TOMORROW IS CANCELLED

ANNA LERCHBAUMER

DARJA SHATALOVA

PETER VÁRNAI

MARLENE LAHMER

DAVID MERAN

NICOLETA AUERSPERG

MAXIMILIANE LENI ARMANN

<u>GAŠPER KUNŠI</u>

ELIZAVETA KAPUSTINA

LISA GROßKOPF

STHER MARTENS

MARIE YAEL FIDESSER

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KRINZINGER PROJEKTE 25 06 10

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The challenge of the show lies in the input and collaboration of a group of international curators developing and producing the exhibition together during the six-week program.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the renowned 1968 protests: The global rise of social collisions, largely distinguished by popular rebellions opposing bureaucratic elitism and the military, who in return counteracted through the act of political repression. The protests allowed for countless socialist movements to prosper, take action and make an impact within the USA, Europe, Mexico and Brazil. 50 years later, the 1968 riots and revolts generate pressing concerns as political climates once again veer towards a growing inclination of right-wing fascism.

The global rise of right-wing populism tactically incorporates tropes of mystification generated through post-truth prevalent in fake news, propaganda and corruption. Such a precarious masking of the real, which has made a substantial return in politics and elsewhere, can be understood as the spectacle seen through Guy Debord's 1967, 'Society of the Spectacle'. Not being a "collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images," the spectacle slithers into every crevice of life by commodifying it, creating collective alienation and drowning any possibility for authenticity.

Today, the domination of the spectacle of ever developing technologies, post-internet and artificial intelligence is undeniable. Algorithms are based off feedback loops that survey and calculate people's behaviors day in day out, social media and the news blur into one conglomeration and access to the online realm is feasible almost anywhere and at any given time. Alienation from the real world persists through virtual media's sheer image explosion and reproduction. The works presented in *Tomorrow is Cancelled*, take into account collective alienation in a world where the degradation of knowledge bleeds into a blindness towards critical thought - where everything turns into homogeneous robotic feelings of unconsciousness and political ambivalence. As a point of departure, the works consisting of video, sculpture, installation, performance and photography deal with altering perspectives of complacency as both a repercussion and liberation from alienation.

Tomorrow Is Cancelled

Acknowledging 1968, half a century later, forces us to re-edit the legacy of that revolutionary year which, let's just remind it here, accounted for many coexisting global outbursts, and not just the European ones, as it is too often reduced to.

Guy Debord's 1967 visionary text, *The Society of the Spectacle*, remains one the best diagnostics written in those days to decipher today's world. Debord's work is to be understood as the progression of Marx's theoretical analysis. It reveals the Spectacle as the offspring of our fast emerging capitalist society, rooted in both slavery and war times. Back then, Debord accurately prophesied our image-saturated way of life, dominated by screens in which representations were to prevail authenticity. 50 years on, the Spectacle reinforces its political construction and its anchorage within our society through commodification and global privatization.

With appearance and reality overlapping, alienation is just a step away. The ongoing manipulation of our personal identity by the Spectacle annihilates any belief in our own power to effectively protest or change "The System". Debord's statements beg thus the question: what are we left with? For any alternative may resemble some kind of lost battle. As a result, **complacency** becomes somewhat an understandable position.

The challenge for this year's Curators Agenda resides in therefore curating the "LEFTovers" from that revolutionary era. Indeed, the selected artists of the exhibition, *Tomorrow Is Cancelled*, were not even born in the 1960s. Their practices, however, trace us back to this period, which undoubtedly has, to some extent, shaped their psyche.

The Curators Agenda's team attempted to "decolonize" 1968: from the collective uprising to the isolated *Asleep* of Gašper Kunšič; from the grand utopia of the times to the fine "potential" of Nicoleta Auersperg's *Tambo* piece; from the strategy of phobia underpinning the Spectacle,

to the over-exposed body of Elizaveta Kapustina, self-published on social media to help her overcome personal fear.

Anna Lerchhaumer's video **HIM** ironically introduces the Spectacle's best arm: technology and its overwhelming intrusion into our life.

Darja Shatalova's performative sculpture, *Vorübergehend*, plunges us to the brainstorming experience: from a Tabula Rasa – the artist speculates on visitors empiric trajectories to progressively reveal new formulae for us to conquer as new paradigms.

> David Meran's objects recall the banal cobblestones of the French May 68, turned into the iconic slogan "Sous les pavés la mer" (Under the cobblestones, the sea). Though Meran's Bubble Wrap distorts the utopian dreams proclaimed then. Instead Meran alludes to our fragility that "modernity/coloniality" (Walter Mignolo) ineluctably engenders side effects and "collateral damages" (ex-President Bush).

