

HOW TO SURVIVE

Art as Survival Strategy

H O W T O S U R V I V E

Art as Survival Strategy

SPRENGEL MUSEUM HANNOVER

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How to Survive: Art as Survival Strategy

Carina Plath

A writer, or any man, must believe that whatever happens to him is an instrument; everything has been given for an end. This is even stronger in the case of the artist. Everything that happens, including humiliations, embarrassments, misfortunes, all has been given like clay, like material for one's art. One must accept it. For this reason I speak in a poem of the ancient food of heroes: humiliation, unhappiness, discord. Those things are given to us to transform, so that we may make from the miserable circumstances of our lives things that are eternal, or aspire to be so. If a blind man thinks this way, he is saved. Blindness is a gift. (...) It is one more instrument among the many--all of them so strange--that fate or chance provide.

Jorge Luis Borges, "Blindness", Seven Nights (1977)¹

I. Crisis

We were already in crisis. We were already in crisis when Gustav Metzger (1926-2017) wrote his manifesto "Auto-Destructive Art" in 1959, in which he called on contemporaneous artists to respond to the destruction of our environment. We were already in crisis when Shūsaku Arakawa (1936-2010) and Madeline Gins (1941-2014) declared death to be an impossibility and organised their Reversible Destiny Foundation around overturning our linear idea of a lifespan. We were already in crisis when Alina Szapocznikow (1926-1973) gave to friends her carcinomas transferred to sculptures, *T u m e u r s p e r s o n n i f i é e s*, and thus made it public that she was sick with cancer. We were already in crisis when Metzger in Münster in 2007 distributed his leaflet *R e d u c e A r t F l i g h t s* (p. 53). We were already in crisis in 2017 when, after once again working with Metzger's work, I had the idea of an exhibition on crises and how to overcome them through art. We were already in crisis when Greta Thunberg addressed her famous "How dare you?" to the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York in September 2019.² We were already in crisis when the funding for this project scheduled for this autumn was still uncertain as late as the spring of 2020. We were already in crisis when it became clear at the same time that transporting art from the United States and Japan would not be logistically and financially possible and that the artists and speakers invited could not fly in. We are in crisis as I write this



text in October and do not know whether we will be able open the project to the public or be behind closed doors on 13 November 2020, in the face of the rising coronavirus infection statistics globally and in Germany.

We are still in a large societal and global crisis that concerns the environment as much as the question of the place of culture in the world we live in. H o w t o S u r - v i v e : A r t a s S u r v i v a l S t r a t e g y is an exhibition and lecture project that once again vigorously asserts the relevance of art. It assembles selected international artists, scholars in the humanities, curators and filmmakers who, against the backdrop of personal or societal crises, have developed strategies for survival in their art that can be significant to us. Art has the opportunity to set off on other paths and to pursue a third option in situations in which it seems to be about yes or no, right or left. Who would think of giving one's own cancerous tumors as gifts with humor and a sense of play, or of cursing students because they do not walk properly, and who would apply for funding for a large steel monument that will not last? Smiling at the edge of the abyss, uncompromising demands and radical designs unite the artists who developed their artistic approaches from the early 1960s onward. Metzger, Arakawa and Gins, and Szapocznikow stand here as exemplary of many others: to name just a few, of Hannah Wilke, Mirit Cohen, Joseph Beuys, Tetsumi Kudo, Yayoi Kusama and Maria Nordman, who have conceived society, environment and art as a unity that they question with their works.

II. Three Standpoints:

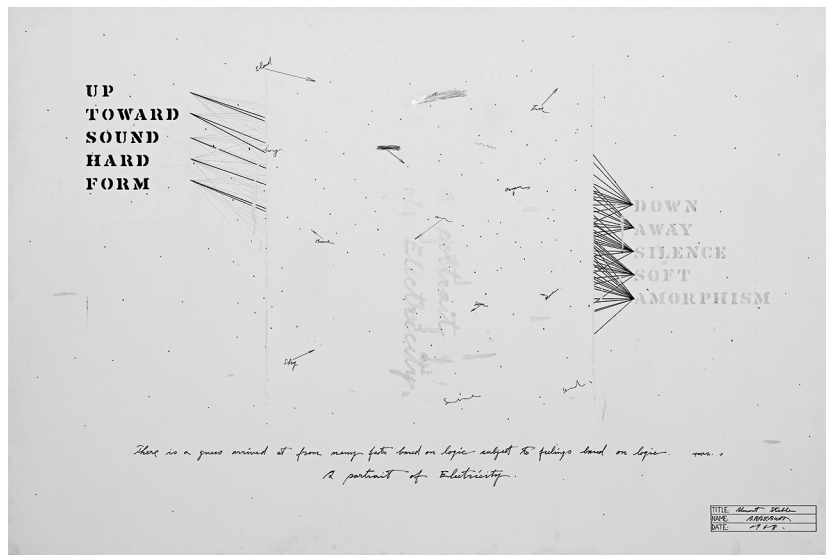
Metzger, Arakawa and Gins, and Szapocznikow

Gustav Metzger's art and personality, which was and is characterised by an urgency and radicalness, represents the point of departure. Since the late 1950s, the Nuremberg-born Metzger, who was stateless since escaping to the United Kingdom in 1939, was one of the pioneers among those artists who warn of the consequences of the destruction of human beings, animals and the environment. His five manifestos are important steps in the development of an Actionism in which aesthetic activity and artistic responsibility are equally important: The First and Second Manifestos on "Auto-Destructive Art" of 4 November 1959 and 10 March 1960, advocating adopting self-destruction as a constructive element in art; the Third Manifesto, "Auto-Destructive Art, Machine Art, Auto-Creative Art," of 23 June 1961, places destruction alongside new creation (p. 51). During the famous public art action in South Bank, London, in

which he etched three frames with nylon fabric with acid, he had this manifesto distributed as a handout. Early on, Metzger grappled with computer art and technological progress; the hydrogen bomb, the new arms race and the destruction of the environment by violence and technology were the backdrops against which he developed his existential art. His provocative, anti-bourgeois design of a monumental work of art that slowly disintegrates in a public space (p. 52) is in my view one of the most important concepts for public monuments of that time.³

From the position of a victim--a position that Metzger never wanted to adopt and which he shared with Szapocznikow as a survivor of several ghettos and concentration camps--he developed the activist, creative energy, with which he worked from then on. In his early coffin works, Shūsaku Arakawa, whose childhood in Japan was not unaffected by Hiroshima, addressed death as a communal, politically determined challenge to be coped with as a society: in wooden crates lined with velvet which surrounds clumps of plaster and other materials, formed by the artist's body and his blows into a damaged corpus.⁴ This corporeality connects his early sculpture to that of Szapocznikow, who molds the folds of her belly and turns them into tondi, like *O k r a g ł a / L a R o n d e* (1968), which is seen in this exhibition. In this way the Polish artist not only confronts her femininity and finitude, which were themes of many artists of the period, but also ennobles her feminine weakness and power at once, which is located in the belly, with the sensitive solar plexus, as the refuge of intuition and as a part of the body that can give birth. The body mold is doubled and arranged with mirror symmetry in this large, brownish-and-jet-black, uncanny sculpture.⁵

All three artists--the stateless Londoner, the Japanese man in New York and the Polish artist in Paris--are wanderers between worlds and share fates of emigration: Szapocznikow emigrated as a Holocaust survivor, first to Czechoslovakia and then to France, returning to Poland in 1952 after she was diagnosed with cancer, and then in 1963 immigrating for good to France, where she died of cancer in 1973 at the age of forty-six; Metzger and his brother went to the United Kingdom with one of the last *K i n d e r t r a n s p o r t e* (transports of children) from Germany in the late 1930s as sons of a Jewish family from Nuremberg, and he remained there but never again became a citizen of any state; Arakawa emigrated from Japan in 1961 to the United States, after his actions in Japan in a neo-Dada artists' group and his spectacular works, as in his *A n o t h e r G r a v e y a r d* exhibition in Tokyo (1960),



Shūsaku Arakawa, "Almost Stable - A Portrait of Electricity", 1968
 Oil, drawing ink, silver paint on canvas, 122 x 183 cm
 Sprengel Museum Hannover
 Kunstbesitz der Landeshauptstadt Hannover
 Inv. No. KA 3,1971

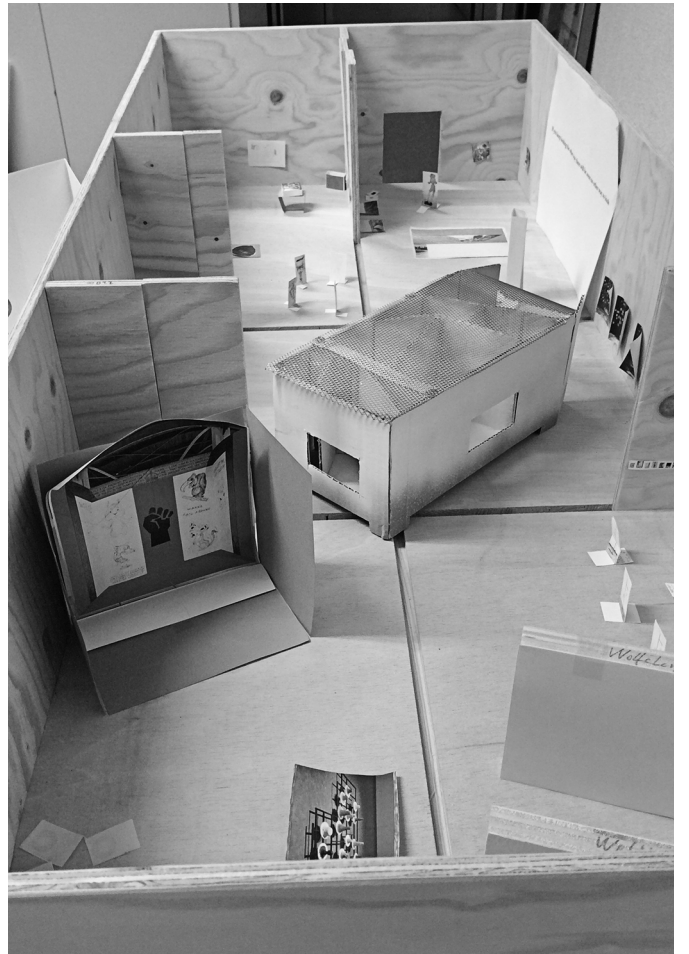
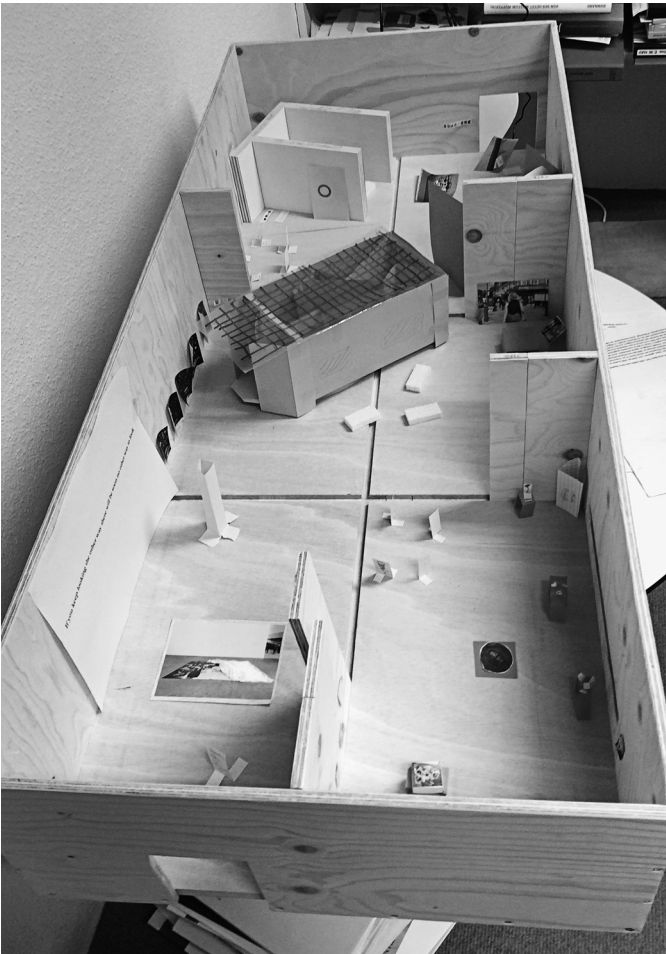
turned out to be incompatible with traditional society, and he was called "a crazy artist".⁶ In New York, after a brief period of acclimatisation, he began a new phase in his work in which he--familiar with the art of Marcel Duchamp, whose telephone number was in his pocket when he traveled to New York--designed diagrams with language panels and reaction drawings. The painting *Almost Stable: A Portrait of Electricity* (1968) in the collection of the Sprengel Museum Hannover documents this phase. In 1962, he met the poet Madeline Gins, a woman of a similarly distinctive personality, with whom Arakawa made models and architecture from the 1980s onward. Surviving early separation from his parents, confronting death as a child, reorientation in new cultures, which mean foreign languages, translations and learning new abilities marked his works from the outset. The early experimental films *Why Not: A Serenade of Eschatological Ecology* (1970) and *For Example (A Critique of Never)* (1971) show lost

children and young adults in an alienated New York or in an isolated, self-centred sexuality and have been interpreted as self-portraits and as turning points in his artistic evolution from Surrealist influences to working with what is directly present.⁷

Arakawa and Gins subsequently refined their idea of a "Reversible Destiny" in an effort to enrich with new ideas the finality of the Western idea of life with the idea of changing states and the physical and psychological existence of human beings. They formulate the idea of "To not to die" in manifestos, texts, lectures and symposia and implement them in "testing sites," designs for bridges and finally in the parks *Ubiquitous Site - Nagi's Ryōanji - Architectural Body* (1994), Nagi Museum of Contemporary Art, Okayama, Japan; the *Site of Reversible Destiny - Yoro* (1995), Yoro Park, Gifu, Japan, and the architectures of the *Reversible Destiny Lofts Mitaka - In Memory of Helen Keller* (2005) in Mitaka, Tokyo, Japan, and the *Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa)* (2008) in East Hampton, NY (p. 59), the model of which is being shown in the exhibition.

There are countless reports and documentations that reveal Arakawa's vehemence, wealth of insights and charisma in his lectures and teaching as well as the consequences for the occupants and users of the built surroundings. With these documents as evidence, it becomes possible to understand how the artist and the architect work in an interdisciplinary way with scientists and who enduringly claim they were influenced by the deaf and blind socialist writer Helen Keller (1880-1968). The world of ideas of these husband-and-wife artists became clear in an extreme way when Madeline Gins decided immediately after the death of Arakawa to organise a symposium in which death continued to be described as an impossibility.⁸

Interdisciplinarity and multimedia are typical of the time in all three cases, but differ in how they are employed: In Metzger's case, working with materials such as acid, liquid crystals and rolled steel; in Szapocznikow's, in her literary writings and letters and materials such as chewing gum, gauze, plastic and newspaper; in the case of Arakawa and Gins, in the complex realisation of their buildings and parks with engineers, carpenters, landscape architects and many other professionals.



III. Second Generation

The Vietnamese-American photographer An-My Lê (b. 1960) shares with many artists an origin in a land at war. Lê fled Vietnam for the United States with her parents near the end of the war in 1975. She has been processing her origins since the late 1990s and early 2000s by studying the American military, the former invader of Vietnam: she attends Army maneuvers in Virginia, North Carolina and in the Californian desert, at times taking part in the role of a Vietcong soldier, which she photographs in the black-and-white of classical landscape photography in her series *S m a l l W a r s* (1999-2002) and *2 9 P a l m s* (2003-04) (p. 67). By doing so, she emancipates herself from this past at the same time. She becomes the chronicler of American reality in the photographs called *F r a g - m e n t s* concerning the debate, which has flared up again as a result of the Black Lives Matter movement, over how to deal with slavery and its monuments, especially in the American South; protests against gun violence; and the activities on the Mexican border in the series *S i l e n t G e n e r - a l* (2016-19). Yet her photography is stubbornly impassive; she works objectively and precisely and with a rich knowledge



An-My Lê, "Fragment VII: High School Students
Protesting Gun Violence, Washington Square Park,
New York" from the series "Silent General", 2018
pigment print, 101.6 x 143.5 cm
Courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery

of the history of photography. The American tradition especially, with its famous precursors such as the landscape photography of the nineteenth century and even more so the documentary style and instrumental view of photography of the likes of Dorothea Lange and Lewis Baltz, is evident in her series of unmonumental, succinct photographs. It was therefore only natural that Lê also responded to the emergency of the Covid-19 crisis in New York hospitals with her fundraiser edition *U. S. N. S. Comfort, Verrazano Bridge, Brooklyn, New York* (2020), for which she photographed the eponymous Navy auxiliary ship on the Hudson River.⁹

The photographer belongs to the same generation as Mike Kelley (1954-2012) and Tracey Emin (b. 1963). Kelley and Emin were not, however, exposed to foreign violence but rather reflected in their direct and expressive sculptures, installations and films the traumas that their generation suffered at the hands of their own incestuous and wounded Western European and American society--in this case, their fathers and mothers, who were marked by World War II and who in turn influenced their children with their idea of religion, success, repressed sexuality and repressive education. All his life, Mike Kelley tried to deal with the traumas of his childhood and youth in songs, videos, sculptures and installations. Tracey Emin, who represents here the so-called Young British Artists (YBAs), reflected on growing up in provincial Margate on the British coast, which she had to leave for London in order to be able to develop somewhat more freely as an artist and a woman. The film *Why I Never Became a Dancer* (1995) (p. 68-69) takes place precisely at the turning point at which she left the narrow, provincial and misogynist small-town society for harsh London. The dancing with which she tries to liberate herself one evening in the disco, according to the film's story, when she is unexpectedly called a "slag" by the teenagers and men, becomes the breaking point and the cinematic element; now it is the liberated artist who can dance unfettered in a London studio. It is a brief coming-of-age film, which has been screened often and become kind of iconic for the emerging British artists of that time.

