a plain implementation of socio-political endeavors based on ideological fundamentals such as queer-feminist, post- or decolonial theory (which doesn't mean that I don't fully support the impact direction of these basic and highly necessary efforts), neither did I want to present artworks that simply could be labeled as examples for any such categorization of artistic practice – rather I wanted to show individual positions which are strong statements of personal existence and self-empowerment, opening up side paths towards new and unexplored territories that reflect the artists' libidinous alignments and thus may be seen as drafts for subsequent realities, no matter if these are set into a personal or socio-political context. Based upon these considerations, I came to the conclusion that it would make more sense to describe the artists presented in the show not as artists working within a queer-feminist or decolonial context (though many of them undoubtedly do), but rather as artists that have emerged from such a background which is closer to what they really are, given that they represent a next generation of artists whose social environment and lifestyle had already been shaped by the spaces opened up by artists such as Ashley Hans Scheirl, Kaucyila Brooke

and many others. By pointing out this little difference – which may add a certain *post*-aspect to the category ‘queer’ – the view might be led to marginal or even deviant aspects that exceed the term ‘queer’ as being limited to its basic sociopolitical meaning. To exemplify that idea, we may find in many positions an inclination towards spiritual heritage, magic and mysticism which varies widely from established conceptions – instead of following elaborated belief systems as they were proliferated through New Age esotericism during past decades, here a certain emphasis on the wisdom of the body, the mysteries of nature, earth and the cosmos can be observed. This may not even come as a big surprise, as shamanism always has been deeply connected with transgender practices. In most shamanic societies it was obligatory for male shamans to change their gender by adopting modes of dressing and behavior that usually were attributed to the opposite sex. It is commonly assumed that these practices were based on the idea that it is essentially the female who is capable of magical powers and the communication with the otherworld. Even if we leave that spiritual aspect aside, we may notice in many of the shown works a tendency to reach some kind of transcendence by sounding out depths and in-between spaces that open up at various points when deconstructing established role models and related social interactions, thus leaving empty spaces that demand and enable the development of new forms of human self-understanding and world view. Consequently, as said before, I was not so much interested in works that offer striking statements, but rather in ambiguous and multi-layered positions giving an insight into sublime self-designed worlds, conveying a transient non-verbal knowledge open to be captured by the viewer according to his/her own associations and libidinous alignments. At least this was my focus when putting the works for the exhibition together, and it might be helpful to understand that curatorial approach when facing each single work of the show. In order to give a kind of guided tour of the exhibition, I will in the following try to outline some thoughts and background information regarding the presented works and artists, thus offering one of many possible narrations that may be taken as a basis for the compilation and juxtaposition of the shown works.



The first work of the exhibition was Marianne Vlaschits' *Venus City*, a large dimensional hanging installation of printed silk that any visitor had to pass when entering or leaving the gallery space. It refers to a hypothetical NASA project called HAVOC (High Altitude Venus Operational Concept) that envisions the human inhabitation of the planet in helium-filled airships cruising through the Venusian atmosphere which offers, at an altitude of 30 miles above ground, quite earth-like conditions. Hovering through clouded skies, Marianne Vlaschits' airships resemble bizarre anemones, blood cells or organs without bodies, being inspired by baroque ceramics and futuristic computer game designs. In her version, *Venus City* is taken over by a crew of female space travellers who live in a post-human and post-patriarchal world, thus offering an alternative script to visions of the future which exclude or even fear the possibility of a female dominated world. *Venus City* wants to remind us that if the doom of a patriarchal world order seems to be more dystopic than the



Marianne Vlaschits:
Venus City (2016).
Digital print on silk, 10' x 55'.
(Installation view and detail.)

doom of mankind itself, then the images we can sense of the future draw the limits of our political imagination. The installation served as a kind of curtain or labia which one had to pass in order to enter the inner sanctuary of the show, thus enclosing the gallery space as an autonomous area with its own miracles to explore.

The first wall piece to encounter was a self-portrait by Rini Mitra, painted during her first time in Vienna after having graduated from Dhaka University. The aspect of transition is here present in various details: while the pink wig refers to the cultural differences that one may experience when coming from Bangladesh to the queer environment of Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class, her hands are raised in protection of the green landscape in the background, thus expressing by stringent body language the request *Surrender to Nature* as the painting is entitled. While for Rini Mitra the necklace of skulls symbolizes basically the future vanishing point to which all roads of life and likewise the exploitation of nature inevitably lead, it still evokes a strong association with the black goddess Kali who is traditionally depicted with a necklace of disembodied heads and represents death and destruction, but also renewal in Hindu mythology. At a closer look, one may discover an auratic doubling of the raised arms which can be taken as a clue to Rini's artistic philosophy which deals with the power of the human body and the relation to its environment, the relation between the inside and the outside, or rather the incomprehensible correspondence between the inner and the outer worlds which can be seen as reciprocal expressions of each other. Rini Mitra understands her work as a constant dialogue with what is visually absent, but still present. Her credo, „What we are seeing at the same time represents what we are not seeing“ could as well be a motto for the whole exhibition, which, as its title indicates, circles around the topic of transition and in-between spaces.

Rini Mitra: *Surrender to Nature* (2015). Acrylic on canvas, 28" x 40".





Similar elements, as seen in Rini's painting, can be found in Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski's videos from the ongoing research and performance project *Medicine Mountain – Learn to Love in Seven Days*, which takes up Alpine folklore customs as the so called *Perchtenläufe*, processions of grim masked figures that were believed to drive away evil spirits during the *Rauhnächte* (rough nights) around winter solstice. Having lived myself for a good part of my life in the Austrian Alps, I can assure that such pagan rites are still being practiced passionately by rural communities and, due to their extensive use of bells, drums, terrifying costumes and masks, still have a powerful magical impact on the mind. In their video performances, realized with the backdrop of Salzburg's and Tyrol's mountainous landscapes (thus reflecting Austria's prevailing *Sound of Music* cliché) and Bollywood-like choreographies, Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski enrich the native folklore with Indian mythic figures such as the elephant-headed Ganesha, destroyer of obstacles, and the divine ape Hanuman who once, having been sent out to a Himalayan mountain for a healing herb and not knowing which one to take as there were too many different herbs, simply fetched the whole mountain and carried it on its palm through India to Sri Lanka in order to heal Rama's wounded brother Lakshmana. *Medicine Mountain*, which aims, in its cultural cross-over, at a demonstration of universal love, is the collaboration between two artist duos, consisting of Peter Kozek and Thomas Hörl as Kozek Hörlonski, as well as Ruby Sircar, long-term assistant professor in Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class, and Wolfgang Meisinger as Sir Meisi.

Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski: *Medicine Mountain - Learn to Love in Seven Days*.

6 BLÜTENTRAUM. Marktplatz Alpbach, 16 July, 2011. DV PAL video (2011).

Next pages:

Mirabella Dziruni: *SACRED PLANT, SACRED CLITORIS, SACRED ME*.

Mirabella Dziruni in Daniel Lie's 'Death Center for the Living' (2017). Color print, 40" x 60".

Mirabella Dziruni: *WHEN WE ARE TOGETHER WE LIVE OUR BEAUTY*.

Elisabeth Mtasá, Enyonam Tetteh-Klu and Mirabella Dziruni in Daniel Lie's 'Death Center for the Living' (2017).

Color print, 40"x 60".





