

2016

viennacontemporary 2016 | Fair Report: Curator's Agenda

Posted on 29. September 2016 by #VIENNACONTEMPORARY

[Leave a comment](#)

Eleven international emerging curators currently enrolled in a residency for young curators in Vienna, organized by BLOCKFREI, visited viennacontemporary. Here's what they thought of the 2016 edition.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160922-13060632-alm_0011-2/#main)

Curators' Agenda (C'A) is a curators-in-residency program designed for emerging international curators consisting of the intensive 6-week program that takes place in autumn in Vienna. After an introductory tour of the fair, guided by Nico Anklam, the young curators from Bangladesh,

Colombia, Costa Rica, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Romania, Russia, the UK and the USA summed up their first impressions about viennacontemporary in brief statements.



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/adelina-luft-profile-picture/#main>)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160922-17363633-alm_0555/#main)

Adelina Luft (Romania/Indonesia, 26)

There is certainly an interesting transposition in experiencing an art fair from macro (Asia) to micro (Europe) spatio-temporal localities that come along with certain organizational specificities, as well continental aesthetics in the axis between West and East in a European context. viennacontemporary represents, in this sense, a courageous arena where galleries leave room for experimentation as seen in the works by Romanian artist Stefan Sava at Ivan Gallery booth, or Polish artist Paweł Kovalewsky with a work of extreme current significance, "Europeans Only" (2007), represented by Propaganda Gallery. Conclusive about the art fair is the very statement found in the concept of "exhibition inside an exhibition" proposed by New York Postmasters Gallery, leading to an important question to be addressed: are artworks shrinking in an irrefutable transition from macro to micro aesthetics?

Adelina Luft is a freelance curator, art manager and writer based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She is specializing in Southeast Asian Contemporary Art with a Master in Visual Art Studies. Her current research revolves around curatorial practices in biennials from a peripheral country in the context of art globalization.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/aviya-cohen_pic/#main)

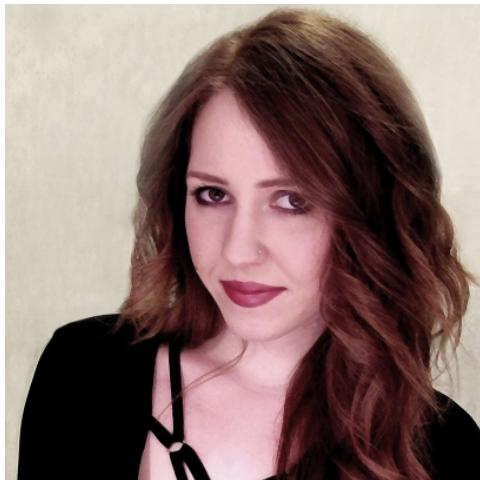


(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160924-15171718-alm_0506/#main)

Aviya Cohen (Israel, 29)

viennacontemporary proves itself to be an interesting event, unique in its ability to offer both an international scope of art, while maintaining a focus on the localities that surround it. Featuring plenty of artists from the robust scenes of both Austria as well as Hungary, viennacontemporary also offers a well-deserved stage to the pioneering artists and galleries of the Balkan countries who are steadily paving their path with art that merits such stronger attention. This balance between the global and the local, endows the fair with a special character providing the viewer with a worldwide landscape panorama, as well as an in-depth gaze into the fascinating narratives emerging just east of the Adriatic.

Aviya Cohen is a writer, scholar and curator working in Jerusalem and focusing on the fields of philosophy of technology and theory of art.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/evelin-pal_pic/#main)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160921-13181814-alm_0029/#main)

Evelin Pál (Hungary, 25)

The second edition of viennacontemporary offered an impressive panorama of contemporary art, with some beacon-like positions that are quite unorthodox to encounter at a commercial art fair. I was also thrilled to discover the proliferation of projects in which artistic and curatorial sensibilities were matched with tools of science and technology, traversing boundaries. Additionally, from a personal perspective, the program series Collector's Forum (<http://www.viennacontemporary.at/en/talks-2/>) was gratifying as it not only introduced the numerous factors that have an influence on purchasing an art piece, from collectors' point of view, but also the modes or avenues utilized by them in order to make their collection accessible – to provide the works with visibility opportunities in this new context.