The works of Mike Kelley are an important link in the exhibition. He is a central mediator between various genres, media and age groups. Born in Wayne, a suburb of Detroit, and active in Los Angeles, the artist expressed an entire generation's attitude toward life: his stuffed animals arranged on doilies, his *Arenas*, his bottles of Johnson's Baby Oil

smeared with feces in large colour photographs and his numerous performances with Paul McCarthy, which employed fairytales as in *H e i d i* (1992) to present family taboos such as incest and sexual violence in drastic and bizarre ways. Especially from the viewpoint of a present in which these themes are increasingly being discussed without taboos and punished as crimes, Kelley's films, such as his first video, *T h e B a n a n a M a n* (1983), which is shown in the exhibition, convey truths that are difficult to bear using odd, nerve-racking and absurdly simply constructed sets, props and performances. His architecture-related works, which he assembled to form his large *E d u c a t i o n a l C o m p l e x*, were created along the recapitulation of the spaces which he was forced to experience in elementary school and college. The large installation *F r o m M y I n s t i t u t i o n t o Y o u r s* (1987/2003), which seems to mock phallic symbolism with a banal hidden hanging carrot, includes found cartoons with jokes ranging from the risqué to the bizarre alongside the emblem of a black fist--the symbol of the working class and of the Black Power movement. Kelley, who was himself from the suburbs of an industrial city, combines here the working-class milieu and the protest movements with artistic issues. After all, a long, red ribbon connects the artist's own institution asserted in the title to the offices of the director and administration of the Sprengel Museum Hannover, as is intended for every new exhibition of the installation. It is thus pointing a finger at the museum as another expression of the very bourgeois society whose abysses and double standards were Kelley's constant themes.

Several of the artists, like the rock stars of their generation, lived only briefly, and suicides like that of the YBA Angus Fairhurst (1966-2008) ended an intense artist's life. In the end, Mike Kelley was not able to control his own demons either--it is no coincidence that the punk and noise band he cofounded in the 1970s was called *D e s t r o y A l l M o n s t e r s*.

Valérie Favre (b. 1959) has included numerous suicides, not just of artists and intellectuals, in her series *S u i c i d e* (2003-13), which now has 129 parts. The Swiss artist, who became established in France before moving to Berlin in the 1990s to be part of a topical discourse on painting, draws motifs and techniques from the rich tradition of French painting. She turns this taboo theme into the question how beautiful and virtuosic painting is permitted to be if it is dedicated to this real and destructive action. Similarly to her small format

A u t o s d a n s l a n u i t (Cars at Night) (2002)-- paintings of urban scenes at night that recall film noir--the suicide paintings are as repulsive as they are attractive in their rapid painting style that often abridges the theme. The suicides of ancient heroes, mythological figures, modern drama characters, writers, philosophers, artists and politicians are depicted more or less abstractly in a palette of yellow-white-grey-blue nuances of colour. The wealth of pictorial inventions and the intense preoccupation with the theme contrast with the great quantity and the mercilessly masterly treatments of this subject in painting. In her latest series of paintings, B a t e a u d e s p o è t e s (Boat of the Poets) (2020) (p. 65), the painter now "rescues" the dead in open boats beneath a jet-black night sky lit by countless stars. Added to the boats are collages of portraits copied from encyclopedias and newspapers, making it possible to identify the famous people. The painter thus enters the grey zone between despair, possible rescue and survival in the sensation of tragedy or in the enduring masterpiece. The questions of survival, whether the artistic work remains, whether it makes sense for generations to come, whether it can compensate for fears experienced, are more uncertain than the fateful end. At the same time, madness and suicide are heroised in the history of culture: Favre adds the B u r e a u d e s S u i c i d e s as the third element of her contribution to H o w t o S u r v i v e: a discussion between her and the cultural scholar Thomas Macho, who has studied art and suicide.¹⁰ This corresponds to her conceptual approach, which is often overlooked in her paintings but is obvious from the conception of her series and of numerous exhibition projects.

The daily toil, the invisible quotidian struggle with the void and passing time, are palpable in the work of Martina Kresta. Yet her works seem as if they have dropped out of time, even though time and fleetingness are her only themes. Despite their closeness to the themes of the Viennese Actionists, the Vienna-based artist's plan for life and work is radical but not theatrical at all. Utterly without pathos, she draws her own boundaries in her drawings, often on ephemeral materials; detached and inscribed labels from cans of soup, a cash register roll of cheap and short-lived thermal paper (p. 75), and finally the kaiser roll in the curator's desk drawer and a file folder with drawings, simply placed on the shelves of the office as a time capsule. The circular drawings with her own blood as paint undergo an extension: when the artist discovered the strange voids in the circles that resulted from bluebottle

flies drinking the blood, she collected the dead flies and added them to a display case in the work *R a u s c h* (Rapture) (notes 1 February 2002-31 January 2003). Filling inexorable time with activity, documenting one's own expiring life, and finally the consumption of the body and of things--all of this can be found in Kresta's pitilessly self-delimited work process made visible.

IV. Art and Society: A Relationship through the Ages

The way artists deal with crises has crucially changed, at least since the 1980s, after Conceptual Art and Institutional Critique. "Sculpture as a form of action" (Manfred Schneckenburger)¹¹ gave way to sculptures, videos and installations that were far more nihilistic in their basic tenor than the utopias of the Sixties generation. Whereas crisis and its thematisation shaped artistic form itself in the oeuvres developed in the 1960s by the three artists selected here, the views of art by younger artists have changed and expanded. After the 1980s, with their new, diverse mediality and adoption of popular culture, expressed in installations and videos, the most recent art is expressing itself with text again, with lectures and descriptions, with autobiographical and socio-biographical elements, about the reality of life in Kyoto, Japan; Los Angeles; New York; or Oaxaca, Mexico, as in the work of the artists Kōki Tanaka, David Horvitz, Elizabeth Jaeger and Berenice Olmedo.

Berenice Olmedo (b. 1987) has from the outset recorded the symptoms and phenomena of everyday urban life. One of her first works consisted of a stuffed stray dog she prepared herself and another involved wearing clothing made of the pelts of dogs run over by cars (*C a n i n e T A N A T O c o m m e r c e ; o r , T h e p o l i t i c a l - e t h i c a l d i l e m m a o f m e r c h a n d i s e*, 2015). With the primitive appearance and strong smell of the pelts, she presented herself early on as someone affected and involved who draws the anarchy out of the archaic. In that sense, the works with children's orthotics are also images of the social conditions that Olmedo describes in her own text (pp. 78-81). The handicap of the community is captured visually in static and moving sculptures of orthotics. In the exhibition, she presents a ballet with four female dancers, each of who has a girl's name, constructed from children's orthotics in pointe shoes. One of them, *P a u l a*, is made to dance like a ballerina by an electric motor. The Mexican sculptor reacts intuitively and directly to the conditions of her surroundings; for example, recently in Tepito, her neighbourhood in Mexico City, where she initi-



Berenice Olmedo, "Canine TANATOCcommerce; or, the political-ethical dilemma of merchandise", 2015
 Courtesy the artist and Jan Kaps, Cologne

ated and implemented a kind of neighbourhood meeting at which the game Poleana was played; it is popular, among other places, in prison. The player not only wagers money but can escape into entertainment in the game, which the artist compares to the constant fleeing from police in the markets of Tepito, which are famous for their high criminality. The betting in the game has also created an economy in which entertainment becomes work--a process which Olmedo sees as obtaining monetary and productive surplus value from social life. Play becomes mercantile and the players, perhaps, become local entrepreneurs.

Kōki Tanaka (b. 1975) incorporated Japanese society after the accident in Fukushima in 2011 into his practice, which he worked out with other people in workshops, videos and installations. In the series *P r e c a r i o u s T a s k s* (since 2012), he assigns people and groups challenging tasks they must manage or at which they can fail in order to observe processes that play out when a familiar environment is disturbed. In the

film shown in the exhibition--P r e c a r i o u s T a s k
 # 8 : G o i n g h o m e c o u l d n o t b e
 d a i l y r o u t i n e (2014) (p. 73)--he had four peo-
 ple retrace the path they had taken during the London Riots in
 2011, when they departed from their usual routine. In P r o -
 v i s i o n a l S t u d i e s : W o r k s h o p # 7
 H o w t o L i v e T o g e t h e r a n d S h a r -
 i n g t h e U n k n o w n at Skulptur Projekte Münster in
 2017, he also studied how a new society forms in the face of
 crises, unfamiliar situations and emergencies by having eight
 participants work on various tasks in workshops over ten days,
 moderating and documenting the process.¹²

David Horvitz (b. ?), who works continuously on blurring
 the concepts of artwork and artist biography, was invited to
 the show in connection with my acquisition of his work F o r
 \$ 1 U S D I w i l l t h i n k a b o u t y o u
 f o r o n e m i n u t e . I w i l l e m a i l
 y o u t h e t i m e I s t a r t t h i n k i n g ,
 a n d t h e t i m e I s t o p . P a y P a l (n.d.),
 by sending him one dollar via PayPal to think about me. By in-
 corporating ephemeral means such as stamps, mail art and spoken
 works, Horvitz enriches and enlivens the constant exchange
 with and through art in a poetic and existential way. The
 small-format, black-and-white photograph F o r K i y o k o
 (f r o m A m a c h e) (2017) shows the starry sky above
 the Amache internment camp in Colorado for Japanese Americans
 after the attack on Pearl Harbor, in which Horvitz's grand-
 mother Kiyoko was held. The portent on the wall of the ex-
 hibition--"if you keep looking the other way there will be
 soon no other way to look" (2020)--written with charcoal from
 the forests destroyed in the renewed intense forest fires in
 California, is a message, a contribution that vanishes again,
 and a continuation of the early warnings of Gustav Metzger,
 captured in his M i r r o r T r e e (2010/2020), which rises
 up immediately in front of it.

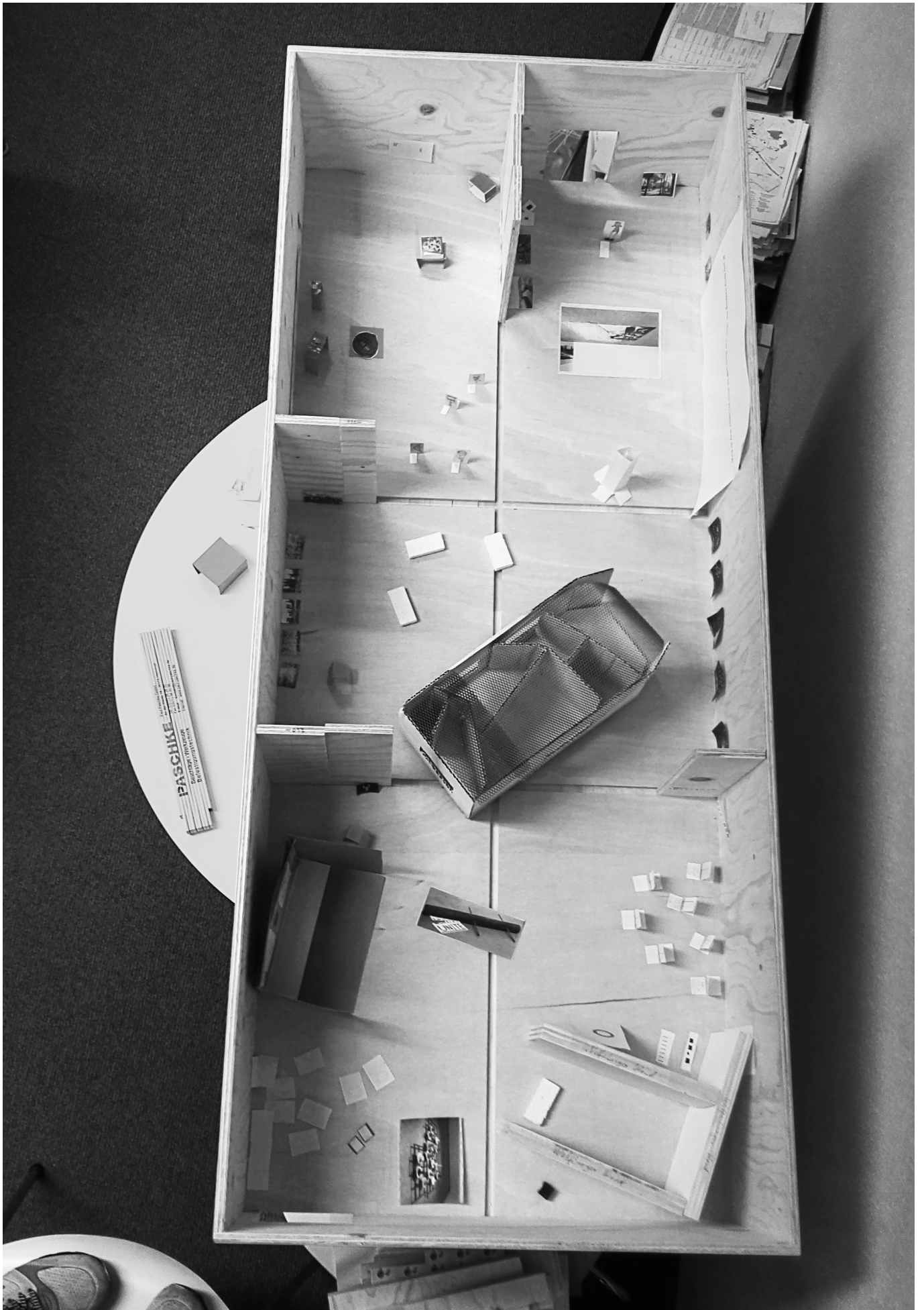
Elizabeth Jaeger's (b. 1988) fish--B r i n e (2019) (p. 83)
 --of handblown milk glass seem to be gasping for air with their
 metal teeth and loom admonishingly out of their metal stands.
 A bright, white installation that is as fragile and precarious
 as the froth and salty crust on the piles standing in the sea,
 documenting traces of the tides of the Pacific, an ocean Jaeger
 could still experience as rich and colourful as a child grow-
 ing up in California. Animal figures such as birds (B i r d s,
 2018) and dogs (6 : 3 0, 2014) characterise her recent sugges-
 tive installations of figurative and abstract elements, featur-

ing mostly female figures; female nudes in the history of art were also the subject of her artist's book *D e n u d e* (2018). The figures are often vessels and objects in black or white ceramic that create atmospheric tableaux. Located between emotion and the haptic, craftsmanship and the intellectual, *B r i n e*, too, is a hybrid of snapshots of an abandoned play and commitment to the survival of the species. The form of the jars alludes to ancient lachrymatories, vessels used for grave gifts, which were thought to capture the tears of the mourners.

V. Architecture as a Medium: (Not) A Green House

Jean-Pascal Flavien's (b. 1971) *D e s c r i p t i o n o f a S t r u g g l e* (2020) (p. 70-71) lends the exhibition a signet that addresses the existential struggle for survival as an artist. It does more than update for the present an approach like that of Arakawa and Gins. The plan for the architecture was originally different: Flavien had proposed taking the existing *G r e e n h o u s e* as a model for a walk-in exhibition architecture with a treelike structure as the floor plan; in the antechamber there would be four identical doors requiring visitors to make a decision about which of the four corridors of different length in four approximately square rooms they wanted to enter. The structure was to float on wooden blocks strewn about the room and also function as a stage for the lecture and screening programme. After an official call for tenders had been made and the bids received, the project had to be canceled for lack of funding--efforts to find private donors and supporters had failed, so that Plan B was quickly worked out. The result testifies to an acute and ongoing struggle for survival here in which an artist who, like Flavien, works between media and hence in a form that is scarcely commercially viable, has to engage.

Flavien's sociopolitically oriented, psychologically interpreted architecture with strong influences from South American architects works between art and architecture, function and autonomy. Just as Arakawa and Gins assumed that a space has a direct influence on the bodies and psyches of its occupants, *F l a v i e n* transfers inner psychological states to his architecture when building homes for two people or, as in Hannover, proposing an inaccessible building. The title *D e s c r i p t i o n o f a S t r u g g l e* is taken from Franz Kafka's first short story of 1903-07. One can understand Flavien's architecture as an expression of frustration with the impenetrable and withheld. The building has a shell with a complicated floor plan inside; one can see into it from out-



side through windows but it is not really transparent. On the front sides, there is a short plateau, and the back is sealed off by hermetic drywall. This introversion contrasts with an almost idyllic light in the interiors, which results from the dispersion of light by a ceiling grate placed on top--a weave of rebar and orange-red and green plastic construction mats--that can trigger associations of South Seas light beneath palm fronds. The outer walls have a brownish zone near the floor that is cloudily spray-painted in white and evoke the appearance of a building that was abandoned in an unfinished state and is perhaps still under construction. *Description of a Struggle* thus also becomes a symbol of the isolation of artists that has recently been made worse by the coronavirus crisis--a blend of hermitage and Tropicália, between forced and voluntary isolation.

VI. How to Survive: The Exhibition

With Fridays for Future and the current coronavirus crisis, the theme of this project has become unexpectedly topical. At the same time, it required great flexibility from the artists and the curatorial team to produce an exhibition that makes sense visually and in terms of content. In a summer during which the president of the United States denied the pandemic, before falling ill himself in the autumn, this means that the majority of the invited American artists will not be able to come, nor will works that are stored in the United States.

The same is true of the lecturers (p. 91) who wanted to appear live, such as Zairong Xiang, who is a professor in Potsdam and since last summer also teaches in Kunshan, China, who will now offer a live lecture online, and such as Kōki Tanaka, who cannot travel from Japan, and the artists Elizabeth Jaeger und Berenice Olmedo as well as the curators Miwako Tezuka of the Reversible Destiny Foundation, New York, and Ula Dajerling and Leanne Dmyterko of the Gustav Metzger Studio, who would have accompanied the presentation of the works. Private collectors who no longer wished to allow art shippers into their homes during the coronavirus crisis; gallery employees who are stuck in temporary work or in lockdown, transport costs that are becoming astronomically high--all of these were other phenomena that affected the entire art world--as well as safeguarding one's own health and that of coworkers.

This exhibition is an excerpt from a large set of themes and shows that art today has not yet abandoned the question of how it can contribute to our survival. Even if the concept of utopia has long since ceased to apply here, this is good news. As

can be seen from the new attention to politically engaged art by the likes of Thomas Hirschhorn, Theaster Gates and Christoph Schlingensief, this is being accepted by society as well. At the same time, these artists stand for passionate aesthetic demands that they formulate for society. This possible commitment to society and cultural policy is currently experiencing a new urgency and energy, which will, one hopes, pull exhibiting institutions along with it.