Two photographs by Mirabella Dziruni, *SACRED PLANT*, *SACRED CLITORIS*, *SACRED ME* and *WHEN WE ARE TOGETHER WE LIVE OUR BEAUTY*, also place body and self in a more or less shamanic framework. Mirabella's artistic work has emerged from her presence on social media platforms where she started to share nude self-portraits that were shot spontaneously in public spaces like streets, bars, supermarkets or in front of government buildings. In the shown works, Mirabella is posing at the backdrop of an installation by Daniel Lie entitled *Death Center for the Living*, which had been realized as part of the Vienna Festival in 2017. Lie's installation was designed as a recreational space containing minerals, plants and rotting fruits to facilitate a contemplation of evanescence and transformation. It was strongly reminiscent of spiritual gathering spaces used by indigenous people of Brazil and Peru, and thus perfectly matches with Mirabella's geometrical stance in front of a flowering cannabis plant suggestive of shamanic tree of life conceptions in which the human and earthly realm takes an intermediate position between the upper- and the underworld.

Another piece that plays with worldly and otherworldly conceptions is Julia Zastava's textile work *TOMORROW*. It is based on a film still from an early Soviet animated movie which reflects, in the interactions of animal characters, the communist leadership's dealing with deviant modes of thinking and behavior. Cut into its surface is a bordered hole connected by a cord with a yellow sponge lying placenta-like at the viewer's feet. The work would impose an unsolvable riddle on any viewer if not for its title, which is printed like a watermark across the picture's surface, indicating that we have to break through prescribed conditions and open ourselves to new and unexplored dimensions in order to create future realities that correspond with our desire. Whether the magical sword in the foreground is the weapon to cut such holes or rather a tool to conjure and attract desired realities through this opening, is a question that may be left to the viewer's imagination.

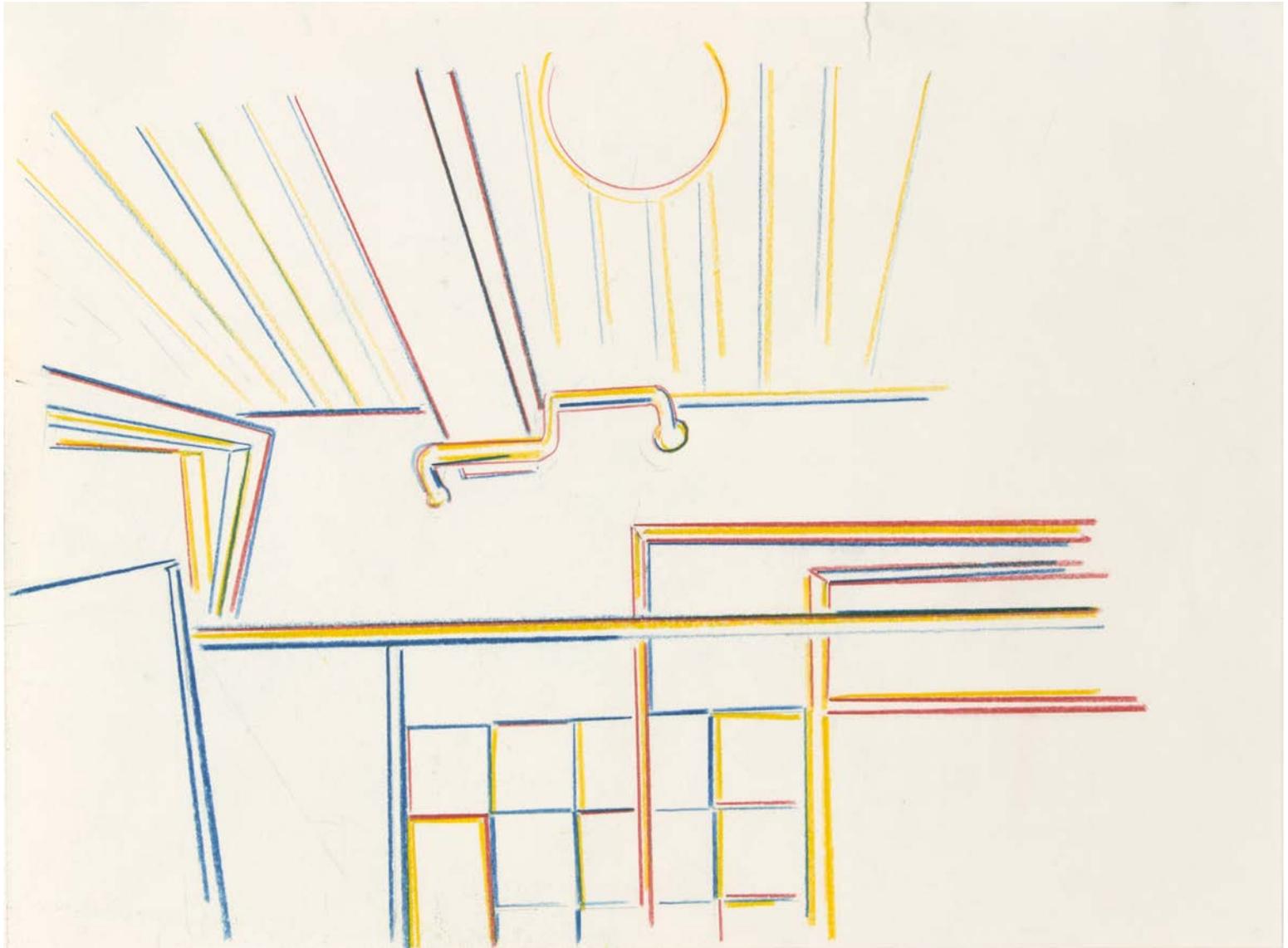
Julia Zastava: *TOMORROW* (2017). Print on textile, collage, pencils, 96" x 68".





A work that directly addresses the topic of the witch, though in a more socio-political than spiritual sense, is Veronika Eberhart's film *9 is 1 and 10 is None*, which takes up considerations of the Italian-American philosopher Silvia Federici from her book *Caliban and the Witch*. For Federici, the persecution of witches stands for the processes of the domestication and disciplining of the female body which have been conducted over centuries in favor of capitalist relations of production. Against this background Veronika Eberhart has dealt with art-historical representations of the witch – such as Hans Baldung Grien's *New Year's Wish with Three Witches* – and translated them into a choreography of movements performed in an abandoned carpentry. Set into contrast with meditative views of sylvan countryside landscapes, the images of the film are woven to a complex arrangement of performance, video and sound that invokes mythical pasts and utopian futures.

Veronika Eberhart: *9 is 1 and 10 is none*. 22 min, HD video (2017).





While all previously mentioned works dealt somehow with the relation between the body and its social and natural environment, offering different kinds of frameworks to encourage either affirmation or interference, the drawings by Andi Dvořák mark a break in the exhibition installation, as they differ from the other works in their size, medium and topic as well. I knew Andi's work mostly from flyers and fanzines that he produced for his record label Fettkakao (fat-cocoa), portraying befriended musicians and DJs in spidery colored pencil drawings. In a 180-degree turn, his new drawings expose a very controlled use of straight lines, showing empty public spaces such as the Viennese Stadionbad, a public swimming pool that ranks among the most crowded places of the city during summer time. At a closer look one realizes that the contours are drawn in different basic colors so that the scene seems to vibrate in a kind of spectral light which serves as a perfect transition to the next series of works that could be subsumed under the term 'refraction', dealing with the splitting up of singular identities into a multitude of selves, each expressing a different aspect of one's personality or personal history.

Previous pages:

Andi Dvořák: *Stadionbad Study No 1 Restroom* (2017).

Stadionbad Study No 2 Handrail / Stairs (2017).

Colored pencil on paper, 11,2" x 8,5" each.

Opposite:

Installation view D301 gallery (Zoe Dewitt, *CIS/TRANS*,

Cis Zoltowska Memorabilia and Veronika Eberhart, *9 is 1 and 10 is none*).