Marlene Lahmer's **Non-Human Response** subtly voices the new agencies of our world: a "nonplace" (Marc Augé) within which, Maximiliane Leni Armann's Another State of Matter metaphorically sets out to navigate through.

Esther Martens's Gold Digging Latex T-shirt plays with our senses in offering a - rather epidermal - touch of today's Spectacle, while Marie Yael Fidesser re-explores conventional photography focusing on scales and contrasts to escape all forms of image representations in her **Positiv Auf Negativ** compositions.

Peter Várnai's Installation with Time No.1, adds onto our angst in redefining time in some Kafkaesque way.

> To further question curatorial practices, the journey across all artworks is to be a physical one: once you will have surfed through Instagram visuals at Krinzinger Projekte, embark on a "D(iversion)tour" to Atelier Foto Augarten, to go windowshopping Lisa Großkopf's installation...

LISA GROßKOPF

1989, AUSTRIA

Großkopf is a multimedia artist and her artistic practice explores performance and activism using conceptual and experimental methods. A recurring theme in her artwork is the tension between private and public space and the guestion of how the general public perceives its surroundings. Großkopf challenges the way of viewing everyday objects, images, as well as ideas. For her work The Photostudio she turns the windows of vacant shops into fictional photographic studios to display counter-hegemonic queer imagery. Considering that shop windows of these studios usually portray a traditional, hetero-normative image of families and stereotypical gender roles of men and women. Großkopf addresses and renegotiates these gender norms and presents them side by side in the compressed space of the public shop window.

The Photostudio

photography, diasec

2016 - Ongoing

100 × 133 cm





Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Transmedia Arts, Prof. Nita Tandon), University of Art and Design, Linz.

NICOLETA AUERSPERG

1991, ARGENTINA

Education:

University of applied Arts Vienna (Transdisciplinary Art, Prof. Roman Pfeffer, Ricarda Denzer, Nita Tandon), Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam. Co-Founder of GOMO, Vienna. Auersperg's practice focuses on the specificity of materials, investigating their character and origin, believing in their potential to change. She interrogates the potential for change through performative sculptures and installations, making this idea of potential become manifest. Her work *Tambo*, is an elliptic aluminium container with a central divide, separating milk powder and water. In their rawest form, these materials imply both past and future states.

Tambo

2018

Aluminium, steel, paint, tape, water, milk powder

64 x 44 x 110 cm



Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Transmedia Art, Prof. Brigitte Kowanz)

GAŠPER KUNŠIČ

1992, SLOVENIA

Kunšič's practice poses existential questions of the millennial generation using vocabulary drawing from advertising, socialist realism, Slavic heritage and architectural elements rendered through graphic imagery. He experiments with painting, sculpture, installation, and print media creating situations which encourage the viewers to rethink the patterns of contemporary life. *Asleep* is an enlarged image of the warning referring to the risk of impotence found on some cigarette packets. Even though we are meant to be repulsed by this image, the portrayed figure embodies the aesthetic qualities of the high renaissance which would not be out of place on the Sistine Chapel Ceiling, yet here we find the subject withdrawn in a foetus-like position of rest or fear, which could be read as reflecting societal escapism or the contemporary state of paralysis caused by an uncertain future and a yearning for safety.



Asleep

pigment print on paper

90 x 60 cm

Are we just secretly yearning for a 10/25 f fascist illiberal Siri can you tell me about the truth about tomorrow? society that Hmm. I'm not sure. never changes? A dictatorship crystallised in time and space, basking in memories of past glories haunting us like ghosts from a Cambodian Hell.

We need no more evidence of this than our current political climate, with countries from all over the world queuing up to join the populist parade. The most recent addition is Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, but the list just keeps getting longer - Italy has Matteo Salvini, Tayepp Erdogan in Turkey, to Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines and we mustn't forget Donald Trump in America.

Nevermind that democracy is now losing ground. Forget the apocalyptic tsunamis, devastating wildfires and ignore accelerating homelessness. Hail our new masters, tech titans Google, Facebook and Amazon - harvesting and profiting from our data to suppress competition and unconsciously control our behaviour. Disregard the dangerous delusion of Theresa May when she said no-deal is better than a bad-deal Brexit.

Instead, visualise a pleasant state of complacency. Fully operational internet of driverless cars, metro stations, organic shops, and the dissolution of unions where protest has been eradicated because humans do not need to work anymore. A state of perpetual holiday where fear has been supplanted with artificial intelligence and a few gargantuan twists of geo-engineering to diminish our criticality and our ability for discourse.