VII. Take Care:

Curating and Preserving in Times of Crisis

It is astonishing that several artists who have made their activities reality without gallery representation or commercial success represent some of the most important positions that have had consequences for the institutional critique of museums. Michael Asher and Gustav Metzger are just two examples of artists who have asserted themselves as autonomous and resistant to the art market. At the same time, it seems as if this freedom allows them to raise the fundamental questions without regard to the production of salable products. If in Asher's case the theme was looking at the spaces, at the supposedly neutral white cube whose ideology he exposed, in Metzger's they were the destruction of the environment, the commercialisation of art and misguided technologising. Not so much as the ideal, hyperflexible creative people that artists have been said to be since neoliberalism,¹³ for as the autonomous and resistant they exemplify artists who design society despite that or precisely for that reason.

This autonomy continues to exist in Germany in institutions such as the arts societies and museums, which have their origins in the Enlightenment, but they are rarely perceived by the institutions themselves and are frittered away between populist demands and political rollercoasters. The survival of museums in Germany depends not only on clarifying their own confusion about competition with social media and blockbusters that create publicity but also on how the struggles over the distribution of federal, state and municipal funds evolve and what agenda of cultural policy and self-empowerment the institutions adopt.¹⁴

Museums ought to help support the relevant artistic strategies, especially during a crisis. *H o w t o S u r v i v e* reveals, first, that there is an art historical line from the late 1950s to the present and, second, how we can profit from the unique quality of fine art to think differently from how we are accustomed to and able to. Without wishing to pursue

the myth of the artist genius, the goal should be to recognised and advocate that artists are not just seismographs of phenomena of society as a whole and of the world. An artist's work is instead relevant when it formulates these phenomena in a different, unexpected, provocative, poetic way and thus reveals paths other than the dominant rationalised and unimaginative ones. Ultimately, we end up again with an idealistic idea of art that I do not wish to abandon, but which at least since the discussion of the provocations of the likes of Ai Weiwei is once again at the centre of the debates.

Communal tasks and social and political commitment are acknowledged by artists: for example, several of the artists participating in this exhibition, such as Elizabeth Jaeger and An-My Lê, took part in the fundraising campaigns for hospital workers in New York. The authors of the catalogue texts refer, first, to the astonishing strategies the artists developed for coping with illnesses (Fiona McGovern) and, second, to a new sustainability that can also consist of respecting one another, *in c u r a r e* (Lat. "to care for"), which is the basis for curating (Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez). That is true not only of the care for art but also more broadly for the role of the art world and the institutions which can gain more significance by implementing sustainability.

The form of this catalogue follows loosely the model of the *K o n z e p t K u n s t* catalogue of the Kunstmuseum Basel from 1972--at that time, the texts were written on typewriters, and the typography of the artists' contributions was adopted as they authors had designed it. Today, returning to it contributes to reflection on the significance, lavishness and effect of art catalogues. Are texts still read today when they are published in a black-and-white "print-on-demand" edition that is more photocopied than printed? Can the art industry provide a return on capital without lots of illustrations of the artworks produced, or does that make art unattractive? Or does that make it in turn more attractive in Pierre Bourdieu's sense, since it asserts an intellectual surplus value that can be turned into capital? The result will lie somewhere in the middle, just as the fruits of this exhibition--so I hope--will lie in numerous encounters between works of art and perceivers and in inspirations by artistic contributions and by the participants thinking ahead aesthetically how the next crisis, whether personal, social, or global, will be mastered.

- 1 Jorge Luis Borges, "Blindness", *Seven Nights*, trans. Eliot Weinberger (New York: New Directions, 1984), p. 107-21, esp. pp. 120-21.
- 2 Greta Thunberg gave her speech at the United Nations Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019. For a transcript, see <https://blogs.fu-berlin.de/bibliotheken/2019/09/>, last visited: 16 October 2020.
- 3 The model of this monument, made simply of staples, was published in the *Daily Express* of 15 March 1960 with a brief article on Gustav Metzger. See exhibition catalogue Gustav Metzger, *Geschichte Geschichte*, ed. Sabine Breitwieser, Generali Foundation, Vienna 2005, n.p.
- 4 Exhibition catalogue *Funeral for Bioengineering to Not to Die - Early Works* by Arakawa Shusaku, Osaka 2010.
- 5 See the photographs on p. 57 for how these sculptures were produced. *La Ronde* was initially conceived as a wall object, but for reasons of conservation it is now presented lying on the floor like other works in this series.
- 6 Jan Ebara, "Shusaku Arakawa: Artist Overcoming the Craze," in: exhibition catalogue Arakawa Shusaku, Art Gallery Mudo Garo, Tokyo, 1961, quoted in Koji Takahashi, "Introduction: Forming space; an Attempt to Trace the Development of Motifs in the Works of Shusaku Arakawa," in: exhibition catalogue *Constructing the Perceiver: ARAKAWA; Experimental Works*, Matsuzakaya Art Museum, 1992, p. 299-312, esp. p. 301. For the comparison to Marcel Duchamp and on craziness cf. Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Reserve of Spatial Events", in: *ibid.*, p. 323-327, p. 326.
- 7 Koji Takahashi, *ibid.*, esp. pp. 308f.
- 8 "We", 2012, directed by Nobu Yamaoka.
- 9 On the continuities of the political situation in the election campaigns of Richard Nixon and Donald Trump, 1968 and 2020 respectively, cf. Willi Winkler, "Schläger in Uniform", in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25.08.2020.
- 10 Cf. Thomas Macho, *Das Leben nehmen: Suizid in der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main 2017.
- 11 Manfred Schneckenburger, "Plastik als Handlungsform", in: *Kunstforum* 34, no. 4 (1979): p. 20-31,.
- 12 <https://www.skulptur-projekte-archiv.de/de-de/2017/projects/201/>, last visited: 16 October 2020.
- 13 Exhibition catalogue *STREIK*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster 2003, <https://www.westfaelischer-kunstverein.de/ausstellungen/archiv/2003/streik/>, last accessed: 4 December 2020. Also exhibition catalogue *Arbeit Essen Angst*, Kokerei Zollverein, Essen 2001.
- 14 Eleven applications were submitted for this project; of those, one was for federal funding (negative), one for state funding (positive), five to foundations for international exchange (one negative, four positive), three to private foundations (two negative, one positive), two to private donors (one negative, one positive).

Integrating Crisis into Artistic Work.

(Breast) Cancer as Subject Matter in Visual Art

Fiona McGovern

The Vulnerable Body

"I am convinced that of all expressions of transience, the human body is the most vulnerable," wrote Polish-born artist Alina Szapocznikow, who lived in Paris for a long time, in her probably most well-known 1972 text *The Roots of my Work*. She goes on to say the human body was "the only source of all joy, all suffering and all truth because of its intrinsic awkwardness, which we try in vain to suppress in our consciousness."¹ At that point, her own body was already a sick body. Breast cancer was first suspected in 1968--one year later, she received the diagnosis. Shortly afterwards, she began the series *Tumeurs* ("Tumours") on which she kept working until 1971. These cluster-like objects of varying sizes consisted of a mixture of newsprint covered in polyester, gauze bandages and photographs that Szapocznikow merged into various constellations of *Tumeurs*, among them *Envahissement des Tumeurs* (1970), *Layered Tumeurs II* (1970-71) as well as *Tumeurs personnifiées* (1971), modulated after face casts of the artist. The *Tumeurs* were presented directly on the floor, which made them themselves into vulnerable objects.

Since the early 1960s, Szapocznikow had experimented with prints of individual body parts in various materials. The fragmentary nature of these objects puts them in context with surrealism. Through the indexical reference to a specific body they also were, as Cornelia Butler pointed out, in contrast to the anonymised norms of beauty in modernist art.² In her aforementioned text, Szapocznikow refers to them as 'strange objects', a description seized upon many times over.³ And yet her *Tumeurs*, except for the *Tumeurs personnifiées*, appear to be less imprint than externalisation, as if only through becoming objects, they become tangible and manageable. This interpretation is supported through photographs taken outdoors in 1970, showing the artist amidst the *Envahissement des Tumeurs*, at one time arranging them, at another sitting on them, at times among them and at one time posing with a tumour on her head. The image conveyed through this, that of an active, good-humoured artist



Alina Szapocznikow with her work "Envahissement de Tumeurs (Invasion of Tumours)", 1970, in her Malakoff studio, France, 1970

Courtesy The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr Stanislawski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris

Inv. No. ASDOC2791

at one with her work, stands in contrast with the threatening nature of the depicted work's title. The word *E n v a - h i s s e m e n t* ("invasion") echoes what often happens in the linguistic description of cancer: the formation of an analogy of invasive, brute force, as it is known from warfare, for instance.

In her 1978 essay *I l l n e s s a s M e t a p h o r*, Susan Sontag examined this phenomenon and, not least based on her own experiences, made the argument for a fundamental recognition of cancer as an *i l l n e s s*. Szapocznikow, with the *T u m e u r s*, gives this illness a shape that makes use of a formlessness while still assuming a concrete form, which makes it into an irrevocable fact and direct counterpart. Whether the "A happy 1970 to you Alina Szapocznikow", as written on one of the *T u m e u r s*, is meant encouragingly or ironically, remains unanswered. Just like the artist, for most of her life, refused to talk about the horror of the concentration camps, which she witnessed as a child in Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald and Theresienstadt, she spoke little about her cancer and the pain involved. That she had a mastectomy in 1972, meaning one of her breasts had been removed, is for instance mainly conveyed in a letter to fellow artist Annette Messager, composed in comic style. In it, she depicts herself lying on her sick bed with a large scar on her left upper body. Speech bubbles reveal that she is suffering from great pain yet at the same time is still capable of noticing the doctor's charm.⁴

Symbolically, Alina Szapocznikow had already laid herself and her work on the *Tumeurs* to rest two years earlier in the relief-like mural *L ' E n t e r r e m e n t d ' A l i n a* ("The Burial of Alina"). On a black background, next to glass wool, wood and photographs of friends and family members, her own clothes are moulded into an only vague anthropomorphous form covered in tumours. According to one source, her symptoms had abated in the meantime.⁵ Subsequently, direct traces of the traumas pervading her life can be found in her work. On one hand, the series of so-called *F é t i c h e* came into being, mostly lamp-like constructs characterised, like previous works, by a recurring breast motif, on the other the series of *S o u v e n i r s*, a variation of the *T u m e u r s*, in which she now explicitly broaches, with the help of photographic material, the subject of the Nazi past and her experiences in the concentration camps. She showed the works formerly named *T u m e u r s p e r s o n n i f i é e s* in 1971 under the new title in the Geneva Galerie Aurora and thus dealt with her

own bodily deterioration as a theme.⁶ She died, after suffering from sustained paralysis, of bone cancer in 1973.⁷

From today's perspective, it may be conspicuous that the works mentioned, in spite of the possible near-parallelism with the artist's personal medical history, did not take a separate place among her complete works during her lifetime but rather appear naturally integrated in it. One reason for this will be the naturalness with which Szapocznikow dedicates herself especially in the latter years to aspects of sickness and trauma in her art, another being that the depiction of breast cancer only increasingly became subject of art-historical analyses over the course of the following decades.

(Breast) Cancer as Subject Matter in Fine Art

Szapocznikow's *Tumors* coincide with the emergence of feminist-influenced self-help groups for women with breast cancer, which were based around solidarity and voluntary mutual support.⁸ Also, the search for an adequate imagery of one's own cancer that became more and more prominent over the following two decades is derived from the idea of "help for self-help" and partially involves a clear activist concern - without the artists concerned necessarily knowing of or referencing each other explicitly. At the beginning of the 1980s, four years after her breast cancer diagnoses and frustrated with the academic medical apparatus, the British photographer Jo Spence, for instance, began to seek alternative ways of treatment. She documented this process in the photo series *The Picture of Health?* (1982-86), which toured various cities around Great Britain as part of a travelling exhibition and thereby raised crucial awareness. As she points out in her autobiography *Putting Myself in the Picture*, this was accompanied by the wish to gain more control over one's own body.⁹ When Spence became ill with leukaemia a few years later, it changed her method of presentation. The self-therapy approach was replaced with an examination of one's own mortality. With the help of Spence's partner David Roberts as well as Terry Dennett, the *Final Project* (1991-91) was created, which aimed to free the taboo-ridden subject of death from the taboos it still has in the West. For this, Spence employed various seemingly allegorical props in the style of the Mexican death cult and worked with overlays, also of previous photographs. The production of new photographs no longer seemed appropriate to her under the circumstances.¹⁰



Alina Szapocznikow, Untitled, 1971-1972,
Ballpoint on paper, 29.5 x 21 cm
Courtesy The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris / Hauser & Wirth
Inv. No. ASCL592

At a similar time, in 1986, the American artist Nancy Fried began a series of terracotta torsos of women who had one breast removed through cancer operations. She herself had decided not to wear a breast prosthesis after her own mastectomy and had subsequently made the case for conveying an image of the female body that displays its dis_ability in a self-confident way.¹¹

Even more attention was attracted by the photographs of her relatively well-established contemporary Hannah Wilke. Wilke, especially at the beginning of her career, saw herself confronted with accusations of narcissism due to the inclusion of her body, which was considered particularly attractive. When in the 1970s, she began to record her mother's hospitalisations, who was ill with breast cancer, it therefore appeared like a big contrast. Wilke hoped that in this way, she could keep her alive and like Spence attributed a therapeutic function to photography.¹² Some of these photographs subsequently became part of the works *So Help Me Hannah Series: Portrait of the Artist with Her Mother, Selma Butter* (1978-81) as well as *In Memoriam, Selma Butter (Mummy)* (1979-83). They bear witness to a great intimacy between mother and daughter and give a very life-affirming impression of the portrayed sick person. When Wilke herself was diagnosed with cancer in 1987, as a consequence of which she underwent chemotherapy, she began, likewise in collaboration with her husband Donald Goddard, her project *Intra-Venus* (1987-83) that stretched across six years in total. The work comprises drawings, watercolours, objects, a two-hour video and a series of life-sized photographs that give a very direct impression of the treatment's effects. In the latter, she puts, as in previous photographs, her by now clearly weakened body, largely naked apart from plasters and cannulae in typically female considered poses that borrow from the Virgin Mary to pornography.¹³ *Intra-Venus* was shown for the first time at the New York Gallery Roland Feldman Fine Arts in 1994, one year after Wilke's death. These photographs in particular caused Amelia Jones to speak of the artist's "radical narcissism". In contrast to Lucy Lippard's criticism for instance, according to which Wilke uses her art for seduction purposes and thereby confounds her role as "beautiful woman" and artist, Jones interprets just this blending of roles as an uncompromising and self-determined exhibition of the artist's body.¹⁴ In this respect, Wilke's last big project can be understood less as a break with her previous work than as a consistent continuation and, at the same time, its conclu-

sion. Already in a statement in 1985, she pointed to the fact that people held her to account for the "bullshit of, 'What would you have done if you weren't so gorgeous?' What difference does it make?". For her, however, death did not make a difference in this regard: "Gorgeous people die as do the stereotypical 'ugly'. Everybody dies."¹⁵

Pathologies and their Potential for Identification

Both Spence and Wilke created images with their "final projects" that stick in one's mind. They are images that, though their immediacy, may shock initially. At the same time, they are images offering potential for identification. The American poet, writer and author Audre Lorde for instance recorded in her *C a n c e r J o u r n a l s*, published in 1980, that before her own mastectomy, she would cave in on herself in front of images of women with only one breast and corresponding surgery scars, yet those same images afterwards no longer seeming strange or frightening to her.¹⁶ She published her cancer diaries first and foremost because she, as a "post-mastectomy woman" believed that the feelings of women having these experiences had to be given a voice in order to be acknowledged, respected and helpful to others.¹⁷ According to Lorde, women with mastectomies have to become visible to each other, as powerlessness is accompanied by invisibility and silence. To her, her diary entries exemplify the process of integrating the crisis into her life¹⁸ - in this case, the life of a black, lesbian feminist and mother seeing herself as a "warrior poet". Shortly before the publication of the *C a n c e r J o u r n a l s*, the first images of the post-mastectomy body, accompanied by major debates, began circulating in the US to much public attention and to be used to enlarge the canon of accepted beauty. In 1977, Hella Hammid drew attention with her highly staged photograph of the poet Deena Metzger, showing her with arms wide open and naked upper body, the scar from her breast operation decorated with a tattoo. With the New York Times magazine cover in the middle of the 1990s, that is, after Spence and Wilke's photo series, featuring the self-portrait of the model Matuschka (*B e a u t y O u t o f D a m a g e*, 1994) taken after her breast operation, a post-mastectomy image with a positive connotation appeared in the US mass media for the first time.¹⁹ Only in the last ten years, however, would photographs like these also reflect a diverse image of women.²⁰

In 2018, a study published by Raffaella Bianucci and Antonio Perciaccante opened up a new perspective on the pictorial tradition of breast cancer. In it, two Renaissance oil paintings,

T h e N i g h t by Michele di Rodolfo del Ghirlandaio (between 1553 and 1555) and T h e A l l e g o r y o f F o r t i t u d e (1560-62) by his Florentine contemporary Maso da San Friano are put forward as pictorial evidence for the existence of what commonly is thought of as a modern disease. In a similar way, the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation, making the comparison on their website between historic paintings such as Rembrandt's B a t h s e b a a t h e r B a t h (1654) with a contemporary re-enactment in order to point to the fact that the shadow on Bathseba's left breast shows the typical features of breast cancer.²¹ Therefore, within this embedding in art history resonates the wish to rid the disease as such of taboos and literally confront it with the individual fates of centuries-old 'role models'.