A prominent position within this series is my own work *CIS/TRANS – Portrait of myself as Countess Cis Zoltowska* which, as the title indicates, refers to the Vienna born jewelry designer Cis Zoltowska who had worked in the 1950s and 1960s for French haute couture labels and relocated to Los Angeles in 1967. It was not only for this aspect of transition between Vienna and Los Angeles (which somehow paralleled the topic of our exhibition) that I chose to deal with her person – neither for the reason that she had, with her passion for ornate costume jewelry in wild colors as well as with her life between high society parties and hard creative work, in some ways anticipated the glamorous lifestyle of contemporary queer circles – the point is rather that the Viennese Countess had an indirect but still powerful impact on my own life as my father (who then was a student of sculpture at the Viennese Academy) had a secret love affair with her during the time of my childhood. Though I never had met her in person, I had played with her gilded cabochons, and there were many other impressions related to her which inspired my imagination and later would even unconsciously recur in my own artistic work. So the occupation with Zoltowska was a search for my own origins and the subtle imprints that the Countess had left in my life. That such may have major consequences can be seen from the fact that most likely I had heard of Los Angeles for the first time when my father had received a letter from her after her relocation – which could quite well have been a crystallization point for the current exhibition project.

In the installation of the show, the photograph was presented with a text on Cis Zoltowska and the influence her love affair had exerted on my life. An original pencil drawing by Cis Zoltowska, entitled *Der Dirigent*, and some vintage silver gelatine prints which I had found in recent years in the attic of my parent's house, alongside examples of Zoltowska's jewelry designs, were included in the show as 'Cis Zoltowska Memorabilia' to document her own artistic work.

Zoe Dewitt: *CIS/TRANS – Portrait of myself as Countess Cis Zoltowska* (2017). Color print, 72" x 48".



Cis Zoltowska Memorabilia
(from the collection of Zoe Dewitt)
Madame Cis and her jewelry collection.
Silver-gelatine print, 8" x 9,5" (1960)..



Zoe Dewitt

CIS/TRANS – Portrait of myself as Countess Cis Zoltowska

The story of this work begins with a love affair that took place in the mid 1960s, when a young student of sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna met an aristocratic Austrian lady and became her lover for some years. The art student was my father, and the lady was Countess Cis Zoltowska, a costume and jewelry designer, who had worked in the 1950s and 1960s for French haute couture labels and later produced own jewelry collections under the name 'Maison CIS'.

Cissy Zoltowska, born as Maria Assunta Frankl-Fonseca in Vienna around the late 1920s, was a product of the Austro-Hungarian nobility. She grew up as the daughter of an Austrian father and a Hungarian mother in Vienna at Altmannsdorf Castle and was forced to flee to Switzerland during the reign of the Nazis in World War II. There she married an elegant but impoverished Polish Count named Zoltowski and began to make ceramic jewelry. In 1951 she moved to Paris, where she worked as a costume designer for theatres and produced accessories for fashion labels such as Balenciaga, Pierre Balmain, Jacques Fath, James Galanos and Helena Rubenstein. Being disappointed that the costume jewelry of her times imitated only the real thing, she decided to make her own 'real' fantasy jewelry using crackled glass cabochons and Swarovski rhinestones in fancyful designs and wild colour combinations. In the 1960s Maison Cis had around 40 employees and produced two collections with 400 models each per year. They were distributed worldwide from French boutiques to New York department stores and frequently appeared on the covers of Vogue, Paris Match, and Harper's Bazaar. During that time Cissy lived in Paris and Vienna, with longer annual stays in Thailand, from where she drew a lot of her inspiration. Preceded by her reputation as a creative artist and designer, in 1967 Cis Zoltowska relocated to Los Angeles where she lived in West Hollywood until her death in 2004. Still on the gangway of her plane to L. A. she tried to persuade my father to come with her, who finally refused because of his young family and little child – which was me.

I never have met Cis Zoltowska in person, and learned about the affair only in recent years by tales of my father. Later I discovered in the attic of our house old newspaper pages and photos of Cissy, as well as a hand drawing of her showing a conductor in front of his orchestra. I realized that it had been her gilded cabochons and metal leaves with whom I had played as a child, and that there still were objects in my possession that originally had been a present my father was given by her – such as an antique Chinese foo dog that I had kept throughout my life (in the work to be seen standing on the table). The more I learned about this extraordinary person the more I became fascinated by her and felt to be connected with her by a strange affinity: her uncompromising extravagancy and self-determinedness, her love for the arts, for people and for all things of beauty, her collection of Buddha statues and Asian antiques, her belief in reincarnation, which she had expressed in one of her interviews – all this suggested the image of a woman with whom I seemed to have many things in common that never had been part of my parent’s world. Had





Cis Zoltowska:

Der Dirigent (collection of Zoe Dewitt).
Pencil drawing, 11,5" x 15", 1959.

Opposite:

Countess Cis Zoltowska:

Aurora Borealis rhinestone brooch
(collection of Zoe Dewitt). 1,8" x 2,4",
1960s.

there been an indirect influence from her through the objects I was surrounded by in my childhood? Or was it just an 'accidental' case of spiritual kinship (if something like that could ever exist)? In any case she was a tremendous factor in the relationship of my parents (as my mother got to know of the affair) which has shaped – as an unsolved source of conflict between them – also my own unconscious personality and course of life. Whatever the mysterious origins and intricate paths of our likeness may be, entering her world is for me like coming closer to the core of my own being: Cis Zoltowska will forever stay deeply embedded in my soul, like a star transmitting a magical light from beyond, resplendent as the glittering rhinestones that she understood to arrange so brilliantly in her marvellous jewelry designs...



Countess Cis Zoltowska:

Raspberry pear cut rhinestone brooch
(collection of Zoe Dewitt) 1,6" x 1,8", 1950s.

Opposite: Florian Aschka: *Self Portrait* (2013).
Color print, 20" x 14".



Another staged photograph which uses an almost similar setting is Florian Aschka's *Self Portrait*, with the artist's exposed backside decorated by a bouquet of flowers and a monkey puppet. In the context of the exhibition, this work could be seen as a dialectic counterpart to the front page aesthetics surrounding the images of Cis Zoltowska, and, given that the monkey is (like the swine which will appear later in the show) one of those animals that confront humans with an unwanted mirror image of themselves, the puppet here acts as a joker that doubles the destruction of any seriousness. As the work can speak for itself, I don't have to add any further background information, except perhaps to note that the motive of the monkey appeared already in Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski's *Medicine Mountain*, where Hanuman represented the 'ugly outside, but beautiful within' god that possesses extraordinary powers, which might apply – who knows – equally to Florian Aschka's ass.

A close collaborator of Florian Aschka is Larissa Kopp (both came from the Academy of Fine Arts Nuremberg to Ashley Hans Scheirl's class), who is represented in the show with her work *Wilhelmina Busch in her younger years*, another staged photograph that refers to the daughter of the German-American brewery owner and 'beer king' Adolphus Busch, who had emigrated to St. Louis, Missouri, in the 1850's and became one of the richest Americans of his time (the most prominent beer type of the Anheuser-Busch company has been until today *Budweiser* or, 'Bud'). The life of Wilhelmina was marked by an equal transatlantic change of location as that of Zoltowska, yet in the opposite direction. Born in St. Louis, she moved to Bavaria in 1911 where she started to buy large estates around Lake Starnberg and lived an eccentric and luxurious life. She preferred to wear white robes and surround herself with white animals (she had around 100 peacocks in her garden, thus her home was called the 'peacock mansion'). Due to her opulent lifestyle she was called 'the last Queen of Bavaria', a title by which she still is known amongst chroniclers of Lower Bavaria's cultural history.

Larissa Kopp: *Wilhelmina Busch in her younger years* (2010), Color print, 14" x 20".