Evelin Pál is an Arts Manager based in Budapest. She is a program coordinator at the Budapest Art Factory which runs an international artist residency program and facilitates exhibitions.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/liudmila-kirsanova_pic/#main)



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/owg/#main>)

Liudmila Kirsanova (Moscow, 28)

I will focus on two galleries that impressed me the most. The first is One Work Gallery, which was displaying one new piece per day – to my mind, this approach brought visitors back to rediscovering the object, which otherwise would be always lost in the multiplicity and diversity of other objects. On the first night, the painting by Stefen Reiter was even closed with a curtain behind which the visitors encountered the object with intimate distance. Second – Postmasters gallery from NY broke the rules, quite to the contrary – by organizing a full show of 32 artists (!), curated by Paulina Bebecka: the park of tiny sculptures and installations. I observed a new tendency popped up here – detailed and precisely handcrafted small objects were representing the idea of coming back to modern aesthetics in contemporary art.

Liudmila Kirsanova is currently doing her Master's program in Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, where she is studying Art History. Her main research is concentrated on space and site-specific exhibitions of contemporary art.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/lorena-parada_pic/#main)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160923-16171711-alm_0380/#main)

Lorena Parada (Colombia, 32)

The variety of artworks on display at the fair ranged from classic paintings to new media art operated by electronics. Of peculiar interest to me were the artworks by [Leo Peschta \(<http://www.galerie-lisihaemmerle.at/artists/leo-peschta/>\)](http://www.galerie-lisihaemmerle.at/artists/leo-peschta/) displayed by Galerie Lisi Hä默尔 and Chen I-Chun at Liang Gallery. The general composition and distribution of the space was well designed. It allowed the public to move around easily and to explore every booth. The size of the fair was precise, not overdone, neither had any empty and unworked space.

The fair offered the opportunity to access emerging art practices in Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia – locations one may not have the opportunity to appreciate at other fairs. viennacontemporary was a satisfying experience in terms of size, diversity and quality of work.

Lorena Parada is a curator from Colombia and has experience in curating contemporary and new media art in Colombia and in the UK. She is currently finding and establishing connections between Colombian and international art institutions. She believes that a dialogue between local and international artists enriches us culturally. Her field of interest are contemporary art practices with the use electronic and digital media.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/mahzabin-haque_bangladesh_pic/#main)



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/alm-007/#main>)

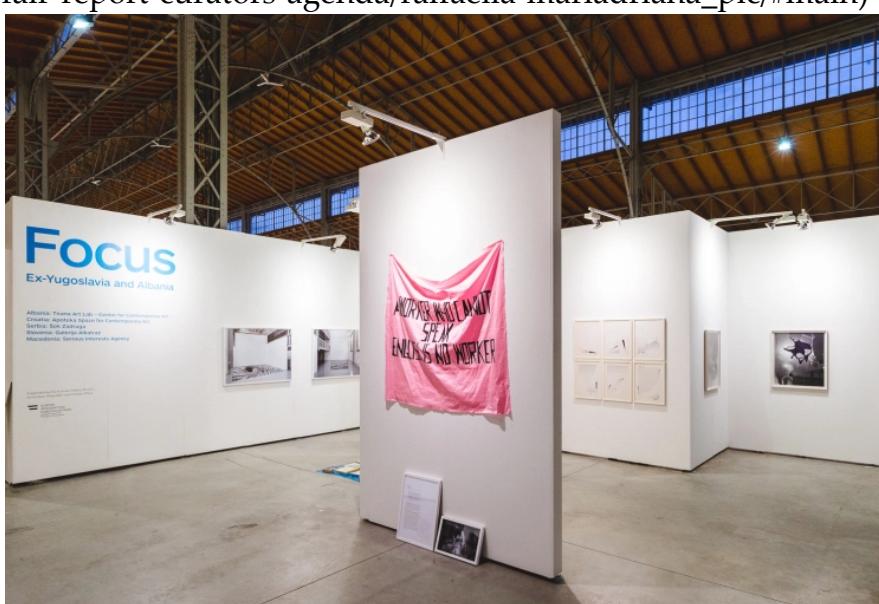
Mahzabin Haque (Bangladesh, 27)

Talk of the contemporary art world, viennacontemporary '16 ended on September 25th. Around 112 galleries from 26 countries participated in the art fair, with an array of works by very young artists with very established names in the field. During one of the various interesting talks arranged by Collectors Forum at the fair, while talking about their own art collection, Miguel Leal Rios (Director and Curator, Fundação Leal Rios) said, "Art is not boring to see when it's contextualized." In reference to his quote, I would like to say that the overall concept of the art fair was so very much focused on the current European context and it was not boring at all. It was indeed very interesting. Yes, it did show a lot of politically intriguing work, which is not very common to show during an art fair. However, by doing this, by being so very much focused on the context, I believe that viennacontemporary could successfully make its own identity.