The Art to Live as Art to Die

In I l l n e s s a s M e t a p h o r , Susan Sontag resists the knee-jerk reaction between cancer and death. In view of today's medical possibilities and methods of early detection, her concern can be even more agreed with. But the disease still requires many an affected person to have an intensive confrontation with their mortality and with the impact on their lives. While Szapocznikow staged her funeral and, with it, her survival and Jo Spence as well as Hannah Wilke concluded their artistic résumés with artistic works clearly defined as 'last projects', the American film-maker Barbara Hammer increasingly advocated for an end of her own choice and with it, as she put it, a dignified death. An impressive testimonial of this is the Lecture Performance T h e A r t o f D y - i n g (P a l l i a t i v e A r t M a k i n g i n t h e A g e o f A n x i e t y) that Hammer conducted in October 2018 after three previous, each slightly varying versions, in its final version at the Whitney Museum in New York in front of a visibly moved public. "The art of dying," her central statement here, "is the same as the art of living." Hammer sees mortality not as threat but as a source of vitality. Shying away from a confrontation with death would only lead to the dissemination of platitudes as expressed in empty phrases like "You'll get better," "You'll beat it" or "You look good today". She cites the case of artist David Wojnarowicz, who died of AIDS, as an example of the enormous strength and joy that can be released by being conscious of the imminent end. Hammer is convinced that art can make a difference. It is important to her to understand that, even though there are without a doubt difficult times, she is not "fighting for surviv-

al" but l i v i n g with cancer. At the same time Hammer, who throughout her life thought of herself decidedly as a lesbian film-maker, talks of a "coming out as being ill" that luckily can be seen more and more often among artists in recent times and points to the fact that by now several organisations have dedicated their work more intensely to the themes of health, illness, death and dying. Under the keyword of the age of uncertainty and worry that her title provides, she locates pain in a wider social context, among the causes of which she ranks, among others, sexism, racism, classism and ageism. Following this, she reveals, with reference to various examples from her artistic career, the central principles of her work method. It has almost romantic connotations and at the same time sounds completely convincing to hear her speak in this context of openness and passion for one's work as well as of acting independently of the market.

The Lecture Performance is part of Hammer's carefully thought-through and organised departure, part of which is, aside from the archiving and digitisation of her body of work and the establishment of two scholarship programmes promoting queer film, also her so-called exit interview. She gave it together with her long-time partner Florrie Burke in February 2019 in *The New Yorker* magazine, only weeks before her death. Just like the statements she makes in the interview, which quickly spread through various channels, the self-confidence of her demeanour is impressive. Hammer jokes and thanks the guests - not before she changes the Q & A into an A & Q and instead of answering the audience's questions, asks them questions with regards to her themes.

She had made her ageing body, sick with ovarian cancer, repeatedly the subject of her video works since her diagnosis. For Hammer, the trigger for *A Horse Is Not a Metaphor* (2008) was, even well over fifteen years after Wilke's *Intra-Venus*, a lack of filmic images depicting the effect of chemotherapy on the body. Through the juxtaposition of images from the hospital and of her on a horse ranch, she shows--in a different way from Wilke--her long-term, self-caring handling of the illness. This prompted Ara Osterweil to develop the understandable yet pugnacious thesis that Hammer's self-description as "lesbian film-maker" becomes secondary in this case as instead of the lesbian, a queer interpretation of the sick, ageing body is paramount here. Accordingly, she calls the film "an undisguised bit of activism, a frank plea for survival, and an everyday chronicle of what a person must endure, regardless how they imagine themselves."²²



Film still from Barbara Hammer's "A Horse Is Not a Metaphor",
2008, transferred from 16mm film, colour, black and
white, sound by Meredith Monk, 29:41 minutes
Courtesy the estate of Barbara Hammer and KOW, Berlin

Hammer's last extensive video work *E v i d e n t B o d - i e s* (2018) is a three-channel installation and was created in direct collaboration with the cellist N. Scott Johnson. It evolved from a live performance from two years before, in which images from Hammer's previous works (*S a n c t u s*, 1990, *C h e s t X - R a y s*, 2015 and *B l u e P a i n t F i l m S c r o l l*, 2005) were projected onto her body. This body represents not only proof of ageing and the impact and consequences of illness but also Hammer's eloquent handling of it. The title of this work was also the title of the only retrospective during her lifetime, that was shown from the autumn of 2017 until January 2018 at the Leslie Lohman Museum for Gay & Lesbian Art in New York.

Sick Women* Theories

Hammer largely abstains from having a discursive embedding of her deliberations in her Lecture Performance. Her emphasis on life not despite but *w i t h* illness though echoes starting points that on the one hand, have been and are addressed within the framework of the debates surrounding the dignified depictions of people with AIDS and on the other, within the context of the so-called Disability Justice Movement. For instance, Carolyn Lazard, in their 2013 text *H o w t o b e a P e r s o n i n t h e A g e o f A u t o i m m u n - i t y* revealed their own experiences with chronic illness, which also entails being unable to work for long periods of time.²³ Three years later, Johanna Hedva published *S i c k W o m a n T h e o r y*, in which they understand the "woman" in the title as the "strategic, all-encompassing embrace and dedication to the particular, rather than the universal", which still represented "the un-cared for, the secondary, the oppressed, the non-, the un-, the less-than" and which thereby deviates strongly from an essentialist interpretation.²⁴ Like Lazard, Hedva also focusses on life with illness--a life that, in contrast to Hammer's case, currently does not have an immediate foreseeable end. The fact that in the spring of 2020 both texts are in greater circulation again in the wake of the corona pandemic and especially discussed under the keyword 'care'²⁵ shows once again that their demands for greater circumspection and other forms of accessibility have not lost any of their relevance.²⁶

Similarly characteristic are the recourses to the AIDS pandemic triggered by COVID-19 and the comparison between the different forms of behaviour and the representation in the media of both viruses.²⁷ For instance, at the end of May 2020,

the N e w Y o r k T i m e s printed the names of the first 100,000 people to have died from COVID-19, adding, "They were not simply names on a list. They were us." In 1991, the first 100,000 people that died as a result of HIV were merely considered worth a news item, taken from another news agency and published on page 18 by the newspaper without pictures or names.²⁸ With regard to the photographic representation of people with AIDS, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power had already in the late 1980s called for an inclusion of the portrayed into their contexts as well as "the visibility of PWAs (People With AIDS) who are vibrant, angry, loving, sexy beautiful, acting up and fighting back."²⁹

Until now, Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens perhaps came closest to the implementation of this demand for the representation of people with (breast) cancer: in the exhibition *The Romantic Adventures of Beth Stevens, Annie Sprinkle and Breast Cancer*, shown in 2018 at the Art Gallery Arsenal in Poznań, Poland, they employed clear references to their 1970s and 1980s predecessors and contributed thereby to a stronger embedding and visibility of breast cancer as a subject matter in fine art. What is more, the slide show *Cancer Erotica*, shown herein, staged Sprinkle's illness as a collective, erotic adventure.³⁰ A group exhibition following shortly thereafter at the same gallery brought together artistic work with the themes HIV, AIDS and cancer under the title *Creative Sick States*. Its concern was to expose health as a fiction, as an ideal that never existed.³¹ In turn, it also makes the case for normalising illness and integrating it into social processes. Moreover, in the press release the sick are declared "the avant-garde of radical democracy, because it is the weakness that highlights the most systemic exclusions."³² The connections set forth between the different illnesses and disabilities in this exhibition therefore open up a possibility, which to me seems paradigmatic in recent approaches: consolidating concerns and struggles that have hitherto been largely discussed separately in order to raise awareness in and with art.

1 Exhibition catalogue Alina Szapocznikow, Bielefeld 2011, p. 27. The original French text was first printed posthumously in the exhibition catalogue *Tumeurs, Herbier, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris*, 1973. The relevant quote is: "(J)e suis convaincue que de toutes les manifestations de l'éphémère le corps humain est la plus vulnérable, l'unique source de toute joie, de toute souffrance et de toute vérité, à cause de son essentiel dénûment, et aussi inéluctable qu'inadmissible au niveau de la conscience." Quoted here from the facsimile reprint in: exhibition catalogue Alina Szapocznikow. *Sculpture Undone 1955-72*, Brussels/New York 2011, p. 28.

2 Cf. Cornelia Butler, "Soft Body/Soft Sculpture: The Gendered Surrealism of Alina Szapocznikow", in: exhibition catalogue Alina Szapocznikow. *Sculpture Undone 1955-72*, Brussels/New York 2011, p. 33-45, here p. 33.

3 Cf. for ex. Agata Jakubowska (ed.), Alina Szapocznikow. *Awkward Objects*, Warsaw 2011.

4 Cf. exhibition catalogue Alina Szapocznikow, Bielefeld 2011, p. 52f.

5 Cf. see Jola Cola "Alina Szapocznikow, Lebens- und Werkgeschichte", in: exhibition catalogue Alina Szapocznikow, Bielefeld 2011, pp. 97-112, here p. 108.

6 Cf. see Anda Rottenberg, "Personalization", in: Jakubowska 2011, pp. 103-112, here p. 103.

7 Cola 2011, p. 109.

8 Cf. <https://www.bcaction.de/bcaction/feminismus-und-brustkrebs/>, last accessed: 25.08.2020.

9 Jo Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture. A Political Personal and Photographic Autobiography*, London 1986, p. 208f.

10 Cf. Clarissa Jacob, Amy Tobin, "Considering Her Final Project", in: Jo Spence. *The Final Project*, London 2013, pp. 29-36, here p. 30.

11 The underscore in the spelling of "dis_ability" refers to the social construct of dis_ability and relates to a fundamental concern of disability activists. A central credo in this context is that people are not disabled but are "made disabled" by society. (The German equivalent 'Be_hinderung', contains the word 'hindern', meaning to impede, to obstruct).

12 Cf. Barbara Oetl, *Existentielle Grenzerfahrungen. Tabubruch als Strategie in der zeitgenössischen Kunst*, Bielefeld 2019, p. 75.

13 Ibid. p. 183.

14 Cf. Amelia Jones, "Intra-Venus and Hannah Wilke's Feminist Narcissism", in: exhibition catalogue Hannah Wilke. *Intra-Venus*, New York 1995, pp. 4-13 and p. 47, here p. 4f.

15 Marvin Jones et. al. interview with Hannah Wilke, "Hannah Wilke's art, politics, religion, and feminism," *The New Common Good* (May 1985), 11. Quoted here from: Amelia Jones, "The Rhetoric of Pose: Hannah Wilke and the Radical Narcissism of Feminist Body Art", in: by the same author: *Body Art. Performing the Subject*, London/ Minneapolis 1998, pp. 151-195, here p. 193.

- 16 Audre Lorde, *Cancer Journals* (London 1980), reprinted in: *The Audre Lorde Compendium. Essays, Speeches and Journals*, London: 1990, p. 61f.
- 17 Ibid. p. 3.
- 18 Ibid., p. 4 and 48.
- 19 Cf. Mary K. DeShazer, *Mammographies. The Cultural Discourse of Breast Cancer Narratives*, Michigan 2013, p. 30 and 119f.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 <https://www.breastcancerfoundation.org.nz/the-survivors-collection>, last visited: 25.08.2020.
- 22 Ibid. In this context, Osterweil also points out that while it was not a "grand piece of art", it was a courageous, deliberate and honest one.
- 23 Carolyn Lazard, "How to be a Person in the Age of Autoimmunity" (2013), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55c40d69e4b0a45eb985d566/t/58cebc9dc534a59fbdbf98c2/1489943709737/HowtobeapersonintheAgeofAutoimmunity+%281%29.pdf>, last visited: 25.08.2020.
- 24 Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory" (2016), <http://www.maskmagazine.com/not-again/struggle/sick-woman-theory>, last visited: 25.08.2020.
- 25 Please refer to Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, "An Attempt to Hold Everything Dear" in this publication.
- 26 Johanna Hedva authored, also in response to this, the text "Get Well Soon", which was published online in 2020 as part of the collaborative e-card project by Sam Lavigne and Tega Brain: <http://getwellsoon.labr.io>. I would like to thank at this point Nora Brünger and the seminar "Kunst in Quarantäne" ("Art in Quarantine"), which we taught together during the 2020 summer term at Hildesheim University and as part of which we discussed these texts.
- 27 Artists like AA Bronson, for example, were asked about their experiences with the AIDS crisis and how they perceive the corona pandemic in relation to it. <https://www.monopol-magazin.de/aa-bronson-aids-coronavirus>, last visited: 25.08.2020.
- 28 This juxtaposition attracted a lot of attention in the social media and also provided a source for me here.
- 29 Cf. Douglas Crimp, "Portraits of People with AIDS", in: by the same author, *Melancholy and Moralism. Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics*, Cambridge, Mass. / London 2002, pp. 85-107, here p. 87.
- 30 <http://www.arsenal.art.pl/en/exhibitions/romantyczne-przygody-annie-sprinkle-beth-stephens-i-raka-piersi/>, last visited: 25.08.2020. Many thanks to Hanne König for this reference.
- 31 See also the essay by Berenice Olmedo, p. 78-81.
- 32 <http://www.arsenal.art.pl/en/exhibitions/creative-sick-states/>, last visited: 25.08.2020.

An Attempt to Hold Everything Dear¹

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez

"I am a fruit of radical care, this is the way I could have survived in Brazil where each 23 minutes a young Black woman or man is killed", told us in June 2020 Fabiana Ex-Souza, an artist and researcher living in Paris. The sunset was offering us beautiful colours in the sky; we were in a picnic assembly with a group of artists within the context of a new Initiative for Practices and Visions of Radical Care, about which I talk further in this essay. We organised our first assembly, after a long period of confinement, under the trees in an urban garden of Paris. The lived experience of the confinement was very different from one person to another, we shared many surviving tactics and stories, and mostly talked about how difficult it is to project oneself in the near future.

In France, where I am living², and everywhere else, people are experiencing how the COVID-19 pandemic has been modifying the social, environmental, cultural, and political landscapes. Elísio Macamo wrote in April this year that "Covid-19 is a cruel reminder that crisis is us. As we brace up to look the pandemic in the eye, we would be well advised not to forget what our normal is, namely crisis. History has taught us that you do not master a crisis by setting the return to normality as your goal. You master a crisis by enabling yourself to act whatever the circumstances."³ The incitement #stayathome exposed the social inequalities and increased domestic violence in France⁴ and elsewhere that have existed before. Many minorities have been largely unable to stay at home throughout the lockdown because they make up a large proportion of the so-called essential workers: supermarket cashiers, security personnel, medical staff at the hospitals, public transport workers, truck drivers, postal workers, cleaners, delivery workers. As Françoise Vergès writes, they belong to "an entire humanity that the journalists and the scholars seemed to discover, the 'invisible ones', 'the little hands', 'the essentials'. The 'essentials' have been distinguished from 'the essential' expressing itself sentimentally and permitting the elimination of any inequalities, calling for a return of 'true values' completely separated from the conditions in which millions

of people are living, and ignoring practices of groups and communities who have managed to emancipate themselves from the consumerist economy by developing modes of living, eating and caring based on ancestral knowledge."⁵

The proposed concept of the life before as representation of a certain norm and the life after as something that is going to be modified into something that is more careful and sensible, however does not match the reality: "Life before 17 March (official beginning of the confinement in France) has nothing that would be worth accepting it as a norm - structural racism, economic violence, contempt regarding the class issues, state and civilizational feminism, islamophobia, anti-migrant laws."⁶ Whatever was happening here or there was never normal anyway.⁷

In a similar way, Achille Mbembe wrote during early spring-time and just a few weeks before George Floyd's murder in Minnesota that intensified the Black Lives Matter protests on a planetary scale, on universal right to breathe. For him as well, nothing was ever normal before COVID-19 that attacks violently the respiratory tract: "humanity was already threatened with suffocation. If war there must be, it cannot so much be against a specific virus as against everything that condemns the majority of humankind to a premature cessation of breathing, everything that fundamentally attacks the respiratory tract, everything that, in the long reign of capitalism, has constrained entire segments of the world population, entire races, to a difficult, panting breath and life of oppression. To come through this constriction would mean that we conceive of breathing beyond its purely biological aspect, and instead as that which we hold in common, that which, by definition, eludes all calculation. By which I mean, the universal right to breath."⁸

For the underprivileged, subaltern and indigenous identities in many previously colonised countries, survival throughout decades in the face of social and racial injustice has been identical to a form of love and caring received by their own communities. Writing about W.E.B. Du Bois' speculative fiction *The Comet* from the early 1920s, Saidiya Hartman expresses her vision of what love does as a survival technique: "Of all the things that love makes possible: eyes that see you, someone to hold your hand until the end, adore you even in your ugliness, kiss you a thousand times (...) even swing a knife for your love, risk it all for one last dance, exchange vows even when there isn't a chance in hell of being together, see heaven all in her eyes, carry a corpse-child through the dev-

astated city in search of him, miss her until it breaks you, not want anybody else to ever love you, the one thing it is not able to do is confer a legacy or guarantee a future. Y o u r l o v e i s a l l I n e e d--a beautiful lie, a necessary refrain that helps you survive in the meantime, experience tragedy after tragedy, endure another scene of grief, as if 'our love' was fortification and always enough."⁹ With this power of love in mind, I would like to turn to some visual artists--with histories or experiences of racism and discrimination--who have developed important caring practices that they intertwine within their artistic practices.

The way the artist Otobong Nkanga thinks of care that she mobilises through her work is in relation to breathing. In a recent interview, she claims: "In a perfect world, the act of breathing should not be detrimental to anyone's health, but in some parts of the world it can be. We have to realise that we are all breathing, but not all the same air,"¹⁰ referring to air pollution for example in Port Harcourt, Nigeria and Dhaka, Bangladesh. As with Mbembe, the question who is allowed to breathe and who is allowed to live in areas with clean air is predetermined on grounds of class and race. In this way the environmental racism manifests itself, and I c a n ' t b r e a t h e has become a global metaphor for social and environmental justice as much as it is a plea for racial justice. "Without care, the very land on which we live will be affected. Our bodies will be affected and the generations to come will inherit the ruins that fill the earth and the violence that comes with such acts."¹¹

The artist and researcher Fabiana Ex-Souza writes about her name change, reflecting a desire of liberation that creates conditions for survival: "I am born Fabiana De Souza in Brazil in 1980. In 2014, through a poetical-political process, I name myself Ex-Souza and understand this gesture as a dynamic of liberation. Of the characteristics of enslavement is depersonalisation that cuts an enslaved person from her/his parental relations. I am coming from a family that is entirely Afro descendant and I expose with this the violence that is inscribed in carrying a family name of Portuguese origin, furthermore the one which is the most common amongst the slave trader families."¹² Throughout her artistic work she incorporates care in the form of relations with her public, with the objects, with her family archives or exposes neglected chapters of decolonial artistic practices in Brazil. In her writings, she focuses on the notion of "I" in contrast to the researcher's neutral "we", conventionally employed especially in French academia. She un-

derstands it as a psychic protection, as a foundation from which she works towards liberation outside of spaces of coloniality.