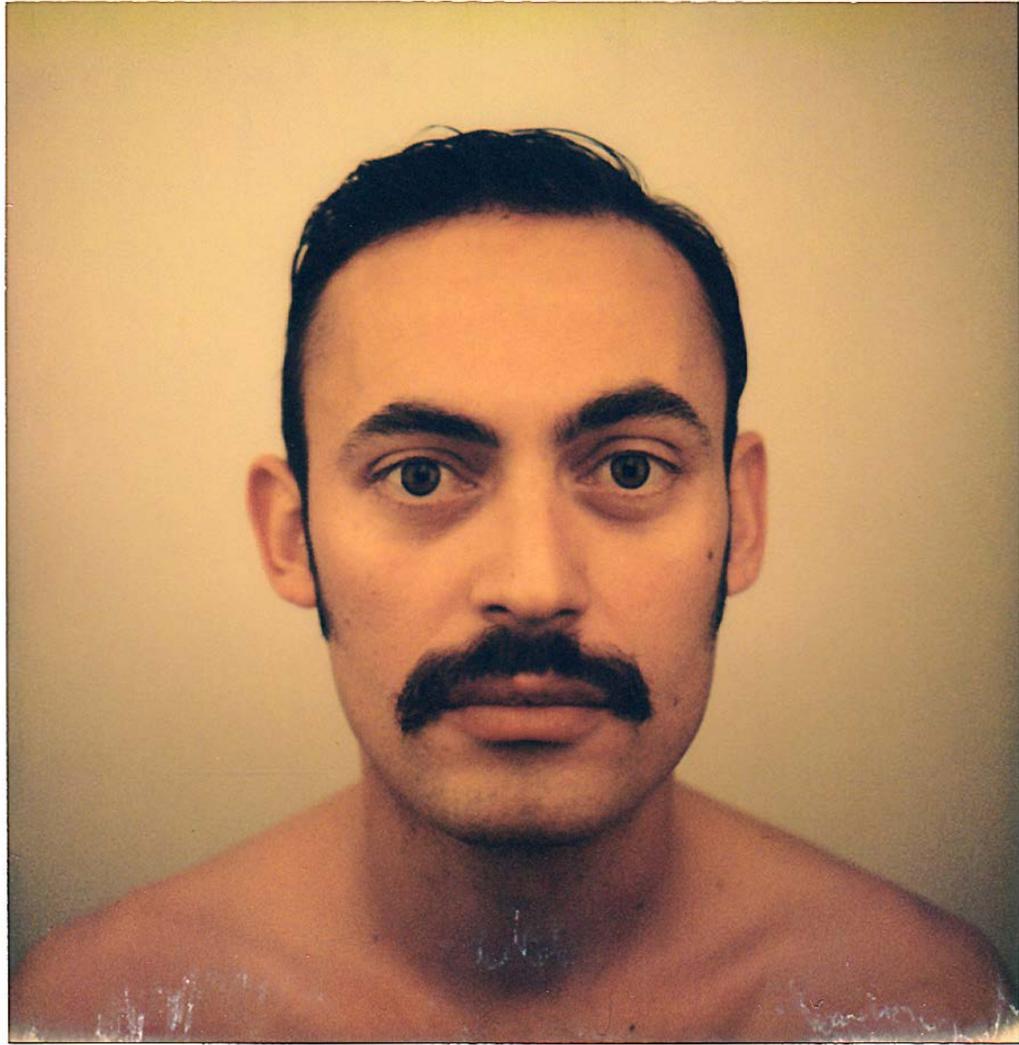


Another group of works could (though not exclusively) be described as referring to transitions in terms of sex, gender and aging. An example that unites all of these criteria is Julia Fuchs' photograph *Nicole*, taken from a larger series of works entitled *Your body is yours, take it*, in which she used a specific studio setting including a mirror to create multiple views of the performative shooting situation. Though Julia said she didn't want to label persons, it might be important for the context of the exhibition to know that Nicole is a trans woman who had undergone a sex reassignment surgery. When selecting the works for the show I didn't know this fact, but chose it because of the compelling beauty expressed by her aged and scarred body, thus counteracting discriminating prejudices that still are prevalent in our societies – not to exclude the art world in which the market permanently demands fresh meat and calls for art prices usually apply only for artists below the age of thirty-five or forty.

A work that directly addresses the topic of gender is Alfred Morina's diptych *I and the other I*, a double self-portrait that was shown as color prints made from original Polaroids. Here we encounter not so much a transition from one binary position to the opposite one, but rather an oscillation between two visual conceptions of gender, revealing either as a simulacrum in the sense of being a copy for which there is no original.

Julia Fuchs: *Nicole*. From the series 'Your body is yours, take it' (2015). Color print, 36" x 24".

Next pages: Alfred Morina: *I and the other I* (2015). Two color prints, 20" x 20" each.



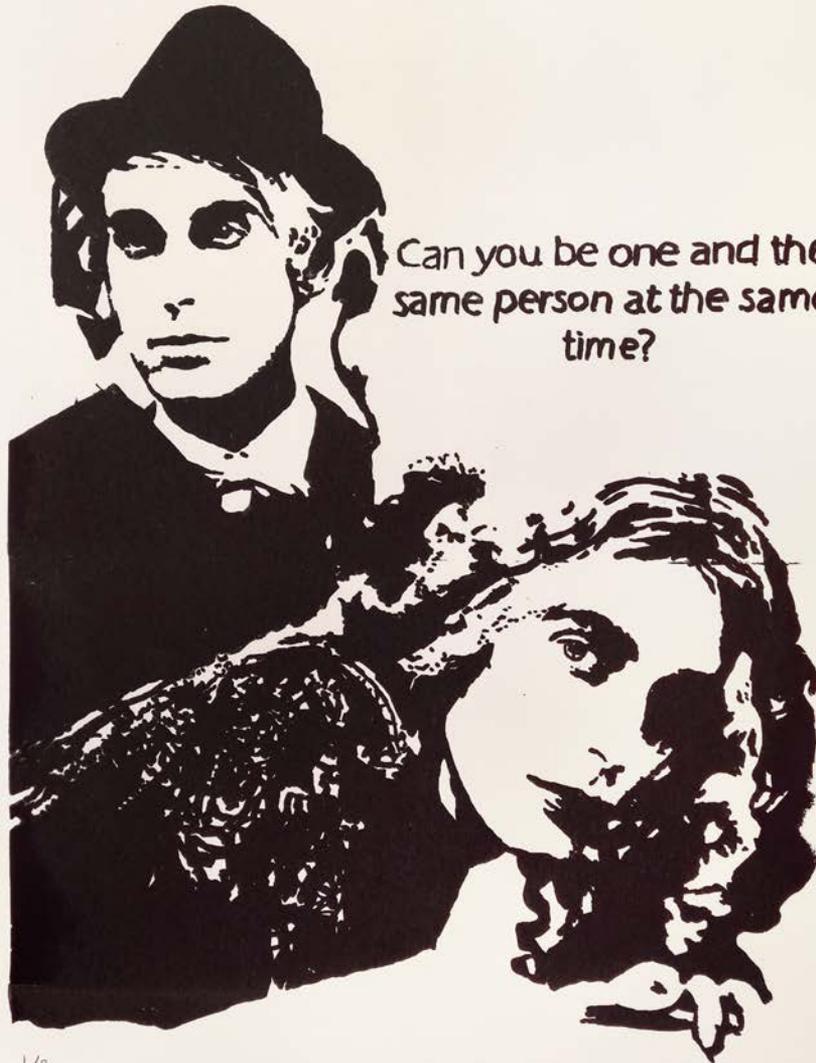


A similar approach is taken by the Swedish painter Danielle Pamp in her screen print *Twofold*, asking the meaningful question „Can you be one and the same person at the same time?“ Reviewing the previous works, and given the fact that Danielle’s self-portrait is – similar as before Alfred Morina’s work – split up into two opposite manifestations of something that doesn’t exist as a whole, the right answer here seems to be „obviously not“.

The last group of wall pieces was three paintings by Michal Rutz, a Polish painter and LGBT activist whose works are situated in an overlapping field between realism and abstraction, dealing with gay fantasies and the social acceptance of homosexuality. While his painting *Composition with a Dildo* may be seen as an example of the former, the works *Coma I* and *Coma II* obviously refer to the fate and social exclusion of HIV patients in a terminal stage, thus completing one circle of the exhibition with the topic of death as it had initially been touched upon in Rini Mitra’s painting of her necklace of skulls.