AGAINST THE CANCELLATION

Nevermind that this scenario is just for a few of us, the cocooned 1%. Are we to blame if we secretly wish for a comfortable, illiberal, authoritarian, corporately maintained society where one doesn't need to think and dream about the future because tomorrow is cancelled?

Against The Cancellation

Tomorrow is Cancelled is an unorthodox platform that defies convention by reinterpreting the methods through which the spirit of the famous 1968 protests in Paris persists in contemporary life.

Instead of engaging the framework that Blockfrei has provided on '68 and potential new utopias, this exhibition will look into the edges of this discourse, anchoring it in the notion of "fear" and exploring this concept that pervades most recent artistic movements.

> As Guy Debord once noted, all that art has now is spectacle, where socioanthropological and political problems are played out with no substantial impact on reality.

With this in mind, we propose a constellation of works that deal with twenty-first century ethnography of our continued fascination with images of transformation, the mystique of the future, algorithms, rise of populism, fake news, destruction and complacency through the concept of body, artistic materials, time and space. The weaving of works is grounded in the collective fear and alienation in a world where the degradation of knowledge bleeds into a blindness towards critical thought (Debord, La Société du Spectacle, 1967) where everything turns into homogeneous robotic feelings of unconsciousness and political ambivalence.

This exhibition argues that rather than commemorating the legacy of '68, we should instead counter it and reframe it as a resistance of the process of renunciation, the creation of fictions, the construction of new languages, the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge capital, and renege our obsessive relationship with our smartphones, corporate-run academies of neoliberalism and start talking about its everyday failings. It has robbed us blind and ripped us off. We need to abandon the ship of the 68 and start creating spaces where craftsmanship sharpens alertness to the difference between good shit and bad shit, but only to acquire the moral clarity to move to the next mountains of garbage.

MARLENE LAHMER

1996, AUSTRIA

Lahmer is a performance and multimedia artist whose practice uses language to explore concepts of personal and shared identity. Her performance for *Tomorrow is Cancelled* is "I" to "you" a spoken word poem that is loosely based on Donna Haraway's ideas expressed in *A Cyborg Manifesto*. She argues that the cyborg is a model suitable for social paradigm shift asking the audience to question hierarchic definitions of culture, nature, gender, reproduction, etc. Likewise, the speaker of the poem becomes a revolutionary figure who introduces thought categories beyond the human. "You" represents the old societal norms.

One Trap Beyond consists of a little figure fixed between two mirror panels held in place by a clamp. It explores the concepts of repetition and permanence. Influenced by the works of two of her artist friends, the artist investigates ideas of words, scale, play, and spying in this work.

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Transdisciplinary Art, Prof. Nita Tandon, Roman Pfeffer, Stephan Hilge), University of Vienna, Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn. Since 2016, she works with the artist collective Supra// Struktur.

One Trap Beyond

glass

5 x 5 x 10 cm

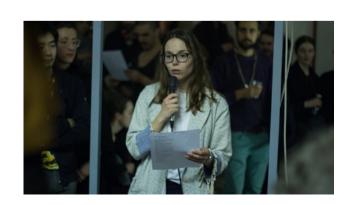
2018



Non-Human Response

text and performance

2017



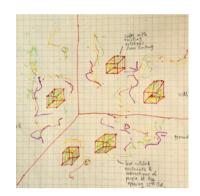
DARJA SHATALOVA

1988, RUSSIA

Shatalova's artistic practice examines the underlying structures of our social practices and the notion that there is a limited number of basic principles to which our systems adhere. That which we take for granted is revealed in graphic manifestations of codes and algorithms to give us a new understanding of the world around us. For the work in the exhibition, she recorded the movements of people passing by B-Galerie, Hamburg on transparent overlapping maps. These maps were then cut and transferred to Vienna to form cubes of miniature spaces of Hamburg's space, and then the movements and interactions of Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna are incorporated into them. The interweaving of time and space becomes a formative component in her artwork.

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Transmedia Art, Prof. Brigitte Kowanz), University of Fine Arts, Hamburg, University of Bozen, Bolzano, University of Cologne.



W(VG H) (Das Gedächtnis eines Raumes)

2018

paint markers on acrylic glass cubes approx. 48 x 48 x 48 cm each



Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Fine Art/ Photography, Prof. Gabriele Rothemann), Dance Arts, Vienna.