As a curator and cultural worker who is inspired by such artistic positions, I feel the necessity to propose a transformed way of their understanding as being an important part of the social sector of care work. What would it mean if the artists and cultural workers of all disciplines who are working on caring practices would be valued in the societies in the Global North as if they belong to the above-mentioned category of essential workers? "Theorized as an affective connective tissue between an inner self and an outer world... a feeling with, rather than a feeling for others", care work, when mobilised, offers "visceral, material, and emotional heft to acts of preservation that span a breadth of localities: selves, communities, and social worlds. Reciprocity and attentiveness to the inequitable dynamics that characterize our current social landscape represent the kind of care that can radically remake worlds that exceed those offered by the neoliberal or postneoliberal state, which has proved inadequate in its dispensation of care".¹³ Such a proposal implies slowing down and situating our ways of working and being in the given context over longer periods and against the impetus of event-driven economy in the arts on the one hand. On the other hand, it understands artistic practices of care as continuous practices of mutual support among artists and their living or non-living material.

As a prolongation of such propositional thinking, in April 2020 we came together with the interdependent curator Elena Sorokina to form a new initiative that we call Initiative for Practices and Visions of Radical Care. It was born during the COVID-19 confinement as a response to an unprecedented situation and as a wish to relate our respective curatorial practices to the practices that deal with the issues of care in arts as a question of public health and legal work. Following Audre Lorde's writing and work, we understand "radical care" as both self-care and care for the others and one's own environment, which is necessary for collective survival within a world that renders some lives more precarious than others. The Initiative draws inspiration from the artists who have been involved in long-term caring practices on one hand, or from the ways in which the Indigenous communities have continued to maintain the importance of caring for each other and the earth. Our curatorial research happens in a collective manner with the existing and long-term developed artistic practices. Many of the artists that we work with come from diasporic and racialised communities, and some others have

a status of asylum seekers or refugees. Alongside Bruno Latour, we question ourselves on "what protective measures can we collectively think of so we don't go back to the pre-crisis production model?"¹⁴ Inspired by Angela Y. Davis' recent interview, we see care as fundamental to social change and social movements.¹⁵

As a sign of solidarity and mutual support, the Initiative self-organised the first act *No Straight Line*¹⁶ during the last days of confinement in France, in early May. The act was performed by the artist group Salonistas, artist Gaëlle Choisine and Ecole des Actes, an experimental performing arts institution that is bringing together and supporting financially groups of youngsters from different neighbourhoods and immigrants of younger generation who work with the artists and intellectuals. The school is located in Paris' economically poorest but culturally richest suburb town Aubervilliers, wherein, as well as in its surrounding suburb towns, lives a majority of "essential" and precarious workers who have been massively over-exposed during the confinement period. We invited artists living in or around Paris to draw lines in the public space of Paris during the confinement, between the centre of Paris and the Ecole des Actes in Aubervilliers. Every participant was invited to draw a segment of the line during their legally allowed walk of a distance of 1km in the public space, with material available at home, such as salt, flour, flowers, charcoal or any kind of removable organic pigment. In that way, a web of lines drawn over a period of a few days connected artists that would not necessarily meet in other circumstances, with the intention to draw attention to the precarious situation of Ecole des Actes.

We are extending the Initiative in time and situating it within the Paris metropole. We are currently inviting artists whose ongoing and long-term research and practices have been addressing the situation of ongoing crisis, to share with us how they are transforming or could transform their productivity and creativity into caring and forming solidarity around the most vulnerable and fragile ones in their direct or indirect neighbourhoods and communities. We see our curatorial practice transforming into a form of continuous support that vulnerable but so much life-giving artistic practices request and deserve. The Initiative opened its own radio programme on R22 Tout Monde experimental radio, where we hosted a debate about the contrast between hyper-sanitarisation and hyper-disciplinarisation of the public in the art institutions due to sanitary conditions, and the Black Lives Matter protests in public spaces that demand that bodies assemble in solidarity.¹⁷ What we also try to do,

is to expose how "whiteness tends to be visible to those who do not inhabit it", as Sara Ahmed puts it.¹⁸ We intend to use the self-reflexive position about our own white privilege in order to propose and enhance the intersectional methods of working in the hosting institutions, which are--in the places where we work--mostly white.

With neofascism acquiring greater visibility and power, intersectionality is a crucial framework for dismantling existing power structures of whiteness within institutions, and methods of working within artistic and curatorial practices. The term intersectionality, famously coined in 1989 by the law professor and theoretician Kimberlé Crenshaw, is defined as the view through which "women experience oppression in varying configurations and in varying degrees of intensity. Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Examples of this include race, gender, class, ability, and ethnicity."¹⁹ As Crenshaw sees it, "Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects."²⁰ Social equality and social justice are identified as intersectionality's central preoccupations. Practices of accountability, care, and mutual respect across individual positions should now be at the forefront of art institutional discourses. Institutions should work hard to realise intersectionality's political potential today, transforming themselves profoundly in the process.²¹ Practically speaking, within an institution an ecosystem is to be envisioned between curators, artists and others employees that is built on a relationship of care, solidarity, anti-racism and anti-sexism as an internal code of conduct and method of working within the teams and with the other collaborators. An understanding of the interdependency between the more and the less visible job positions, the more and the less decision-making job positions should be established as that fertile ground from which any artistic project supported by an institution can only benefit from. In what ways could these gestures be part of a larger re-thinking of the system of production, distribution and mutual solidarity in the field of contemporary art? I believe the proposals to address such questions are in the process of becoming also from the side of the art institutions and each individual component of them, and holding everything dear is the first step towards materialising those proposals. This exhibition is definitely one attempt, as is this short piece of writing. Thank you for your attention, take care, grow the care.

- 1 The inspiration and gratefulness come together in the title that refers to the profoundly humane book of John Berger, *Hold Everything Dear. Dispatches on Survival and Resistance*, London and New York: Verso, 2016 that the author wrote in early 2000s.
- 2 Instead of my biography, and following the suggestion of the decolonial feminist scholar Paola Bacchetta, who has written about the importance of situating oneself before beginning to write or speak, I will briefly situate myself: I am a white, Eastern European, cis, heterosexual woman from a mixed working- and middle-class family, born in the former Yugoslavia. I am able-bodied, but have had an autoimmune disease since childhood and was recently diagnosed with another chronic illness. I have a university degree and have been working in the arts for many years. As a child growing up in Slovenia, the northernmost part of the former Yugoslavian republics, I was affected by the racist remarks that children and adults--seemingly reasonable people--would make about the countries from which my father's family originates: Bosnia and Ukraine. In the white European imaginary today, these and many other neighbouring regions are aligned with the racialised territories of the Global South. In the Global North, I constantly receive comments about the Slavic accent noticeable in any of the foreign languages I speak. These comments range from exoticising to degrading.
- 3 Elísio Macamo, "The Normality of Risk: African and European Responses to Covid-19", in: *CoronaTimes.net*, 13 April 2020, <https://www.coronatimes.net/normality-risk-african-european-responses/>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 4 Hervé Hinopay, "A Delafontaine, les soignants sont 'au front sans armes'", in: *Bondyblog*, 13 April 2020, <https://www.bondyblog.fr/societe/sante/a-delafontaine-les-soignants-sont-au-front-sans-armes/>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 5 Françoise Vergès, "La Terre brûle, et partout les peuples se soulèvent", in: *Décoloniser les arts* (eds.), *Voix/Voies entravées. Percées émancipatrices*, *Tumultes*, nr. 54, June 2020, p. 173.
- 6 Françoise Vergès, *ibid*, p.178.
- 7 See e-book *What was happening here was never normal anyway*, *Versopolis Review*, August 2020, <http://www.versopolis.com>.
- 8 Original text by Achille Mbembe, "Le droit universel à la respiration", in: *AOC Media*, 6 April 2020, <https://aoc.media/opinion/2020/04/05/le-droit-universel-a-la-respiration/> (05.10.2020). English translation in *Mail Guardian*, June 24 2020, <https://mg.co.za/opinion/2020-06-24-achille-mbembe-the-universal-right-to-breathe/>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 9 Saidiya Hartman, "The End of White Supremacy, An American Romance", in: *Bomb*, 5 June 2020, <https://bombmagazine.org/articles/the-end-of-white-supremacy-an-american-romance/?fbclid=IwAR1iI8vHlU42J0OU7KUNFb7Wm2uXLCYqIbSgzE86L2IPNsSBKscFY5OS8jY>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 10 Eric Otieno, "'To care is a form of resistance'-on breathing, landscape and repair in the work of Otobong Nkanga", in: *Sleek Magazine*, 20 July 2020, <https://www.sleek-mag.com/article/otobong-nkanga-gropius-bau-breathing-landscape-repair/>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 11 *Ibid*.

- 12 Fabiana Ex-Souza, "De nous au je. Recherche artistique décoloniale", in: *Décoloniser les arts* (eds.), Voix/Voies entravées. Percées émancipatrices, Tumultes, nr. 54, June 2020, p.59. Translated by the author.
- 13 Hi'ilei Julia Kawehipuaakahaopulani Hobart and Tamara Kneese, "Radical Care. Survival Strategies for Uncertain Times", in: *Social Text* 142, vol. 38, No. 1, March 2020.
- 14 Bruno Latour, "What protective measures can you think of so we don't go back to the pre-crisis production model?", in: *Versopolis*, 24 April 2020, <https://www.versopolis.com/times/opinion/846/what-protective-measures-can-you-think-of-so-we-don-t-go-back-to-the-pre-crisis-production-model>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 15 Quoted in Hi'ilei Julia Kawehipuaakahaopulani Hobart and Tamara Kneese, *ibid.*
- 16 This first act emerged as one of the sister projects of the exhibition *Die Balkone*, organised by Övül Durmusoglu and Joanna Warsza in Berlin in April 2020: https://www.facebook.com/events/255137159190276/?active_tab=discussion.
- 17 <https://www.r22.fr/antennes/sollicitude-publique>.
- 18 Sara Ahmed, *Feminists at Work*, 10 January 2020, <https://feministkilljoys.com>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 19 Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics", in: *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (1989): 139-67.
- 20 "Kimberlé Crenshaw on Intersectionality, More than Two Decades Later", in: *Columbia Law School*, 8 June 2017, <https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality-more-two-decades-later>, last visited: 05.10.2020.
- 21 See Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, "Transforming Whiteness in Art Institutions", in: *e-flux journal*, no. 93 (September 2018), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/93/216046/transforming-whiteness-in-art-institutions/>, last visited: 05.10.2020.

Gustav Metzger

I, Gustav Metzger, am asking for your participation in this worldwide call for a Day of Action to Remember Nature on 4 November 2015. We appeal to arts professions from all disciplines to take a stand against the ongoing eraser of species. It is our privilege and our duty to be on the forefront of a struggle. There is no choice but to follow the path of ethics into aesthetics.

We live in societies suffocating in waste. Our task is to remind people of the richness and complexity in nature; to protect nature as far as we can. And by doing so arts will enter territories that are inherently creative.

We want you to respond creatively to this call and encourage others to participate also. The aim is to create a mass movement across the arts to ward off extinction.

Thank you.

("Remember Nature. A Day of Action", Video, 2:24 min, 2015, <https://remembernaturegustavmetzger.wordpress.com>, Courtesy of The Gustav Metzger Foundation and Estate)

AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Demonstration by G. Metzger

SOUTH BANK LONDON 3 JULY 1961 11.45 a.m.—12.15 p.m.

Acid action painting. Height 7 ft. Length 12½ ft. Depth 6 ft. Materials: nylon, hydrochloric acid, metal. Technique. 3 nylon canvases coloured white black red are arranged behind each other, in this order. Acid is painted, flung and sprayed on to the nylon which corrodes at point of contact within 15 seconds.

Construction with glass. Height 13 ft. Width 9½ ft. Materials. Glass, metal, adhesive tape. Technique. The glass sheets suspended by adhesive tape fall on to the concrete ground in a pre-arranged sequence.

AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Auto-destructive art is primarily a form of public art for industrial societies.

Self-destructive painting, sculpture and construction is a total unity of idea, site, form, colour, method and timing of the disintegrative process.

Auto-destructive art can be created with natural forces, traditional art techniques and technological techniques.

The amplified sound of the auto-destructive process can be an element of the total conception.

The artist may collaborate with scientists, engineers.

Self-destructive art can be machine produced and factory assembled.

Auto-destructive paintings, sculptures and constructions have a life time varying from a few moments to twenty years. When the disintegrative process is complete the work is to be removed from the site and scrapped.

London, 4th November, 1959

G. METZGER

MANIFESTO AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART

Man in Regent Street is auto-destructive.

Rockets, nuclear weapons, are auto-destructive.

Auto-destructive art.

The drop drop dropping of HH bombs.

Not interested in ruins, (the picturesque)

Auto-destructive art re-enacts the obsession with destruction, the pummelling to which individuals and masses are subjected.

Auto-destructive art demonstrates man's power to accelerate disintegrative processes of nature and to order them.

Auto-destructive art mirrors the compulsive perfectionism of arms manufacture—polishing to destruction point.

Auto-destructive art is the transformation of technology

into public art. The immense productive capacity, the chaos of capitalism and of Soviet communism, the co-existence of surplus and starvation; the increasing stock-piling of nuclear weapons—more than enough to destroy technological societies; the disintegrative effect of machinery and of life in vast built-up areas on the person...

Auto-destructive art is art which contains within itself an agent which automatically leads to its destruction within a period of time not to exceed twenty years.

Other forms of auto-destructive art involve manual manipulation. There are forms of auto-destructive art where the artist has a tight control over the nature and timing of the disintegrative process, and there are other forms where the artist's control is slight.

Materials and techniques used in creating auto-destructive art include: Acid, Adhesives, Ballistics, Canvas, Clay, Combustion, Compression, Concrete, Corrosion, Cybernetics, Dron, Elasticity, Electricity, Electrolysis, Electronics, Explosives, Feed-back, Glass, Heat, Human Energy, Ice, Jet, Light, Load, Mass-production, Metal, Motion Picture, Natural Forces, Nuclear energy, Paint, Paper, Photography, Plaster, Plastics, Pressure, Radiation, Sand, Solar energy, Sound, Steam, Stress, Terra-cotta, Vibration, Water, Welding, Wire, Wood.

London, 10 March, 1960

G. METZGER

AUTO-DESTRUCTIVE ART MACHINE ART AUTO CREATIVE ART

Each visible fact absolutely expresses its reality.

Certain machine produced forms are the most perfect forms of our period.

In the evenings some of the finest works of art produced now are dumped on the streets of Soho.

Auto creative art is art of change, growth movement.

Auto-destructive art and auto creative art aim at the integration of art with the advances of science and technology. The immediate objective is the creation, with the aid of computers, of works of art whose movements are programmed and include "self-regulation". The spectator, by means of electronic devices can have a direct bearing on the action of these works.

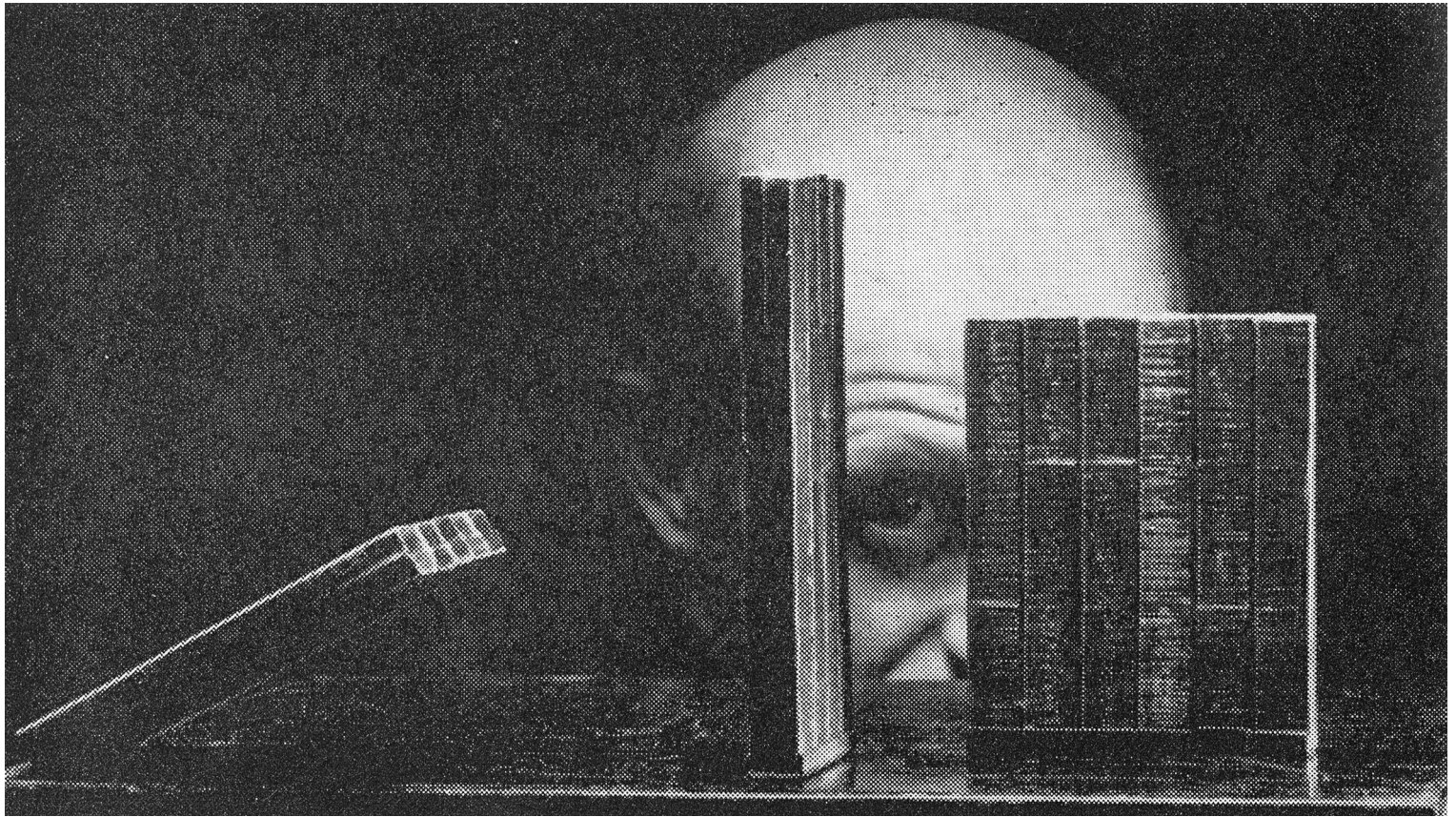
Auto-destructive art is an attack on capitalist values and the drive to nuclear annihilation.