Danielle Pamp: *Twofold* (2017). Screen print, 28”x 20”.

Next pages: **Michal Rutz:** *Composition with a Dildo* (2016), oil on canvas, 24” x 24”; *Coma II* (2017), oil on canvas, 24” x 24”.



Can you be one and the
same person at the same
time?

1/2

Danielle Pamp







While most of the previously discussed works were shown in the main D301 gallery, the adjacent D300 gallery accommodated basically the large screen projection of a looped video program, supplemented with two separate video installations by Roberta Lima and Pedra Costa, and a hanging installation of embroidered underwear by Berivan Sayici entitled *PorNo Remains*, which had been used as props for one of the videos being shown. Another textile work shown in this room was Julia Goodman's *Cocktail Hour*, a heavy rag rug made of wool, silk, faux fur, faux leather and other textiles, with thick attached objects representing classic still life elements. Within the installation of the D300 gallery, these two works were intended to create a cozy atmosphere, inviting visitors to stay, sit down on a soft seating landscape and watch the videos.

D300 gallery: video installations by **Roberta Lima** and **Pedra Costa**.

Hanging installation *PorNo Remains* (2013) by **Berivan Sayici**.

Julia S. Goodman: *Cocktail Hour* (2016), various textiles and acrylic resin, 4' 7" x 4' 11".

Next pages: D300 gallery, video projection space.

Marianne Vlaschits, *Dance with Me* (2016), **Berivan Sayici**, *PornNo* and installation *PorNo Remains* (2013).



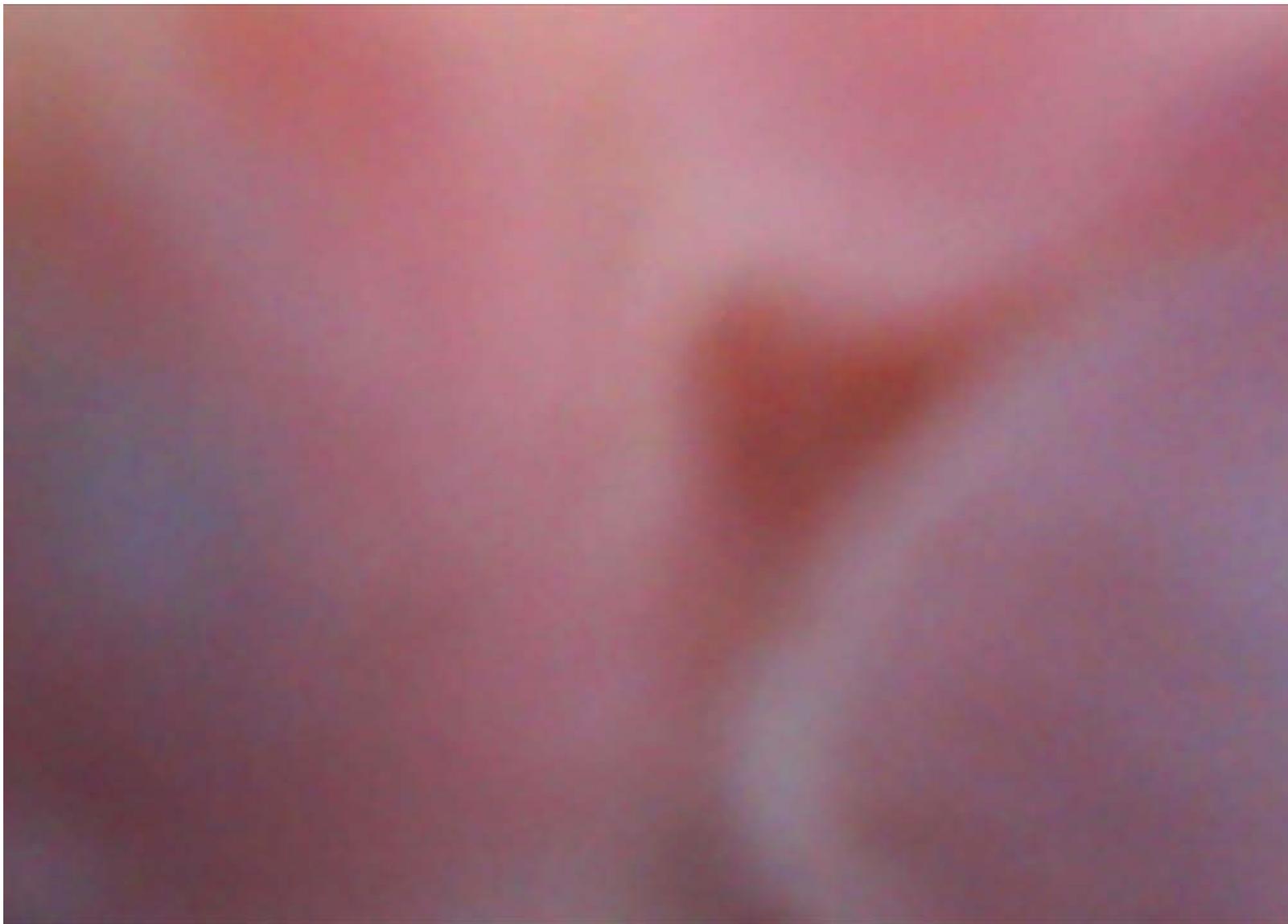


The first of the two separate video installations was a work by Roberta Lima, who had been assistant professor in Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class during the time I had been preparing the show. Her video documented the performative installation *ButterflyStep IN/OUT White Cube* which had been realized at Schneiderei, Vienna in 2014. Having studied architecture in Brazil prior to her artistic education at the Viennese academy, both form and axes of the cube, as well as concrete, are recurrent elements in Roberta's work. Here they are used as a reference to the 'white cube' as well as to the dance step called 'twerk' or *Quadrado de Oito* (8 points square). By mixing two distinguished spaces – the one of the favela, and that of the white cube – Lima aims to blur the lines of queer and feminist theory and diaspora epistemologies from South and North America.

A close collaborator of Roberta Lima is the Brazilian-born performance artist Pedra Costa. S/he takes in her work a radical position, as far as both its political statement and the visuals used are concerned. *The Southern butthole Manifesto* combines the text of the manifesto s/he is reading during the video with visuals recorded by a rectal dildo cam, both being elements that Pedra has used repeatedly in her performances. Considering the current American president's recent remarks on 'shithole countries', which shows that similar associations are being made on the other side of the Bible Belt, Pedra Costa's work seems to have an unbroken topicality.

Roberta Lima: *ButterflyStep IN/OUT White Cube* (2014).
Video of performative installation at Schneiderei, Vienna, DV PAL 1.50 min.





Pedra Costa

The Southern Butthole Manifesto

The butthole's investigations are theoretical and practical, always. Theory is on the skin and the practice comes from life. The theory only exists if there is the experience. It only transforms itself if it goes through the body. The southern butthole is movement. The constraints and rigid systems of the body do not flow in these studies. We do not fight against anything. Our fights were always defeated. We already learned about this in the history of the world. We are sorceresses and healers. Our dance and our ginga is our fight, our way of loving, playing, being in connection with our community. We are always collective, never individuals.

The artfulness is the basis of our whole life against the colonizer's project. Artfulness is not learned and taught. Our knowledge would never be recognized if they were not appropriated by white and/or europeanized knowledge and bodies. Our voices are not audible. Thus, we have all the autonomy and authority to found such studies. Try as we might, we will never be authorized as a field of knowledge by whiteness. We do not need its approval!