MARIE YAEL FIDESSER

1996, AUSTRIA

Fidesser is a multimedia artist whose practice engages with performance, photography and sculpture. The two works included in the exhibition explore ideas of binaries; compositions of 18 geometrics shapes are photographed with a large format camera and the negatives placed onto an undeveloped film from which the positives also emerge. This image of the film, negative and positive, is then enlarged and projected, resulting in a sphere on the light sensitive paper. Reminiscent of constructivist geometrical language, the artist plays with light and spaces to create a new language of voids and volumes.



Positiv Auf Negativ/Positive On Negative Komposition 11 and 12

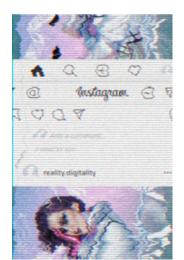
2017 - 2018

silver gelatin print, film positive

125 x 153 cm

ELIZAVETA KAPUSTINA

"Ultra" is a fictional character with exaggerated aesthetics which are simultaneously theatrical and intimate. Started as a project in 2017 on Instagram, Ultra is intended to be a grotesque reflection of popular culture in the digital age. In *Reality/Digitality*, Kapustina uses a combination of photo, painting, and video to explore social media's influence on human behavior. Instagram and Facebook are more than social media platforms; they are an alternative reality, where people can project a "perfect" personality.



Reality/Digitality

2018

video, instagram profile displayed on iphone

1136 x 640 pixels

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Graphics and Printmaking, Prof. Jan Svenungsson).

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Digital Arts, Prof. Jan Svenungsson).



1994, HUNGARY



Installation with Time No.1

2018

mechanical installation
50cm x 50cm x 8cm

Várnai is an installation and media artist influenced by the Surrealists and global political injustice. His work for the exhibition comprises clocks that have been rewired in such a way that their hands never collide. Using the red and black squares with sharp lines reminiscent of constructionism, the dissected clock motors seem like they are engaged in a romantic relationship and dance around each other, never fulfilling their predetermined purpose. The work reflects on questions of societal norms such as the institution of time, and finding beauty and meaning in the absurd.

ANNA LERCHBAUMER

Lerchbaumer is a sound and video artist whose practice applies humour in order to explore the effect of new technologies and hypermodernity on our environment. Him is a playful take on the 2013 film "Her". which features Joaquin Phoenix in a romantic relationship with his operating system, voiced by Scarlett Johansson. In this work the artist transforms the HER into HIM, not only flipping the gender but also removing the humanisation of technology.

The artist questions the reproduction of gender stereotypes in technology (Siri, Alexa), revealing the algorithms that are designed to invest in relationships with our devices.

Spinning Around is satellite footage of the devastation caused by hurricanes, set to an unexpected soundtrack. Accelerated climate change has resulted in an ecological crisis which is met with limited concern and redressal. This complacency is made ridiculed by humorously layering famous pop songs over the images, adding farce to the black mirror state of affairs the world has got itself into.

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Art and Science, Prof. Virgil Widrich), University of Innsbruck, Academy of Fine Arts.



Him 2018

HD video, sound variable dimensions

Spinning Around

HD video, sound

2018

variable dimensions



DAVID MERAN

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Art and Communication Practices & Textiles - Free, Applied and Experimental Artistic Design, Prof. Barbara Putz-Plecko), Tokyo University of the Arts. Meran is a sculptor whose practice investigates our environment as a perpetually changing constructed reality. He questions societal frameworks by highlighting the errors that appear in normalised or expected conventions and the glitches that occur in implied and enforced codes. The plaster cast of bubble wrap included in this exhibition is part of his series of works that subvert the principle of packaging, proposing the question "what would happen if packaging material for fragile objects itself became a fragile object?". Taking inspiration from the materials found in his studio. art organisations around the world, and the plastic crisis on a wider scale. Meran questions what would happen if the protector (packaging) turns into something that needs protection - an object that retains all of the damage, crumpling or fissure. In this alternate world, this material would become something inextricable and monolithic, whilst simultaneously highlighting the fragility and contradiction of these states, processes and places in which we live.

Pressure in Function (No.1)

2018

sculpture, plaster 35

35 x 25 cm



"It is only in a world that there can be a body," states Jean-Paul Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* (1943). Consciously, we take shape as bodies only after we have absorbed and interacted with the world we find ourselves in. However, what happens when a body becomes stripped of its surroundings? Of its history? When the body ceases to belong, to be categorised or to categorise itself? In *The Architectural Uncanny* (1992) Anthony Vidler stresses that "threat exists only insofar as we are in this world." What occurs if, in response, we choose to alienate and retract ourselves from our world

and given environment as a consequence to fear?