23 June 1961

G. METZGER

B.C.M. ZZZO London W.C.1.

Printed by St. Martins' Printers (TU) 86d, Lillie Road, London, S.W.6.



REDUCE ART FLIGHTS

MÜNSTER

DIE ZWEITE BOMBARDIERUNG

16.06.2007

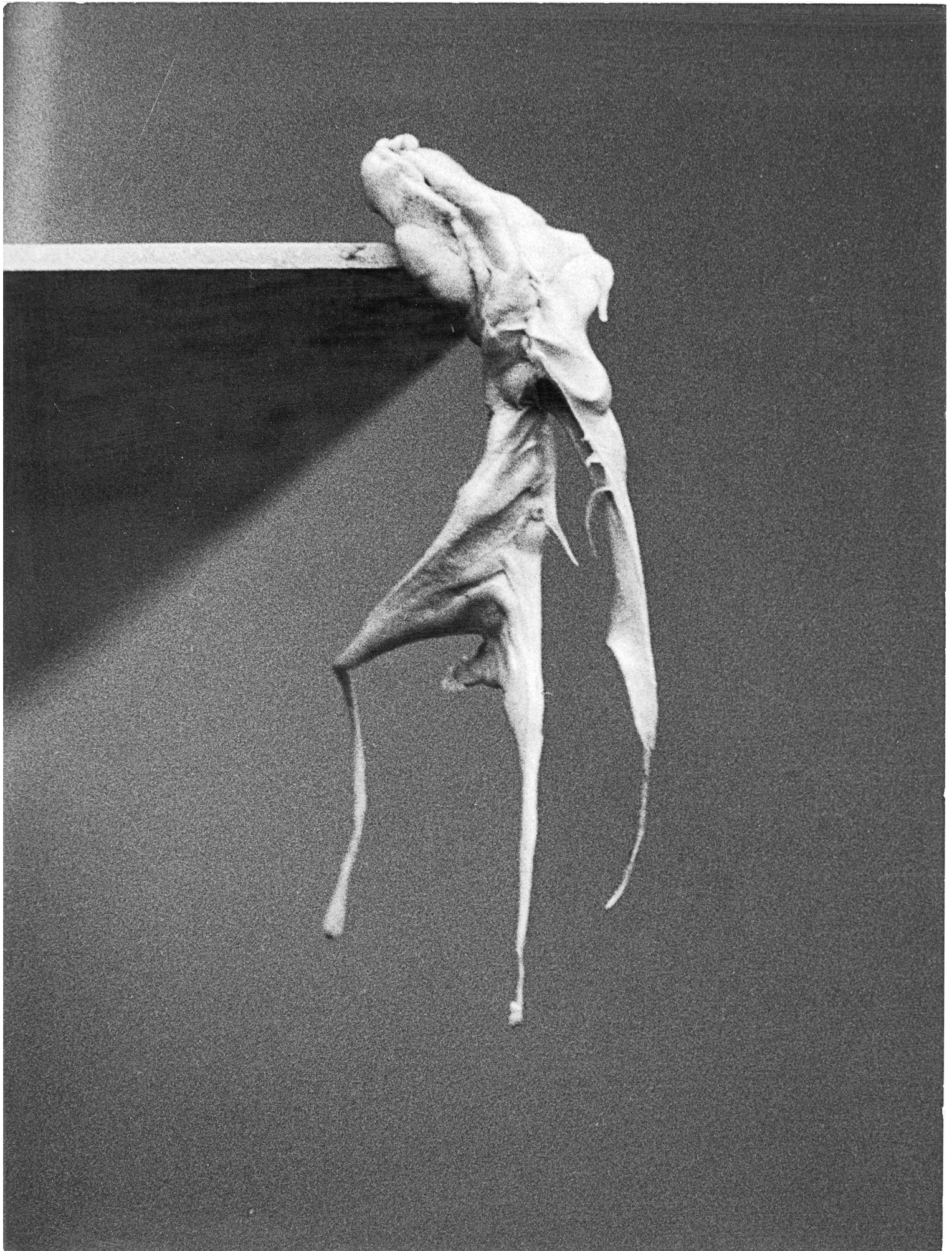
The other day, Saturday, tired from having spent hours polishing my Rolls-Royce in pink Portuguese marble, I sat in the sun and day-dreamed as I mechanically chewed a bit of gum.

In shaping with my mouth odd-looking and bizarre forms, I suddenly realized what an extraordinary collection of abstract sculptures was moving between my teeth.

One has only to photograph and enlarge my masticated creations in order to achieve a sculptural presence.

Chew well then. Look around you. Creation lies just between dreams and daily work.

92 Malakoff, 22 June 1971
Alina Szapocznikow



1926-1973

alina szapocznikow



tumeurs, herbier

musée d'art moderne de la ville de paris

11 avenue du président wilson, paris 16^e

8 mai - 3 juin 1973



PHOTOGRAPHIE: GÉRARD - 1973 - 1973



"You know, Arakawa and I found a new way to approach human life and to extend it. Unfortunately, everything that needed to be in place to realize our theory, our new science, is still coming about; and so when Arakawa's body, his organism, got into trouble, we couldn't do all that was necessary to keep him going. And I am very... very angry at the universe and the human society for being so slow that we couldn't have everything assembled to save Arakawa's existence last May.

So if you ask me how I am, I am very determined to continue the work, which is very, very necessary for this planet and for our poor species. And I am also very angry at the universe, because of what happened to Arakawa. But it proves to me that our species must pursue Reversible Destiny--we have no choice. The universe, such as it is, is heartless. But we construct ways to make it more possible, more kind, more directly useable for the intelligence that we live as. And we know that this is truly there--because if it weren't, I couldn't speak to you. This speaking is an expressing of the intelligence of this organism. That know how and knowing has for centuries been working alone. We have been put in different architectural situations that have been very indifferent to our existences. They have provided shelter, buildings and houses have provided shelter, but they haven't directly talked with the knowhow of the organism. But the procedural architecture, that Arakawa and I invented, converses with each organism, and guides it to be more open to its possibilities, more gentle in its considerations, more skillful at figuring out what's going on as a person. So I guess, that's--you ask me--how Madeline is now. Madeline is completely continuing the work of Arakawa and Madeline, and that is all I desire to do, to have time to do that."

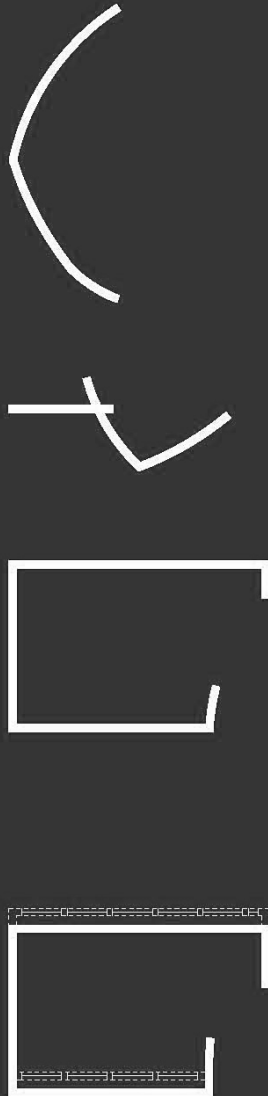
(Madeline Gins, Quote from "We", directed by Nobu Yamaoka, 2012, 65 min, min 49:00 to 53:00)



BIOSCLEAVE HOUSE – LIFE

WALL - CONFIGURATIONS

(INTERSECTING AND SYMMETRICALLY PAIRED)



NOT SIMPLY ABUTTING

AT THEIR ENDPOINTS

BUT INTERSECTING

ONE ANOTHER

AT VARIOUS POINTS ALONG

THEIR LENGTHS,

WALL-CONFIGURATIONS

HAVE THE SAME SEPARATE

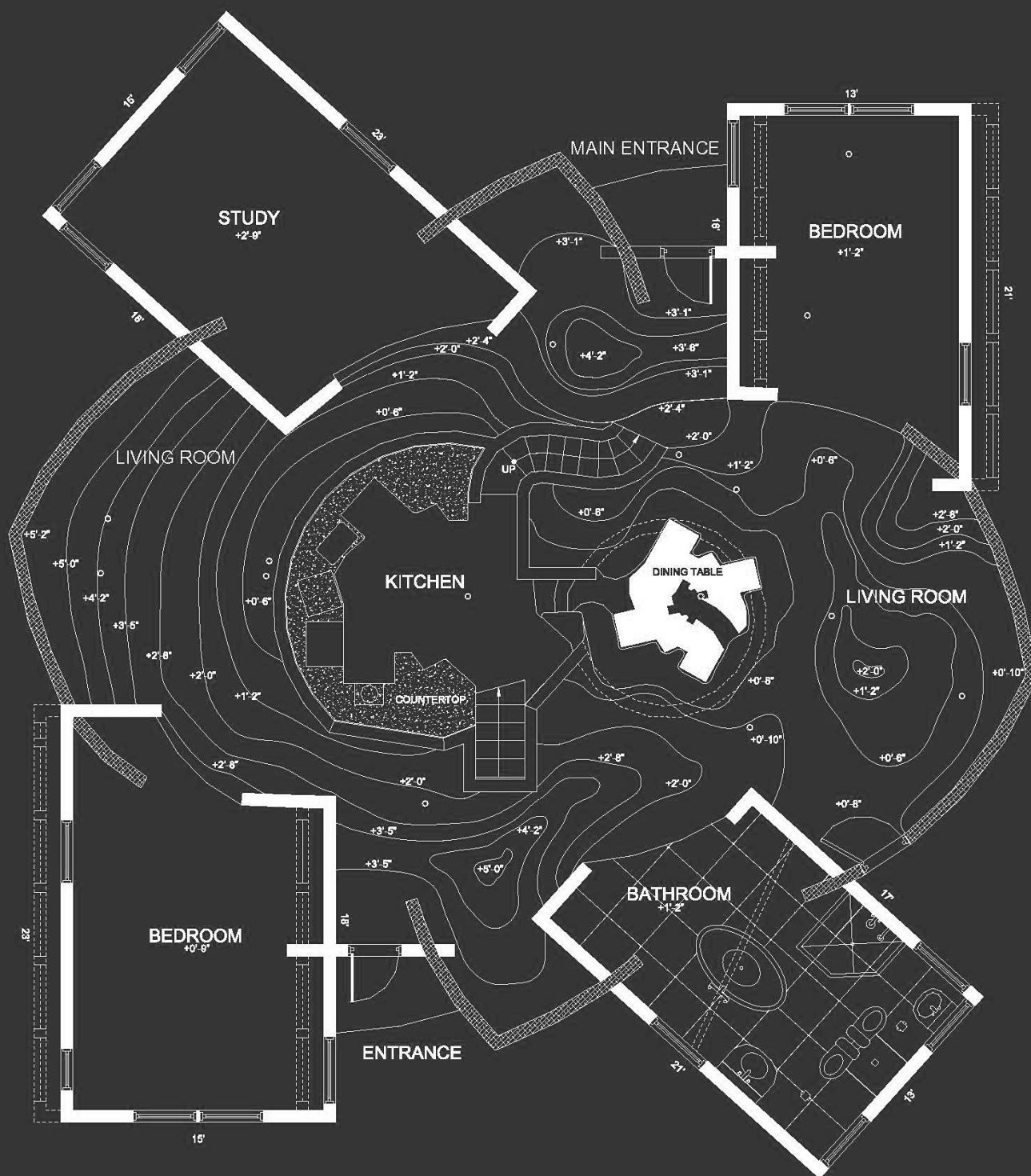
AND DISTINCT CHARACTER

IN THE BUILT WORK

THAT THEY HAVE IN PLAN.

COMPLETE SET OF SHAPE-DEFINING ELEMENTS

ESPAN EXTENDING VILLA



1999-2007

Mike Kelley

LIE WITH THE LION & LAMB, EAGLE & OX. FROM MY INSTITUTION TO
YOURS // LOVE. I AM IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE WORKERS. CLIMB OVER
THE RAMPART // BATTER DOWN THE DOOR // STEP ACROSS THE LINE //
THAT SEPARATES BROTHER & SISTER FROM BROTHER & SISTER. THIS IS
THE SIMPLE SHRINE OF TRUTH IN THE TEMPLE OF LIES. LOOK AROUND
YOU AND SEE YOUR ENEMIES // FALSE IMAGES!!!

ALL YOU OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES OF THIS COMPOUND OF INNOCENT
ANIMALPURITY . . . KISS UP TO THE PIG + CUDDLE THE SKUNK +
TONGUE THE VULTURE + GROOM THE LION + SERVICE THE MOUSE + BOW
TO THE CHIPMUNK + YOU WHO ARE THE RAT . . . POOR TIRED RAT
. . . POOR POOR TIRED RAT!

(Inscription from the installation "From My Institution to
Yours", 1987/2003)







I am preoccupied with the idea of 'coming home' because it applies to the type of fieldwork I do as a photographer as much as it is relevant to the experiences of the refugee and of the soldier. Ambiguity and contradictions and the conflict between expectation and memory are built into the experience of coming home for the refugee, the soldier, and for the photographer.

Whether it's a childhood abruptly ended or a violently murderous week-long siege during the battle of Khe Sanh, some of us are confronted with defining experiences that echo throughout our lives. One is compelled to create a story for oneself when returning home from such experiences as a way to come to terms with what has happened.

In attempting to construct a coherent narrative, one must negotiate a contentious and sometimes contradictory terrain, reconciling one's own experiences with the ideas and expectations of others. A personal equilibrium is reached between these two conceptions and within the larger scheme of things.

However, as a photographer I have a different relationship to memories than the refugee or the soldier. Through my work, there is a potential for the tangibility of memory. In allowing the way things look to be my major storytelling device I am able to take one pointed moment and raise pertinent questions about the larger issues involved.

My work is loosely about reconciling what I thought I was getting myself into and what is actually revealed to me in the field. It's not about taking a stand or exalting a specific cause. I'm satisfied in simply addressing these subjects: Vietnam, the military and the glamour of war, cultural and political history, and small subcultures. Photography is the perfect medium for conjuring up a sense of clarity (if not necessarily the truth) in the midst of chaotic and polarizing subjects.

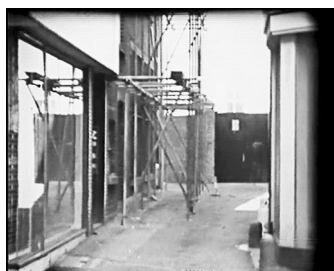
(Edited excerpt from Interview with Hilton Als, in: An-My Lê: Small Wars, New York, 2005, p. 118-125, p. 125.)

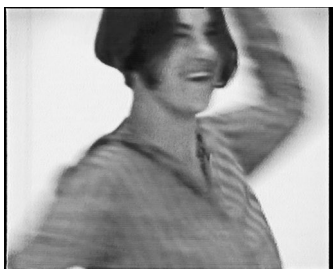
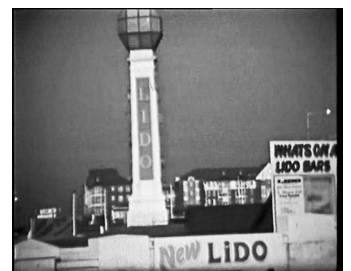
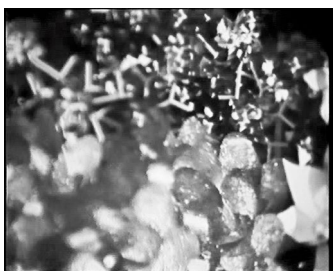
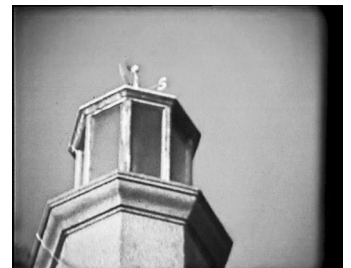
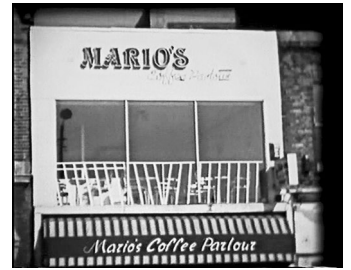
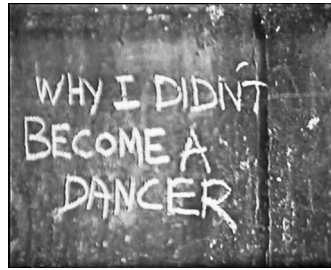


Tracey Emin

"And I left Margate, and I left those boys. Shane, Eddie, Tony, Doug, Richard; this one's for you!"

(Quote from "Why I Never Became A Dancer", 1995, video, 6:40 min, min 4:23)

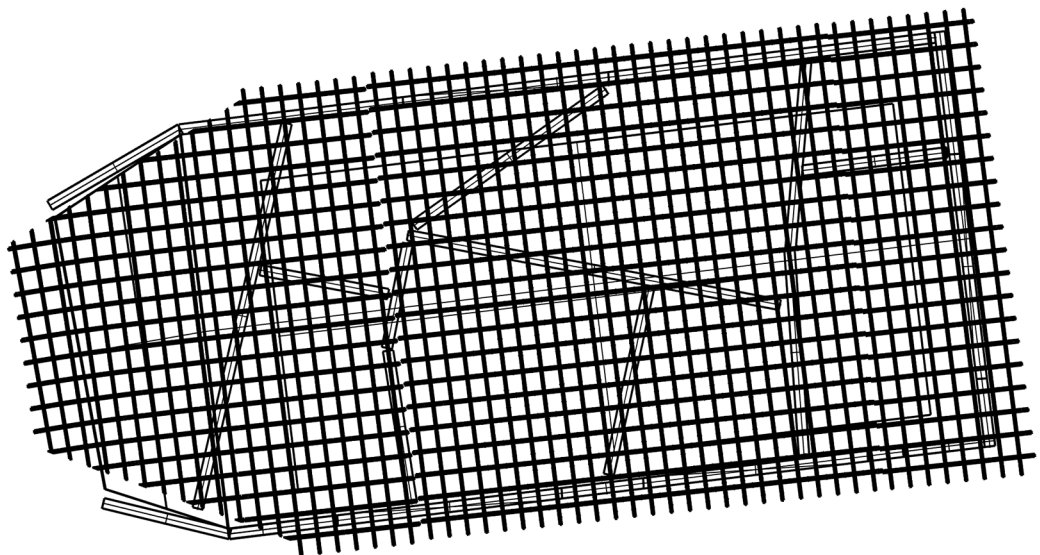
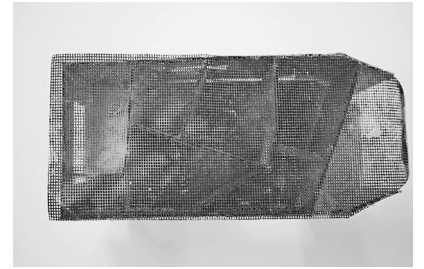




D e s c r i p t i o n o f a S t r u g g l e is the title of a short story by Franz Kafka. I wanted to redo this description in another form. Let the house become a description. A habitable object that wants to be a text. Is it a dream? The description would assemble the elements of a conjecture--walls, passages, rooms--and would define the contours. To describe would be to produce a situation by giving it terms. Describe a life by giving it a daily outline.