We move forward criticizing the „colonial fantasies“ about our bodies and, specifically, butts. Our fierce criticism comes from our buttholes. Our butthole is our power. So many interdictions, religious and colonial fantasies about our butts. Anthropophagy does not unite us anymore. We already ate them as a condition violently imposed by the colonial civilizing education. Now we vomit them and we shit them. To the South of the world, to the butthole of the body.

Pedra Costa: *The Southern Butthole Manifesto* (2017). DV PAL video, 2.18 min.

The first work of the looped video program I would like to discuss is *Play with Me* by Korea-born artist Hyeji Nam who deals in her work with childhood, sexuality and taboos. In her video, she is dancing naked, wrapped around by the tape of a broken VHS video cassette, imitating the movements of a child from some family video footage that obviously is she too. What comes as a perfect metaphor of how we are predetermined and spellbound by our early childhood experiences that are recorded in our unconscious mind, at the same time can be seen as an invitation to playfully confront such memories and transform them by conscious interference.



Hyeji Nam:
Play with me (2016).
HD720 DV video, 4.22 min.





The topic of wrapping appears also in the work of Moritz Gottschalk, a fashion designer and textile artist who mainly deals with the unloved and uncomfortable aspect of garments and textiles which to him are symbolic of the restrictions imposed by society on the individual. In *BlaBlaBra*, a visual meditation on the breast and its textile covering, Moritz Gottschalk explores the gender-changing facilities of the brassiere, thus turning its confining function into a tool for self-love.

The role of underwear is also paramount in Berivan Sayici's video *PorNo*, which appropriates stereotypical representations of sexuality, as seen in mainstream pornographic media. While those basically work with the exposition of flesh and genitals in explicit (inter)action, here these elements are being faked by the use of underwear such as skin-tone tops, tights and panties embroidered with sexual characteristics like nipples and pubic hair or having attached fake genitals that are commonly used as sex toys. By this step of offering a flashy illusion instead of the real thing, Berivan Sayici inverts the basic scheme of pornography and reveals its ingredients as triggering set pieces which throw the viewer back to his/her own voyeuristic curiosity. That nevertheless the fun on both the viewer's and performer's sides is not lost but rather elevated to a next level, makes up the powerful charm of this work, thus confirming my thesis that art is only a special case of pornography. The props used for the shooting were arranged as an installation hanging from the ceiling of the D300 gallery which had to be passed by visitors when entering or leaving the room.

Moritz Gottschalk: *BlaBlaBra* (2017), HD720 DV video, 4.42 min.



Berivan Sayici, PorNo Remains (2013), installation in D300 gallery.

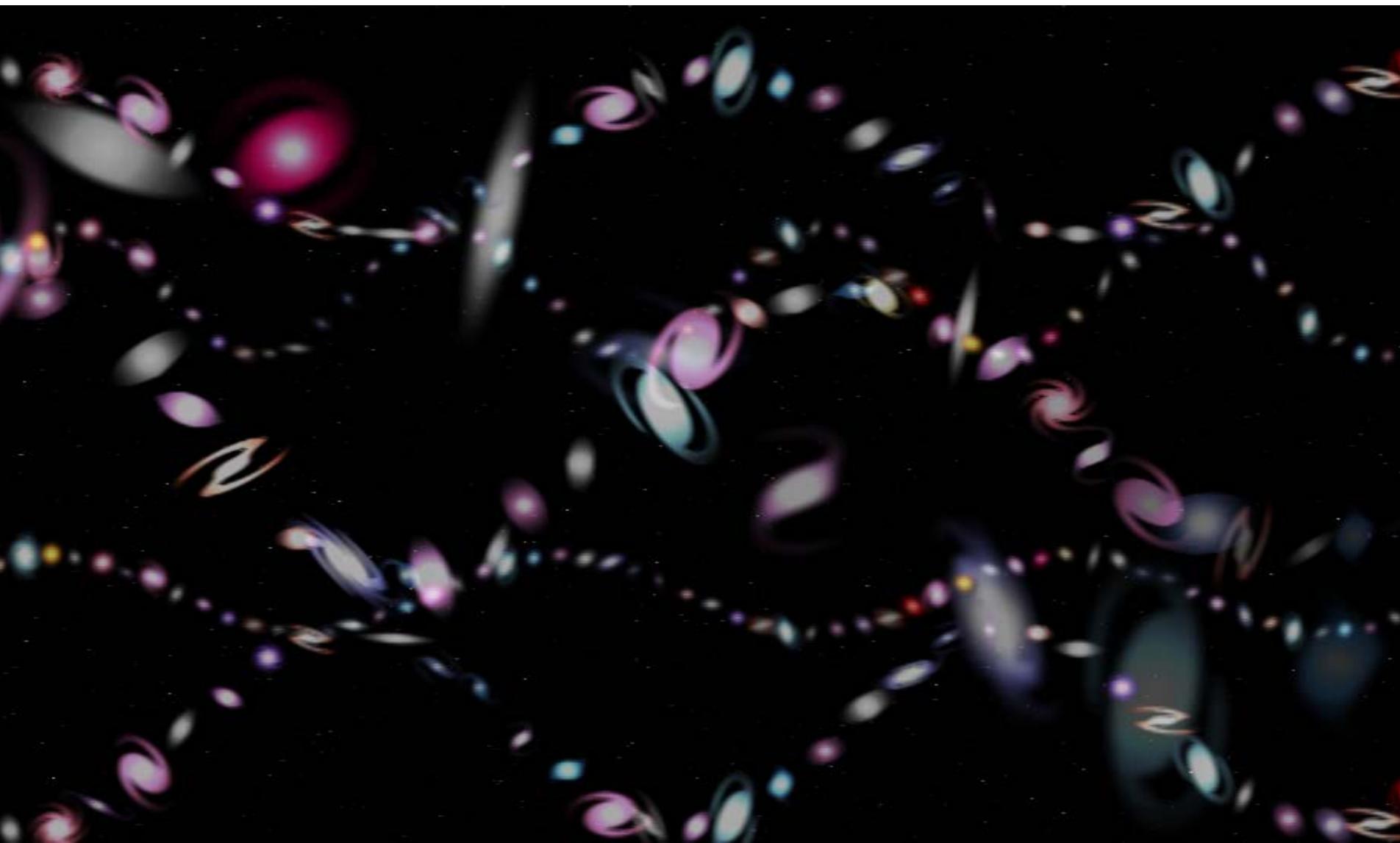
Opposite: Berivan Sayici: PorNo (2013), HD720 DV video, 11.28 min.



The last video of the looped program was Marianne Vlaschits' *Dance with Me*, a work that refers, like *Venus City*, to the futuristic vision of a female dominated age of space travel. While the spaceship commander contemplates the cosmic panorama over a cup of tea containing DMT (the main hallucinogenic component of the traditional indigenous Ayahuasca brew), the approaching star fields turn into a kaleidoscopic vision of animated celestial objects, particles and waveforms, and her mind enters into a spiritual communication with the divine which – by addressing the viewer with the cartoon-like image of a pig – explains the basic unity of the cosmos and its observer as the basic mystery of the universe. With this indication that the future is not only female, but also post-human (in a sense that any next evolutionary step will require a deeper understanding of non-human intelligence and respect for other species), the course of the exhibition ended with a space flight as it had begun.

Marianne Vlaschits: *Dance with Me* (2016), HD720 DV video 8.46 min





Marianne Vlaschits

DANCE WITH ME

Hello.

...

Hello.

...

Can you hear me?

Can you see me?

I am right here.

I am everywhere.

*At this very moment, I am passing through
your body millions of times.*

All those particles.

So tiny.

That you are invisible to each of us.

Neutrinos, Photons, Gravitons.

Higgs Particles. Dark Matter. And so on.

Billions Trillions per second.

And all those waves of radiation!

Cosmic Background Radiation,

Gamma Rays, X-Rays.

Dark Energy. And so on.

Making waves.

All those forces.

So fine tuned.