Mahzabin Haque is an emerging curator and a visual artist. She has been working with a variety of organizations and independent curatorial projects mostly based in Bangladesh for the last 5 years (as the Assistant Curator of the Visual Arts program of the Bengal Foundation). After Curators' Agenda program, she will be joining a fellowship program titled Rave Scholarship, funded by IFA (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations), and she will be working with the Curator, Photography and Media Department, Sprengel Museum Hannover, Germany, for six months.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/raffaella-mariadriana_pic/#main)



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/alm-054/#main>)

Raffaella Mariadriana Matrone, (Naples/Venice, 21)

Being at an art fair can make you quickly lose track of what is actually going on in front of your eyes. Compared to others fairs, viennacontemporary is much more easy to be roamed, allowing you to not saturate your brain in the very first hour.

Wandering through the labyrinthic booths and the artworks displayed, gives you a new perspective on many topics that lie outside the purely aesthetical form of the product: connecting the objects under a common dialogue will eventually engage you in thought -provoking discussions aroused by the interests that most tickles your curiosity. I'm fascinated by how art can be considered a social media, and that's probably why, pushed by the focus on Ex-Yugoslavia and Albania, I found correlation within artworks, history and politics. Art can show you how things were and how they are now, as well as what they *could* be – most of the times it's not obvious, but is it in this surprise factor that lies its power.

Raffaella Mariadriana Matrone is completing her BA in Economics and Management for Arts and Cultural Activities at the Ca' Foscari University in Venice. In the meantime she is a collaborator for the croatian independent association Nomad.



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/cima-azzam/#main>)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160922-18151533-alm_0572/#main)

Cima Azzam (Palestinian/Jordanian)

Visiting viennacontemporary art fair for the first time was quite an interesting experience. I noticed some of the 'curatorial risks' that some of the galleries have decided to take in a very commercial setting. Whether displaying one work per day or utilizing the space to showcase one body of work for the whole duration of the fair. I thought it was quite refreshing to see galleries taking a different approach to the usual art fair set-up.

I particularly enjoyed attending some of the talks that ran during the fair. The talks discussed important and key topics in the art industry, such as the popularity of private foundations and collections. The talks also gave an insight to what is happening in the Viennese contemporary art scene on an international scope.

Cima Azzam is Palestinian/Jordanian, a graphic designer and emerging curator. Azzam currently works at Meem Gallery in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/erica-martin_pic/#main)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160921-13373730-alm_0144/#main)

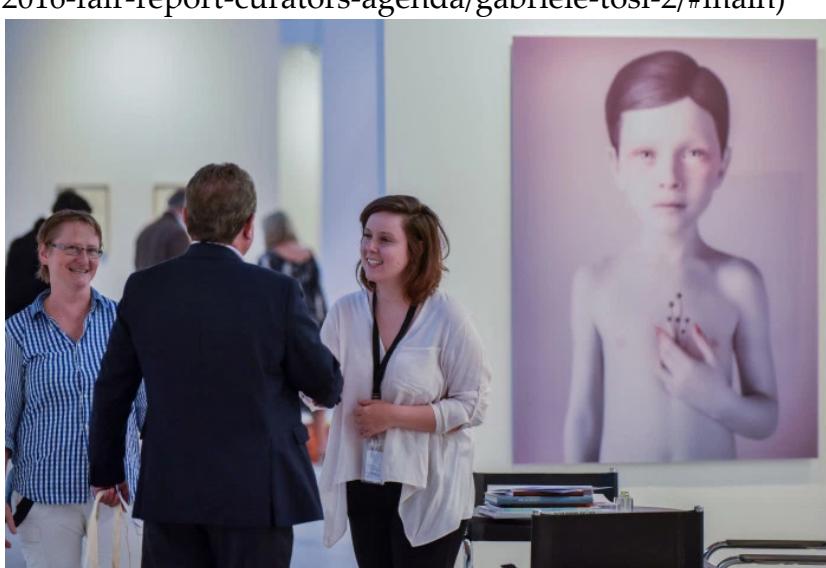
Erika Martin (San José, Costa Rica, 32)