The exterior walls enclose seven spaces divided by roughly finished plaster partitions. Beyond the white wall preventing entry, the seven rooms are doorless and do not communicate. The house is in a state of sleep, waiting for its inhabitant. The resident will have to make an effort to inhabit this place: going through the walls, perforating surfaces, making one's way. They may settle in the first room while leaving the other walls untouched, nestle, lie down, give up, or dig further into the house, to the right or the left, continue, decide on another action. The choices that arise are made of stops, bifurcations, and destruction. A struggle! I imagine something animal-like and feral in this everyday. Living is drawing a line through the spaces, like tracing a tunnel in a mine.

Usually architecture decides on a course of action, on what it separates, what it brings together, even in the intimacy that it sometimes invents and fosters. To live in it, by dint of repetitions, of adjustments, forces one to shape one's life to the form of this space, inducing similar convergences in your habits, assimilating comparable distancings in one's thoughts. There seems to be a contradiction in this house which is in appearance more constraining, but by not deciding the openings, and the layout of the flows, it leaves the inhabitant the choice of making a route, even if with a destructive gesture. I would like the house to withdraw from determination, to impose almost nothing, that life is not written there.



The action of *P r e c a r i o u s T a s k s* #8, walking back home, is about bridging two different experiences of disaster in the UK and in Japan, both of which occurred in 2011. In one case, the riots that took place in various parts of London in August; in the other, the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March, and triggered the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.

Though these events have totally different backgrounds, what interests me about both is what happened afterwards: the formation of frameworks for post-disaster societies. In Tokyo, the earthquake disrupted all public transportation and communication. Subways and buses were stopped, and phone lines remained down for some time. Consequently, large numbers of commuters decided to walk home on foot. For my friend, this meant a three-to-four hour journey, while others' routes home took up to seven hours. One year after the earthquake, I retraced my friend's steps, trying to connect to her journey in walking the same route that she took that day, even though my experience would always be far from the original.

For this project, participants living in areas of London affected by the 2011 riots were invited to re-enact this process. Asking each of the participants about where they were and how they got home when the riots broke out, I had them retrace their paths. One participant, who had been dining with a friend, decided that it would be safer to walk only along major thoroughfares. Another had been escorting his girlfriend home when they heard the news, and lectured her on not joining the demonstrations and looting.

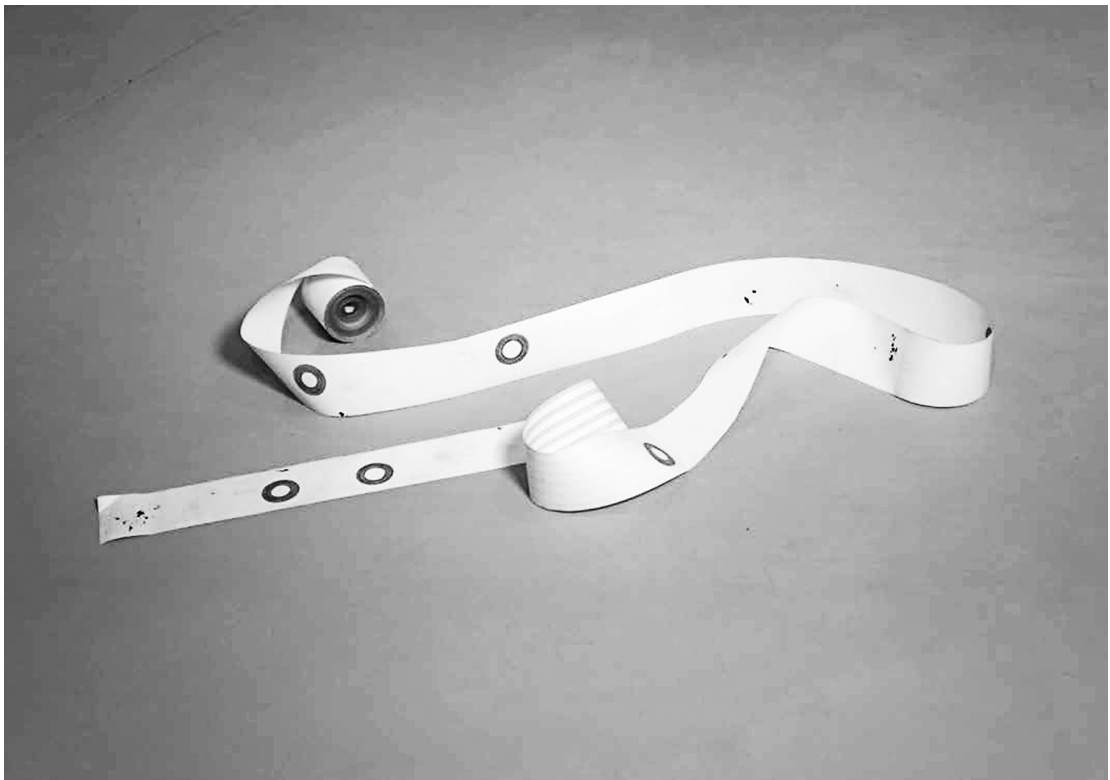
There are of course major differences between the aftermaths of the two situations. One is a natural disaster, and the nuclear accident that it brought about will linger years into the future. The other was a man-made disaster brought about by the social structure. However, I felt that the act of "returning home" could on some level connect the experiences of these two events. What happens to our daily routines under radically different circumstances?

(24 June 2014: this text was originally written as an "Artist's Note" for a project at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London. Edited by Matt Williams; revised and expanded with Andrew Maerkle for the book "Precarious Practice," Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern 2015)



Martina Kresta

Time is. Already past.



Blüten (Funny Money), Recording 25 April-20 September 2008
 149 drawings with ink on cash register roll 7.9 x 7500 cm,
 diameter of the drawings 4 cm. Time of drawing is marked
 in one line, which divided 3576 hours in 2.1 cm. 2 hours
 each day were stolen. Presentation: Jochen Humburg

if
you
keep
looking
the
other
way
there
will
be
soon
no
other
way
to
look

Disability, as anthropogenesis, allows us to reflect upon a humanity that has to be learned, rather than being granted at birth. Man is born without knowing how to speak, write, eat or walk; unless being taught, he is incapable of surviving without the civilising cares of culture. Hence, technique is presented as the mastery of the relationship between nature and humanity; if a man is tossed by nature into life without survival abilities, technique allows him to produce himself.

(...)

Through discipline, how to learn to manipulate the body is rationalised, and how to perform control exercises on oneself that standardise the most common activities, even the strictest moral and ethical codes, through a normative imposition. This is how, under the guardianship of a relatively outdated thinking model, one of the distinctions of what is human is expressed with an anatomical behavior: walking upright. The operations to discipline the body (in which a human can be determined as one) have kept verticality as their axis. The training of the body is a mechanism of coercions and "discipline is a political anatomy of detail".¹ If anthropotechniques are the sets of actions or exercises--both symbolical and formal--that allow humans to recognise themselves as such, it is because we are beings of technique, because we turn the things we produce into our condition. In this sense, walking upright is a technology, a *l o g o s* of the *t e c h n e*, a know-how, a practical knowledge to discipline the body.

(...)

Prostheses are technical devices, but they also precede that condition; prostheses are linguistic. If we take our distance from the medical sense of a prosthesis, that is to say, of the addition or replacement of a missing body part for an artificial one, a prosthesis would not be a simple extension of the human body, but the human condition itself, its constitution. Therefore, there is no human nature; facing nature, the human is entirely prosthetic.

If human beings are disabled beings, who has the capacity to represent normality?

It would seem easy and not so risky to question disability from the comfort of a body with no motor limitations, amputations or congenital anomalies, yet disability is not limited to the phenomena occurring in the body; disability is political. Women in this sense, have not been exempt from being historically disabled due to the hierarchical phallogocentrist construction (verticality par excellence).

It may be supposed that part of politics is about the handicapped, that from the perspective of an "existentialism of resistance or obstinacy", there is an obligation to overcome obstacles, to survive regardless. The political implications in relationship to the foundational incapacities make the acquired disabilities raise the controversy of "whether all political culture does not begin with the distinction between chains and crutches."² Social class is involved in the political dimension of prosthetics and orthotics³ in Mexico. In this country, private medical insurance is not only practically inaccessible for most of the population, but also access to basic services--from food to health--are scarce. Malnutrition during pregnancy can cause future deficiencies or syndromes for the product and it also must be considered that in the most violent and precarious areas the risk of not only losing a body part but life itself rises exponentially. People with disabilities derived from an amputation or the lack of a limb can hardly conceive of receiving a replacement for a high technology and sophisticated device. In Mexico, prosthetics and orthotics are precarious and it is also of importance that disability cases are proportional to the marginalisation index. Thus, it is more than symbolic to try to teach a human how to walk in a country where the population is constantly falling into pieces.

Orthotics and prosthetics are not vestiges of the foreign disease, but political projections of the body, they are processes, actions or states of existence. They not only suggest--based on the conditions of physical decadence of the human--when can a body be considered useless or irreparable? But, with the fragility at stake, the identity and processes that give a body order are disrupted and the capacity of objects or technical devices for political action is debated.

Furthermore, when prosthetics are only physical, when the materiality connected to the use-purpose is not surpassed, prosthetics or orthotics may fall into a reductionism and merely become cultural tools of normalisation with a compulsive spotlight on corporal norms and, rather than threatening the sphere of normality, they reaffirm it. First, physiognomically, they have to perform how a normal-looking body should. Secondly, the purpose is determined by its usefulness and productivity for economic systems.

(...)

If the shape of the human being is determined by the logic of its functionality and productivity in relation to work, and if work was the only essential action of the human being, what happens with the disabilities that escape efficiency and effectiveness in production? Perhaps the act of man producing himself is a form of exercise. Perhaps they are ways of doing and producing his own existence, beyond the work that is defined by a salary, and it is more about deciphering himself in everyday life.

(...)

If persons with disabilities are perceived in the social imaginary as cripples that produce pity, then that is because being human is not considered to be a constant training that must be exercised. A being that struggles with itself to go beyond its shape should not cause any pity. The tendency to pathologise the body based on the yearning for normality is a deliberate exclusion of other possibilities of the human experience. Correcting is not merely correcting nature, but suppressing difference. If existence has always required orthopedics and prosthetics, how do we embody and think the non-normative? How can we avoid being under public scrutiny, having to do normal things through hard exercise? How can we zigzag "the paradox of a normality for the non-normal"⁴?

(...)

If human beings are prosthetic beings, then that is because they are the artifacts of themselves. As such they have the ability to technically intervene in their own nature by producing prosthetics that allow them to enunciate and constitute themselves transversally between corporeal limits, to create create possibilities that allow to think about themselves more as living beings, rather than human beings.

(Berenice Olmedo: Anthroprosthetic or the Prosthesis as Homo Genesis (edited extract), 2019
https://www.academia.edu/39060427/Anthroprosthetic_or_the_Prosthesis_as_Homo_Genesis
(23.09.2020))

1 Foucault, Michel, Discipline & Punish. The Birth of the Prison, New York, Vintage Books, 1995, p. 139.

2 Sloterdijk, Peter, You Must Change Your Life. On Anthropotechnics, Malden, MA, Polity Press, 2013, p. 57.

3 An orthosis is "an externally applied device used to modify the structural and functional characteristics of the neuromuscular and skeletal system", <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthotics>.

4 Sloterdijk, Peter, You Must Change Your Life. On Anthropotechnics, Malden, MA, Polity Press, 2013, p. 44.

Elizabeth Jaeger

Brine

Cut out of a belly, your face met air
You dropped onto the floor with the rest of the entrails
Circling the drain, lapping up the seepage
and I had a little bone stuck in my teeth
Salted and stiffening, where are you from?
anywhere, or not at all
Full moon baths during Pisces season
Maker your skin and my scales glint, crack dry in the light
We are always shedding, gleaming, grimacing
licking briny tears from your eyes
visiting each other in our dreams
as you're eddying on the bank
from the shore I watch you turn
pink
then grey
then white

(a poem by Christina Gigliotti for the exhibition
"Elizabeth Jaeger. Brine" at Galerie Klemm's, Berlin,
26 April to 8 June 2019)



How to Survive: Talks

Due to the current circumstances, the events will be rescheduled.

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

EXHIBITION DEBATES AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE COLD WAR:
"PASSIV - EXPLOSIV" AND "WESTKUNST" (1981, COLOGNE) (EN)
Talk by Paz Guevara (Curator, Berlin)

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

POST-DISASTER SOCIETIES IN JAPAN: FUKUSHIMA AND COVID-19 (EN)
Conversation between Kōki Tanaka (Artist, LA, USA / Kyoto, Japan) and Carina Plath (Curator, Sprengel Museum Hannover)

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

CURATOR IN CONVERSATION (GER)
Carina Plath (Curator, Sprengel Museum Hannover) and Paula Schwerdtfeger (Curatorial Assistant) in conversation with Gabriele Sand (Head of Education and Communication, Sprengel Museum Hannover)

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

ON BLACK VISUAL INTONATION (BVI) (EN)
Screening and conversation between Arthur Jafa (Artist, LA, USA) and Carina Plath (Curator, Sprengel Museum Hannover)

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

"SURVIVING WASN'T THE WORD FOR HOW I FELT, I WAS THRIVING!" (EN)
Screening of films by Barbara Hammer (Artist, LA 1939-2019 NY, USA), and talk by Alexander Koch (Curator and Founder of KOW, Berlin)

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CURATOR'S GUIDED TOUR (GER / EN)
Exhibition's tour with Carina Plath (Curator, Sprengel Museum Hannover)

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

TIMING ANONYMITY. THE CALAIS JUNGLE PROJECT (FR*)
Lecture performance by Guy Woueté (Artist, Antwerp, Belgium / Douala, Cameroon)

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

HOW TO SURVIVE: TWO PROPOSALS FROM AUSTERITY (EN)
Live lecture from Kunshan Asst Prof Dr Zairong Xiang (Comparative Literature, Duke Kunshan University, Kunshan, China)

THESEXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

LE BUREAU DES SUICIDES (GER)
Conversation between Prof Valérie Favre (Artist, Berlin) and Emer Prof Dr Thomas Macho (International Research Centre for Cultural Studies (IFK), University of Art and Design Linz, Vienna)

*Simultaneous translation into German

Biographies

Arakawa, Shūsaku (Nagoya, Japan 1936-2010 New York, USA)

(See also Gins, Madeline)

Shūsaku Arakawa is born in 1936 in Nagoya, Japan. From 1954 to 1958 he studies medicine and mathematics in Tokyo. He drops out of the Musashino Art School. Together with other artists of the post-war generation, he founds the short-lived, anti-aesthetic group Neo-Dadaism Organisers in 1960. At the same time, he pursues his own activities, such as the exhibition "Another Graveyard" (Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo), in which he presents a series of coffin-like works. In 1961 Arakawa moves to New York where he meets Madeline Gins. He produces diagram-like paintings that explore the limits of language and sensory perception: human consciousness is to be restructured. The complex of works and theory "The Mechanism of Meaning" developed together with Madeline Gins tours Germany in the early 1970s. From 1980 onwards, his focus shifts to architecture intended to make the human fate of death reversible. Arakawa dies in New York in 2010.

Emin, Tracey (*1963 London, United Kingdom)

Tracey Emin is born in the London borough of Croydon in 1963 and grows up in the south-eastern coastal town of Margate. She drops out of school as a teenager. In 1982 she gains her fashion diploma in Rochester and then studies art at Maidstone College of Art until 1986. She then goes to the Royal College of Art in London and studies philosophy at the same time. Emin exhibits with the Young British Artists (YBA), who dominate the English art scene in the 1990s. The subject of her art is her own biography, which she processes in explicit and provoking paintings, drawings, textile art, videos, sculptures and installations. She has been a professor at the Royal Academy of Arts in London since 2011.

Favre, Valérie (*1959 Evillard, Switzerland)

Valérie Favre is born in 1959 in Evillard, a small locality near Biel in the canton of Bern. She grows up in francophone Switzerland, in Neuchâtel, where she attends painting courses. From 1975 Favre lives in Geneva and works as a set designer and actress in the theatre and film scene, where she also works in Paris in the realm of "Usine" from 1982. Her oeuvre of paintings emerges from the end of the 1980s onwards, organised in series of works, on which she works in periods and cycles. References to her earlier stage work can be seen in the spatial arrangement of the mystical and zoological figures. She also produces abstract works with a both expressive and experimental use of colour. In 1998 Favre moves to Berlin, where she has been professor of painting at the University of the Arts since 2006.

Flavien, Jean-Pascal (*1971 Le Mans, France)

Jean-Pascal Flavien is born in Le Mans in 1971. After attending the École des Beaux-Arts in Rennes, he studies art in Bologna, in Lorient, Brittany, and at the University of California in Los Angeles from 1991. Since the early 2000s Flavien has been developing sculptural architecture, performative settings and pieces of furniture, which he prepares in models, drawings and conceptual texts. How the space, the actions guided by the

architecture and the narratives created by it relate to each other is tested through the use of colour, surface structures, spatial arrangements and proportions, thereby eliminating the boundaries between architecture, sculpture and design. Flavien lives in Berlin.