They fit so perfectly.

In this perfect world.

It's bizarre.

So bizarre.

And it's funny.

You are a part of me.

I am everything.

And I am everywhere.

I am the Cosmos.

13.7 billion years old.

Everything there is.

All those cells in your body.

They consist of tiny atoms.

Which were formed in stars.

Billions of years ago.

*You are stardust.
You are a star child.
You are a little carbon based unit.
Producing heat and motion.
You convert energy.
Into tiny flashes
In your brain.
But, oh, little star monkey.
You opened your eyes.
You opened your mouth.
You opened your ears.
So that I can talk to you.
Thousandfold.
Do you feel alone?
You say I am too vast.
I am too dark.
Too cold.
Too hostile to live.
There is nobody else.
You can't see.
You can't touch.
Don't be so eager.
I just removed you from the oven.
Baking you over billions of years.*

*And you were finally ready.
A blink of an eye ago.
Look at me.
Look at the sky.
Your imagination is guiding you.
I become reality.
When you are observing me.
Look deeper.
If you want to understand who I am.
You are part of the explanation.
Look at the stars.
They are a part of you.
You are a part of them.
I am reality.
Look at the stars.
They guide your dreams.
Since the moment you were born.
They made you wonder.
Who they are.
What there is.
Because they don't just glow.
They dance.
First you saw the slow dance
of the sun and the moon.*

*Time after time
you saw the dance of the planets.
It took another cosmic heartbeat
to make you sharpen your eyes
and see the stars moving.
The earth is spinning.
With a speed of 1670 km per hour.
The moon dances around the earth.
With a speed of 3.683 km per hour.
The earth dances around the Sun.
With a speed of 107.000 km per hour.
The Sun is spinning.
With a speed of 6.875 km per hour.
The galaxy is spinning.
With a speed of 792.000 km per hour.
Your galaxy is gliding towards andromeda.
With a speed of 10.800.000 km per hour.
And merge.
And join the Virgo cluster.*

*With a speed of 1.609.344 km per hour.
And in the background there is a bass.
Deep and Subtle.
Forever pumping.
The Cosmic Background Radiation.
Finally the cosmos.
You saw the cosmos expanding.
Expanding increasingly.
244 800 km per hour per parsec.
Everything is moving.
Everything is dancing.
Forever pumping.
Forever spinning.
Forever rotating.
The cosmos is dancing.
I am dancing.
Dance with me.
Dance with me.
Dance with me.*

Los Angeles is not only a center of the space industry, but also a place where realities are being created. The process of developing this project has, in itself, been an object lesson in how to create reality from desire. I hope that the exhibition QUEER ENCOUNTERS – VIENNA TRANS L.A., giving an insight into the work of around twenty international artists who have been working in recent years at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and were pleased to share their visions, stories and artistic endeavors at a place like CalArts, will inspire in others the creation of future realities, as well as facilitate a further exchange between the involved institutions, artists and all persons interested in their work.

At this point I would like to express my deepest thanks to all the artists who contributed with their unique works and organizational assistance to the success of the exhibition. It was a great experience to work with them, immerse myself deeper into their art, and realize this project in a wonderful place like Los Angeles and its prestigious art academy, the California Institute of Arts. My warmest thanks are also due to the students of the CalArts School of Art who helped setting up the exhibition, to all visitors who came to see the show, to our funding institutions: Austrian Federal Chancellery, Austrian Cultural Forum New York and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, as well as to the Austrian General Consulate in Los Angeles, whose team had always been encouraging in its enthusiasm while handling the transport of our works to and from L. A..

Art is love, love is exchange.

Zoe Dewitt, Vienna 2018



ARTISTS

Florian Aschka (DE) studied at the Academies of Fine Arts in Nuremberg and Vienna. Aschka's media comprise video and staged photography, interactive and event-based happenings as well as performative interventions in which boundaries of prevailing gender roles, constructed exoticisms and standardization processes are confronted with the notion of a queer utopia. Exhibitions and performances: Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA), Athens | MUSA Startgalerie, Vienna | Moë Contemporary, Vienna (2017); Galerie Bernsteinzimmer, Nuremberg | Galerie Michaela Stock, Vienna | Xhibit, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2016); MOCAM Museum of Contemporary Art Krakow | Apalazzo Gallery, Brescia, IT (2015); Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, Berlin (2014). florianaschka.com

Pedra Costa (BRA) is a queer performance artist and anthropologist, currently studying at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her work is informed by the aesthetics of post-porn and an investigation of decolonial concepts. Several international collaborations with queer artists such as Roberta Lima, Michelle Matiuzzi, Jota Mombaça and Doris Uhlich, curator of *subDocumenta* at the Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA) in Mai 2017. cargocollective.com/pedra

Zoe Dewitt (A) studied electro-acoustic music (University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna), philosophy (University Vienna) and fine arts (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna). With her musical solo project Zero Kama she gained international cult reputation within the ritual industrial genre in the early 1980s. In the field of performance art collaborations with Hermann Nitsch, Elisabeth von Samsonow and Marina Abramović. Curator of *The L. A. Show - queer art // contextual painting*, Museum of Contemporary Mind (MUCOM), Los Angeles (2013). Exhibitions, lecture performances and screenings: Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA) | Moë Contemporary, Vienna (2017); Mandelkern Project, Vienna | VBKÖ Verein bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, Vienna (2016); Aa Collections, Vienna | Xhibit and Anatomy theatre, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna | Dessous, Vienna (2015); MASC Foundation, Vienna | basement, Vienna (2014); Reality Raum Residenz, Vienna (2013);

Museo Laboratorio di Arte Contemporanea (MLAC), Rome (2011); Galerie Ariadne, Vienna | National Gallery Beijing (2007). zoedewitt.com

Andi Dvořák (A) founded in 2005 Fettkakao, a Vienna based record- and art label documenting and releasing music and art within a scene of like-minded activists. He is also regularly publishing a fanzine named *Fettkakao Zine*, with updates on the label's activities, interviews and artwork by befriended artists. Since 2012 he has been creating various designs made of screen-printed fabric. Besides he is also (together with Veronika Eberhart) a founding member of the music group Lime Crush. Exhibitions: Kunstraum Nestroyhof, Vienna | Size Matters, Vienna (2017); Xhibit, Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna (2015). fettkakao.com

Mirabella Dziruni (A) studies contextual painting at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and is currently completing her studies at the National University of the Arts in Buenos Aires. Her works combine body positivity and narcissistic exhibitionism with a subtle sense of self-irony, thus examining the relation between the body and its public representation, normative social regulations and the possibilities of electronic media to undermine such standards. Exhibitions: Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Library and Rundgang (2016 – 2018); Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA) (2017); online performances ‚Bellas Advent‘ on social media platforms such as Facebook, Tumblr and Instagram (2014 – 2017). mirbelladziruni.tumblr.com

Veronika Eberhart (A) studied sociology (University Vienna) and fine arts (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna). Her medially multifaceted works are characterized by a high musicality, and on the other hand deal with conceptual questions in the sensibility of artistic practises connected with feminist positions. Exhibitions: Neue Galerie Graz (2017); A-Gallery, Tokio (JPN) | Miza Gallery, Tirana (ALB) | Produzentengalerie Wien (2016); Xhibit, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna | VBKÖ, Verein bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, Vienna (2015); Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz (2014); Museum of Contemporary Mind (MUCOM), Los Angeles (2013). veberhart@gmx.de

Julia Fuchs (A) studied at the School for Artistic Photography Friedl Kubelka and graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 2017. She was photographer and picture editor at *documenta12* in Kassel, and performer at *Ecosexual Wedding* of Annie Sprinkle and Bet Stephens, Donaufestival Krems 2014. Exhibitions: mumok - Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien | Kombinage, Vienna (2017); Artist Corner Gallery, Los Angeles | Aa Collections, Vienna (2016); Xhibit, Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (2015). juliafuchs.com