Such questions come to mind when confronted with

Maximiliane Armann's video work, Another State

of Matter (2018).

SPACED-OUT BODIES: Collective/Alienation in Maximiliane Armann's *Another* State of Matter The viewer watches an isolated figure swim in an otherworldly dimension. The visible horizon is made up of simplistic geometric forms in hues of black, grey and white, which create a rough layout of a space where water floats amidst this uncanny environment. Eerie and repetitive sounds reminiscent of broken down industrial machines run throughout the video work. The swimmer crawls from one edge of the screen to the other, at times unnervingly slow or glitching repeatedly. At last, the figure reaches the edge of the water, beyond which nothing but darkness is depicted. The edge transforms into a large white barrier, and the swimmer attempts to continue its path through this barrier - repeatedly glitching and failing to do so. Struggling to move, the swimmer reboots, instantly changing path, and swims along the barrier. Although crawling intently, the figure once again becomes stuck in its own movement. The video blacks out and the viewer is confronted with hues of grey that make up a group of synchronized swimmers, who execute a springy and rhythmic choreography. Within their isolated, eerie black environment, the complacent dark grey pixelated swimmers collectively reappear from the void, only to fade back into the darkness they incarnated from.

MAXIMILIANE LENI ARMANN

You will enter slowly. Yes slowly.

Pervade the matter. Dive into it.

Stop.

Turn around, and continue.

Don't forget to breathe.

How far will it go?

Go on.

Seems to be filled with nothing.

Turns out to have no ending?

An unfounded room, unspoiled.

Does something appear in the distance?

Up

Down

Into another state of matter.

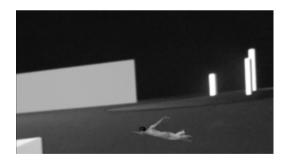
Armann is a multimedia artist working with photography, video, 3D animations and found footage to navigate the intersection between the analogue and the digital. In doing so, she creates a new aesthetic that reflects the moment when reality and artificiality blur, alluding to a new disturbing digital existence. In this work, she depicts a person swimming into various black and white dimensions, rhythmically exploring different planes in an isolated environment. Armann's work moves beyond the discourse of commenting whether new technologies offer a utopia or not – the world presented to us in her work removes collective experience and instead suggests infinite alternative possibilities such as accepting our new technological condition.

1994, GERMANY

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Fine Art/Photography, Prof. Gabriele Rothemann), Vilnius Academy of Arts. Lithuania.





Another State of Matter 2018

4:3 video, 2.3 min

ESTHER MARTENS

1992, AUSTRIA

Martens is interested in challenging conventional expectations of process and materiality, examining their qualities that evolve just like their represented subjects. She usually paints portraits of women on oxidised copper plates which are subjected to a certain chemical process, often resulting in the works perishing with time.

Gold Digging was specially created for **Tomorrow** is **Cancelled** and it is the first time that the artist has ventured into the realm of political art, which she otherwise avoids due to the fear of being misconstrued. The work references a Nike t-shirt from 2012 which was created as an attempt to capitalize on the historic efforts of the US women Olympic team towards apparently motivating them to aim for gold. The outcome of this action was that the provocative quote on the t-shirt was called out for being sexist. The artist explores the way brands endorse and limit a woman's worth to beauty ideals. Latex was chosen as a material. for its resemblance to flayed skin and the format of a t-shirt as a satire that labels are not as easily removed as clothing.

Education:

University of Applied Arts Vienna (Painting and Animated Film, Prof. Judith Eisler), Central Saint Martins, London



Gold Digging

latex

165 x 114 cm

2018

Design by **Greatjobwelldone**

BLOCKFREI is an independent cultural organisation based in Vienna that was established in 2013. It embodies the concept of mobility for artists and cultural professionals, strongly believing that multicultural projects are of the highest importance and inevitability part of the global cultural and geopolitical sphere.

Since its beginnings **BLOCKFREI** has been running an annual curators-in-residence program for emerging international curators, Curators' Agenda. The program maps the focal points of the Viennese contemporary art scene, providing a network so that participating curators can get to know it in-depth and in the future potentially collaborate with its creators. The schedule consists of studio visits, meetings with curators and cultural educators, lectures and workshops, as well as visiting exhibitions, off-spaces and art collections. The aim is to enable the program participants 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.

In the framework of Curators' Agenda: VIENNA 2018, and in collaboration with the University of Applied Arts Vienna, **BLOCKFREI** presents this mutual group exhibition taking place at Krinzinger Projekte.

info@blockfrei.org www.blockfrei.org





The Curators