viennacontemporary is a young fair, visibly emerging with strength within the local and international contemporary art scene in the region. What I found of most value about viennacontemporary is what emerges within the local art community in Vienna as a result of having an international fair that brings together the top Austrian, Eastern European, and international galleries. Consequently, other alternatives parallel to the fair arise, enriching the artist community as a whole and promoting other formats of presenting and observing art. Such that when visiting Vienna during viennacontemporary it's public has the opportunity to not only visit the fair, but also engross into the local contemporary art scene and scope out a wide array of shows, from the underground to the most pristine and commercial of setups.

Erika Martin is a freelance curator and founder and curator of satisFACTORY PopUp Shop, a curatorial and commercial project that has evolved into a cross-disciplinary nomadic brand that gather selected works of local artists, culinary artisans and designer with unique and innovative concepts. Currently curating URBANA, a photography show produced by Traffic, a Costa Rican based fashion magazine, that gathers the works of 10 fashion designers, 10 fashion photographers and 10 art photographers.



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/gabriele-tosi-2/#main>)



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/vc-3519/#main>)

Gabriele Tosi (Pistoia, Italy, 29)

This is my first viennacontemporary, but certainly not the last. As a curator is really interesting to visit a fair that is still creating its own identity with the perspective to become a must see event in the busy contemporary art agenda. I think that viennacontemporary is succeeding to build its own specificity because of the capability to focus on contexts where others looks just to be trendy. viennacontemporary honors the privilege of Vienna's location in Europe with care and attention, and I personally think that it might venture more. A generic annotation from the fair: a new generation of artists backs to explore the political potential hidden in classical art languages such as pop, land, body, etc.

Gabriele Tosi is a freelance curator based in Italy. He runs the non profit organization LOCALEDUE, focused on the promotion of young artists and curators. His research is about the concept of synchronization and about the variability inside an exhibition project.



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/theresa_kneppers_bw/#main)



(https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/20160924-13484833-alm_0302/#main)

Theresa Kneppers (San Francisco / London, 31)

viennacontemporary 2016 avoided the generic art supermarket feel of many contemporary art fairs with a compelling mix of Austrian and Eastern European galleries. There was a sense of discovery from the featured work of young Viennese artists and highlighting of Eastern European artists that have formally been looked over by the West. Innovative curatorial decisions by the invited galleries such as the Vienna based One Work Gallery kept the experience of exploring Marx Halle engaging. The fair serves as an excellent barometer for the expanding and innovative contemporary art scene in Vienna.

Currently working on developing an online art platform. Former founder and curator of Bosse & Baum, a Contemporary art collective supporting and promoting the work of young London based artists in temporary spaces. She holds an MA in Cultural and Creative Industries – from Kings College London and a BA in Art History and Visual Culture.



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/curators-agenda-logo/#main>)



(<https://viennacontemporarymag.com/2016/09/29/viennacontemporary-2016-fair-report-curators-agenda/bf-pic/#main>)

Curators-in-residency program **Curator's Agenda** is organized for the third time by **BLOCKFREI** (<http://www.blockfrei.org>) Association (Jelena Kaludjerović, Jana Dolečki, Nevena Janković) and is supported by the Federal Chancellery of Austria and the City of Vienna.

The program maps the focal points of the Viennese contemporary art scene providing a much-needed network so that the participating curators can get to know about the Viennese scene in more depth and in the future, potentially, collaborate with its creators. The schedule consists of studio visits, meetings with curators and cultural educators, lectures, workshops, which enable the curators to learn about curatorial practices from both freelance and institutionally engaged curators as well as to connect with artists and other relevant key players of the Viennese contemporary art scene.

The C'A curators will be given a chance to learn through practical experience by executing a group exhibition as their final task. The exhibition will be realized in a partnership with University of Applied Arts Vienna, with opening scheduled for **27. October 2016**, at the gallery Krinzingen Projekte.

For more information please visit: <http://www.blockfrei.org/curators'agenda2016.html>
<http://www.blockfrei.org/curators'agenda2016.html>

Tags: [blockfrei](#), [contemporary art](#), [Curator's Agenda](#), [fair report](#), [Focus](#), [One Work Gallery](#), [review](#), [vc2016](#), [viennacontemporary](#), [young curators](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

[Blog at WordPress.com.](#)