Julia S. Goodman (US) received her BFA at New York University and currently studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Goodman looks towards the prominence of design and decoration in the domestic space as an essential quality to the formation of identities. Exhibitions: Kylie's New Living Room, Detroit (2017); One Work Gallery | Pinacoteca, Vienna (2016); BeElectric, Brooklyn (2015); Red Gate, Beijing (2014); Lipstick Building, Manhattan (2013). juliasgoodman.com

Moritz Gottschalk (DE) is a fashion designer, costume designer and textile artist who deals with the most diverse societal phenomena under the theme of the 'unloved'. He gained international experience in London, Milan, Frankfurt and Tokyo, expanding his textile expertise and working with international fashion institutes and theatres. He currently studies in the contextual painting class at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Exhibitions, installations performances: Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA), Athens | Charim Gallery, Vienna, (2017), Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Vienna (2016), Palais Strozzi, Vienna | Xhibit, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2015). moritzlike-blog.tumblr.com

Larissa Kopp (D) studied the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the Academy of Fine Arts Nuremberg. In her works she deals with the question of identity, how identity is being formed by society or influenced by a certain personal story. Exhibitions and performances: Galerie Bernsteinzimmer, Nuremberg | Michaela Stock Gallery, Vienna (2016); Xhibit, Vienna | Defibrillator Gallery, Chicago | Apalazzo Gallery, Brescia, IT (2015); Kunsthaus Graz, Moë Contemporary, Vienna (2014); Friday Exit, Vienna | Atelier Suterena, Vienna, Parkhouse, Graz, (2013). larissakopp.com

Roberta Lima (BRA) studied architecture in Brazil and Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Assistant professor at Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna from 2014 - 2016. Exhibitions and performances: Solyanka VPA gallery, Moscow | VBKÖ Vienna (2017); Vienna Festival, Künstlerhaus, Vienna | Donaufestival, Krems (2016); ARCOMadrid, Madrid (2015); ABC - Art Berlin Contemporary, Berlin (2013); Charim Gallery, Vienna | Defibrillator Gallery, Chicago | White Box, New York (2012). robertalima.com

Rini Mitra (BGD) received her MFA at Dhaka University and is now completing her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her works emerge from her own self-understanding which eventually reveals her surroundings. In her paintings she describes the power of the human body and explores the relation of the inner and the outer worlds. Exhibitions: AU, Vienna (2017), Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna | Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka | Friday Exit, Vienna (2016); Dhaka Art Center, Dhaka | ICI gallery, New Delhi (2012); Clitre des Billettes, Paris | New York Art Expo, New York (2011). facebook.com/swarnalymitrarini

Alfred Morina (A) deals in his work with heritage, identity and sexuality. Focussed on the human body, his photography plays with exchangeability of subject and object, questioning binary gender conceptions. Exhibitions: Athens Museum of Queer Art (AMOQA) (2017); Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Rundgang (2015 – 2016); fotoK Galerie, Vienna (2015); Embassy of Bazil, Vienna | Centro Cultural do Bispo Salvador da Bahia, BRA (2013). alfredmorina.com

Hyeji Nam (KOR) received her BA from Korea University Seoul and now studies contextual painting at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her work comprises multimedia performances, video and painting, with a focus on the topics body, sexuality, childhood and taboos. Exhibitions and performances: Galerie Charim Vienna | Athens Museum of Queer Arts (AMOQA) Athens | Anatomy theatre, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna | Format .strk, Vienna (2017), Korea University, Seoul (2016). thepicta.com/user/hyejinam/23880200

Danielle Pamp (SWE) is focussed on questions regarding identity, upbringing, group belonging, queer problems and power structures. Using autobiographic material such as memories and experiences, her paintings and graphic works are different kinds of subtle self-portraits, searching for general expressions of personal catastrophes. She currently is a student of Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class. Exhibitions: Galleri Helle Knudsen, Stockholm | Motala Konsthall, Motala | Jakobsbergs Konsthall, Järfälla, SWE | Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2017); Galleri Helle Knudsen, Stockholm (2016). *danielle.pamp@gmail.com*

Michal Rutz (PL) studied at Warsaw University, Tel Aviv University, the Academy Fine Arts Warsaw and the Academy of Fine Arts iVienna, where he graduated in 2017. His paintings, often portraits of queer contemporaries, deal with homosexual fantasies and the social acceptance of LGBT-persons. Exhibitions: Tsukaba Museum of Art, Tsukuba, JP (2017); Karlsplatz Red Carpet Showroom, Vienna (2016); Volkstheater Red Carpet Showroom, Vienna (2015); Austrian Cultural Forum, Warsaw (2014); Ubik Space, Vienna (2013); Abnormals Gallery, Berlin (2011). *michalrutz.com*

Berivan Sayici (A) studied photography at the University for Applied Arts Vienna and contextual painting at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Situated between photography and performance art, using the body rather than the camera as her medium, Sayici's work is focussed on anti-racist, queer-feminist theories and identities. Exhibitions and performances: Performance Art Festival, Pittsburgh, US (2017); Fluc, Vienna (2014); Transformer, Vienna (2013); Galerie Place à Elles, Paris (2012); Galerie Otok, Dubrovnik | CRO (2007). *berivansayici.tumblr.com*

Sir Meisi & Kozek Hörlonski (A): Sir Meisi is a collaboration of Ruby Sircar, assistant professor at Ashley Hans Scheirl's contextual painting class, and Wolfgang Meisinger. Together with the artist duo Kozek Hörlonski (Thomas Hörl and Peter Kozek) they work on the research and performance project *Medicine Mountain – Learn to Love in Seven Days*, investigating the similarities of masked figures in Alpine folklore customs and Indian mythology. Exhibitions: Tiroler KünstlerInnenschaft, Innsbruck (2016), Kunsthalle Museumsquartier, Vienna (2014) Austrian Cultural Forum,

London | Nature Morte, New Delhi (2013); Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Vienna | Salzbrurger Kunstverein, Salzburg | Kitty Corner, Vienna (2011); Land Salzburg, Podium (2011). *gegensprechanlage.at; kozek-hoerlonski.com*

Marianne Vlaschits (A) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (graphics and printmaking techniques) and at the Slade School for Art, London. Her works, comprising the media of painting, installation and video, envision earthly idylls and pleasures as well as scientific utopies, examined with critical irony from a queer-feminist point of view. Exhibitions: KW Center for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2017); Galerie Duve Berlin | Kevin Space, Vienna (2016); La Musery, Vienna | One Work Gallery, Vienna (2015); Nile Sunset Annex, Kairo (2014); Viertelneun Gallery, Vienna | Sothebys Artist Quarterly, Vienna (2013); VBKÖ, Vienna (2012); Open Source Gallery, New York (2011). *mariannevlaschits.com*

Julia Zastava (RUS) is working in the fields of video, drawing, installation and performance. Her works deal with transitions, questions of narrations, ideas of the uncanny, traumas, sexuality and magic. Exhibitions and performances: Kubus EXPORT, Vienna (2017); New York Media Center, New York | Austrian Cultural Forum, London | Topographie de l'Art, Paris | MUSA Startgalerie, Vienna (2016); Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow (2014); The State Russian Museum, Saint-Petersburg (2016); Pump House Gallery, London (2015); The Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2014); Roman Susan gallery, Chicago | Adds Donna gallery, Chicago | XL gallery, Moscow (2013); Galerie l'Aléatoire, Paris (2011); The Santa Fe Complex, Santa Fe (2010). *juliazastava.com*

Countess Cis Zoltowska was a Viennese costume jewelry designer, who had worked in the 1950s and 1960s for French haute couture labels and produced own jewelry collections under the name 'House of Cis'. After a love affair with the curator's father she relocated to Los Angeles, where she lived in West Hollywood until her death in 2004. *countesszoltowska.com*

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