Gins, Madeline (New York, USA 1941-2014 New York, USA)

(see also Arakawa, Shūsaku)

Born and raised in New York, Madeline Gins initially studies physics and philosophy. At the Brooklyn Museum Art School she meets her future partner Shūsaku Arakawa in 1962. With her poetic and radical writing she interprets his artwork. Together they develop a speculative architectural philosophy that aims to abolish human mortality. From the 1980s onwards, she produces writings, plans and architectures. Through physical and mental stimulation, the spirit and organism of the human being are to be invigorated and transformed. Among the projects realised are the landscape "Site of Reversible Destiny" (1995) in Yoro, Japan, the "Reversible Destiny Lofts MITAKA - In Memory of Helen Keller" (2005) in Tokyo, Japan, and the "Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa)" (2008) in New York. Gins dies in New York in 2014.

McGovern, Fiona (*1982 Hamburg, Germany)

Fiona McGovern is born in Hamburg in 1982. From 2002 she studies art history, general and comparative literature and English literature in Göttingen and later transfers to the Free University of Berlin. There she completes her PhD in 2016 with the publication "Die Kunst zu zeigen. Künstlerische Ausstellungsdisplays bei Joseph Beuys, Martin Kippenberger, Mike Kelley und Manfred Pernice". Her research focuses on artistic exhibition history, the ethics of curatorship, interdisciplinary approaches in the arts since the 1960s, and feminist and queer theory. McGovern has been assistant professor for curatorial practice and art education at the University of Hildesheim since 2018.

Guevara, Paz (*1976 Santiago de Chile, Chile)

Paz Guevara is born in 1976 in Santiago de Chile. She studies at the Universidad de Chile from 1997 and earns her PhD at the Humboldt University of Berlin in 2010 on "Curatorial Discourse as Legitimizing Form of Contemporary Art". Afterwards, she works as a curator, among others for the Latin American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, the Berlin Biennale and at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. In the context of her academic and curatorial practice, she organises thematically directed conferences on "A History of Limits" (2016), "Love and Ethnology" (2019) and "De-Centering Narratives" (2019). Guevara is a curator, author and researcher in the long-term project "Kanon-Fragen" at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin.

Hammer, Barbara (Los Angeles, USA 1939-2019 New York, USA)

Barbara Hammer is born in 1939 in Los Angeles, where she later studies psychology and literature at the University of California. In the early 1970s, the end of her marriage coincides with her coming-out as a lesbian. Her first films made her a pioneer of lesbian, queer and feminist cinema. Her films make use of screenplays, documentary scenes, cross-fades, found material and numerous experimental discontinuities. She branches out into performance. In 2006 Hammer falls ill with ovarian cancer. As an activist of the "Right to Die"-movement, she hosts the lecture performance "The Art of Dying

or Palliative Art Making in the Age of Anxiety" at the Whitney Museum of American Art in October 2018. Hammer dies from her illness in New York in 2019.

Horvitz, David (*1961/1974/1976/1982/1986/1989/1990/1991?

Los Angeles, USA)

David Horvitz is born in Los Angeles and studies at Bard College in New York. He regularly changes the data available about him, both on his own website and in his Wikipedia article. The procedure of using the freely accessible encyclopaedia for his art work results in exclusion from its community. The varying details of his date of birth, for example, cause an institutional uncertainty that disrupts the writing of this biography in the usual manner. Through the conceptual design of the exchange of information and objects as the incomprehensible, Horvitz weaves power relations such as these, and social relationships in general, into his works. These are executed in a variety of media such as photography, audio, video, performance, mail art, drawing, and letterpress. Horvitz lives in Los Angeles.

Jaeger, Elizabeth (*1988 San Francisco, USA)

Elizabeth Jaeger is born in San Francisco in 1988. From 2006 she studies art in Portland, Chicago and Nancy, where she graduates in 2011. She then moves to New York. With her filigree, figurative sculptures, she initially addresses the social position of the female body. In recent years, she has simultaneously condensed and abstracted her practice, which now focuses on the dual opposition of the geometric and the amorphous. Using various materials, including silk, ceramics, plaster and also glass, Jaeger forms physical objects whose tactile and formal qualities contrast with the basic concept of the steel display, with which she arranges the hand-formed objects in installations. Jaeger lives in New York.

Jafa, Arthur (*1960 Tupelo, USA)

Arthur Jafa is born in Tupelo in 1960 and grows up in Clarksdale, Mississippi. He studies architecture and film at Howard University in Washington D.C. from 1978 to 1982 before moving to Atlanta. He works as a cameraman and film director, including for Stanley Kubrick, winning the Best Cinematography award at the Sundance Film Festival with the film "Daughters of the Dust" (Julie Dash, 1991). In his art video A P E X in 2013, he develops an editing technique that he sees as a tool of Black Cinema and that transfers the principles of Black Music to film production. Media images of the lives of Black people in the USA are interwoven into rhythmic, gripping epics that illustrate the brutal reality and the sublimated rage accompanying it. He produces music videos for Beyoncé, Solange, Kanye West and Jay-Z. Jafa lives in Los Angeles.

Kelley, Mike (Detroit, USA 1954-2012 Los Angeles, USA)

Mike Kelley is born in Detroit in 1954. He studies art at the University of Michigan and the California Institute of the Arts. From the early 1970s he engages in musical and experimental collaborations, among others with Tony Oursler and Paul McCarthy. Kelley works across genres. He makes a name for himself with colourful collages of soft toys and also produces installations, films, performances, drawings, paintings and textile art. In his works, absurdity, provocation and the darkest depths are closely juxtaposed. Since the public tends to read references to child abuse into his soft toy collages,

Kelley begins to address the phenomenon of memory loss after traumatic events ("repressed memory syndrome"). Taking this approach, he processes factual and fictional biographical blanks and memory complexes. His works deconstruct ritualised knowledge hierarchies, oppressive power structures and pop-cultural phenomena. Kelley commits suicide in Los Angeles in 2012.

Kresta, Martina (*1976)

Martina Kresta is born in 1976. Her work, continuously recorded "from ... to" since 1998, consists of circular lines revealing their own processual origin. They are executed with fountain pen, pencil, ballpoint pen, ink, bodily fluids or incisions on various grounds, including fax paper, thermal paper, X-ray images, skin and also sheets of paper. The finely drawn lines are closely associated with the principle of time: Kresta periodically begins one complex of works, after which the next one follows. Work times, breaks, period durations and interruptions are precisely noted. She reflects on the structures of work in objects, which blend almost invisibly into existing office, residential or institutional contexts. Kresta lives in Vienna.

Lê, An-My (*1960 Saigon, Vietnam)

An-My Lê is born in Saigon in 1960 during the Vietnam War. As a political refugee, she arrives with her family in the USA in 1975, the last year of the war. She studies biology at Stanford University before graduating from Yale University School of Art in 1993. In her photographic series, she explores the militarily conceived and shaped landscape and the representation of war in feature films and re-enactments. To this end, she photographs the places of her childhood from 1994 to 1998. From 1999 on, her focus shifts to U.S. military exercises in which scenes from the Vietnam War are re-enacted and she participates occasionally as an extra. In recent years she has been devoting herself to the fields of cultural and political conflict in US society. Lê teaches as professor of photography at Bard College and lives in New York.

Macho, Thomas (*1952 Vienna, Austria)

Thomas Macho is born in Vienna in 1952. There he is awarded his PhD in 1976 with a dissertation "Zur Dialektik des musikalischen Kunstwerks". From the philosophy of music he turns to philosophy and obtains his habilitation in 1983 in Klagenfurt with his thesis "Von den Metaphern des Todes. Eine Phänomenologie der Grenzerfahrung". From 1993 to 2016 he is professor of cultural history at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Since 2016 he has been director of the International Research Center for Cultural Studies at the University of Art and Design Linz in Vienna. His book "Das Leben nehmen. Suizid in der Moderne" is published in 2017. Thomas Macho lives in Berlin and Vienna.

Metzger, Gustav (Nuremberg, Germany 1926-2017 London, United Kingdom)

Gustav Metzger is born in Nuremberg in 1926. In 1939 he, a son of Orthodox Jews, flees from the National Socialists to Britain with the Kindertransport and becomes stateless. He studies art at the Cambridge School of Art and also at the academy in Antwerp. In the light of his own experience, the constant nuclear threat and the increasing destruction of the environment by the industrial societies, he develops the

principle of auto-destructive art, an art far removed from the art market, which he presents in various manifestos and demonstrations starting in 1959. He interprets destruction as an aesthetic process in which industrial materials such as steel, liquid crystal, acid, linen, refuse, newsprint and exhaust fumes are turned into an impermanent work of art. Metzger performs as an activist, organises seminars, initiates an Art Strike (1974) and designs memorials to draw attention to the extinction of all life. Metzger dies in London in 2017.

Olmedo, Berenice (*1987 Oaxaca, Mexico)

Born in 1987 in Oaxaca, Mexico, Berenice Olmedo has been concerned with social, societal and bodily norms since 2011. In her early work complex "Canine TANATO-commerce; or, the political-ethical dilemma of merchandise" (2015), she uses run-over stray dogs from Mexico City, which she processes, among other things, into soap and clothing. In recent years, she has been increasingly producing installations from already-worn orthotics and prostheses. Using the orthotics, Olmedo arranges personified marionettes, figures and murals which, precisely through the absence of the correct or corrected body, expose the social pressure to have an upright, ideal body. Olmedo lives in Mexico City.

Petrešin-Bachelez, Nataša (*1976 Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez is born in Ljubljana in 1976. There she studies comparative literature and art history before switching to the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. Since 2000 she has been working as an author and curator, among others for the Slovenian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, the Kunsthalle Fridericianum and the Berlin Biennale. From 2008 to 2010 she is a curatorial assistant at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In 2013 she curates the 7th Triennial of Contemporary Art in Slovenia entitled "Resilience. For the Contour Biennale 9: Coltan as Cotton" in Mechelen, Belgium, she integrates concepts of social and environmental sustainability into the institutionalised principle of the Biennale. Petrešin-Bachelez lives in Paris.

Szapocznikow, Alina (Kalisz, Poland 1926–1973 Passy, France)

Alina Szapocznikow is born in 1926 in Kalisz, Poland. During the National Socialist occupation, she survives the ghettos of Pabianice and Łódź and the concentration camps of Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt. After the war, she studies sculpture in Prague and travels regularly to Paris. She returns to Poland in 1952 and designs socialist monuments. She represents Poland at the 1962 Venice Biennale, moving a year later to Paris. There she develops a new approach to sculpture, using polyester and synthetic resin to create fragmentary casts of her body. The amorphous organic fragments encourage reflection on transience, death, survival, sexuality and trauma. At the end of the 1960s she contracts breast cancer, a physical disposition that she incorporates into her work. She produces representations of her tumours in resin, gauze, photographs and newspaper. Szapocznikow dies in Passy in 1973.

Tanaka, Kōki (*1975 Tochigi, Japan)

Kōki Tanaka is born in 1975 in Mashiko in the Japanese prefecture of Tochigi. He studies art in Vienna, Tokyo and Los Angeles. Initially he produces videos in which he engages in absurdly senseless interactions with everyday objects. After the earthquake in Japan in March 2011, causing severe tsunamis and the Fukushima disaster, Tanaka increasingly develops

experimental social situations that seek to reveal the scope for and difficulties in accomplishing a collective task. Tanaka sets up group processes - the joint processing of a traumatic event, collaborative work or a collective action - where he himself plays the role of observer. Tanaka lives in Kyoto.

Woueté, Guy (*1980 Douala, Cameroon)

Guy Woueté is born in 1980 in Douala, Cameroon. He studies art in Brussels, Paris and Amsterdam. In photographs, installations and performances, also as a sculptor and painter, he addresses the humanitarian crisis in terms of the existence of the migrant, the refugee and/or the Black in the globalised world and focuses on the force that keeps people alive in this situation. In 2016 he travels to Calais, France, to photograph the life and unfolding culture in the unofficial refugee camp at the gateway to Britain known as the "Calais Jungle". For his working method, he combines the roles of artist and reporter that allow him to place himself as a subject in the situation and to report from this perspective. Woueté lives in Antwerp and Douala.

Xiang, Zairong (* Guiyang, China)

Zairong Xiang is born in the city of Guiyang in southwest China. After research trips to Latin America, he obtains his PhD in comparative literature on "Queer Ancient Ways. A Decolonial Exploration" at the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen and the Université de Perpignan Via Domitia, France in 2014. Scholarships follow at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Berlin, and the University of Potsdam, among others. In his research, Xiang takes a decolonialised approach in crossing feminist and queer theory with literary and visual studies in Spanish, English, Chinese, French and Nahuatl, the language of Mexico's largest indigenous population. Since the summer of 2020, Zairong Xiang has held an assistant professorship in comparative literature at Duke Kunshan University in China, where he is deputy director of art.

List of Works

Arakawa, Shūsaku

Almost Stable - A Portrait of Electricity, 1968

Oil, drawing ink, silver paint on canvas
122 x 183 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
Kunstbesitz der
Landeshauptstadt Hannover
Inv. No. KA 3,1971

Natural History. From "Graphikmappe des Schweizerischen Kunstvereins" ("Portfolio of Schweizer Kunstverein"), 1972

Serigraphy on scale paper
65 x 50 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
Kunstbesitz der
Landeshauptstadt Hannover
Inv. No. KA 1973,25,3

Untitled. Sheet 1 from the portfolio "Hommage à Picasso, Lieferung II" ("Hommage à Picasso, Lot II"), 1973

Screenprint in 12 colours on Velin d'Arches
56.5 x 76 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
Kunstbesitz der
Landeshauptstadt Hannover
Inv. No. KA 1974,9,1

Portrait of Helen Keller or Joseph Beuys. Sheet 1 from the portfolio "Für Joseph Beuys" ("For Joseph Beuys"), 1986

Lithography on hand-made Arches BFK-Bütten
61.2 x 81.5 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
Purchase with funds from Kreissparkasse Hannover
Inv. No. SH 5,1987,1

Arakawa, Shūsaku and Gins, Madeline

For Example (A Critique of Never), 1971

16mm film, digital transfer
90 min
Collection of the Estate of Madeline Gins, Courtesy of the Reversible Destiny Foundation

Model of Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa), 2005-2013

Paper, card, wood, metal, acrylic and mixed media
34.3 x 92.1 x 76.9 cm
Collection of the Estate of Madeline Gins, Courtesy of the Reversible Destiny Foundation

Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa), 2006*

Digital rendering
Collection of the Estate of Madeline Gins, Courtesy of the Reversible Destiny Foundation
Illustration p. 60/61

Bioscleave House (Lifespan Extending Villa), 2008*

Architecture, total area 2,700 sq. ft. (255 m2), East Hampton, NY, Photo by Dimitris Yeros
Collection of the Estate of Madeline Gins, Courtesy of the Reversible Destiny Foundation
Illustration p. 59

Emin, Tracey

Why I Never Became A Dancer, 1995

Single-channel video installation
6:40 min
Sammlung Goetz, Medienkunst, Munich
Illustrations p. 68/69

Favre, Valérie

From the series
Suicide, 2003-2013

All oil on canvas
24 x 18 cm

Terrorist, 2005

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Kleopatra, vergiftet
(Cleopatra, Poisoned), 2007**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

Kamikaze, 2007

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Mit Jagdgewehr (With a Rifle),
2007**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Im Theater (At the Theater),
2007**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Frontal gegen einen Baum
(Straight into a Tree), 2007**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Jürgen Möllemann, gestürzt
(Jürgen Möllemann, Fallen),
2008**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

**Vergiftet, durch Spinnenbiss
(Poisoned, by Spider Bite),
2008**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

**Duo in den Alpen, gestürzt
(Duo in the Alps, Fallen),
2009**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Ins Meer gehen ohne zurück-
zukommen (To Go into the Sea
and Never Return), 2009**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

Overdosis (Overdose), 2009

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Ajax, erstochen (Ajax,
Stabbed), 2010**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Ulrike Meinhof, erhängt
(Ulrike Meinhof, Hanged), 2010**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Romeo und Julia, vergiftet,
erstochen (Romeo and Juliet,
Poisoned, Stabbed), 2010**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Bohumil Hrabal, gestürzt
(Bohumil Hrabal, Fallen), 2011**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Achille Zavatta, erschossen
(Achille Zavatta, Shot), 2012**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

**Cesare Pavese, vergiftet
(Cesare Pavese, Poisoned),
2012**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

**Diane Arbus, verblutet (Diane
Arbus, Bled to Death), 2012**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

**Christian Ferras, gestürzt
(Christian Ferras, Fallen),
2012**

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Guy Debord, erschossen (Guy Debord, Shot), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Mönchskollektiv in Tibet, verbrannt (A Monks' Collective in Tibet, Burned to Death), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Sarah Kane, erhängt (Sarah Kane, Hanged), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Sylvia Plath, erstickt (Silvia Plath, Suffocated), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Hermann Göring, vergiftet (Hermann Göring, Poisoned), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Kurt Cobain, erschossen (Kurt Cobain, Shot), 2012

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

From the series

Bateau des poètes (Boat of Poets), 2020

If not noted otherwise
tempera, crayon, collage on
canvas
170 x 130 cm

Bateau des poètes (Georg Trakl, Cesare Pavese, Ana Mendieta, Stig Dagerman, Virginia Woolf, Beatrice Hasting), 2020

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich / Swiss Collection

Bateau des poètes (Sylvia Plath, Sarah Kane), 2020

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Bateau des poètes (Unica Zürn, Diane Arbus, Wladimir Majakowski), 2020

Ink, tempera, crayon, collage
on canvas

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Peter Kilchmann,
Zurich

Illustration p. 65

Bateau des poètes (Mirit Cohen, Walter Benjamin, Mark Rothko), 2020

150 x 120 cm

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

Bateau des poètes (Robert Walser, Paul Ceylan, Georges Bernanos, Marina Iwanowa Zwetajewa, Inge Müller), 2020

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin

**Announcement of the talk
"Bureau des Suicides. Berlin
- Hannover - Paris" ("Suicide
Bureau. Berlin - Hanover -
Paris"), February 2021**

Brass plate
Illustration p. 64

Flavien, Jean-Pascal

**Description of a Struggle,
2020**

MDF, drywall, steel, paint,
plastic mesh

380 x 1007.6 x 459 cm

Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Esther Schipper,
Berlin

Illustrations of the model and
drawings p. 71

Horvitz, David

**How to make yourself visible
for a rescue boat when you are
stranded in the dark at the
bottom of a cliff on a rocky
coast in Hong Kong, 2012**

20 slides, in loop; one framed
photograph

12.7 x 19 cm

Courtesy of the artist &
ChertLüdde, Berlin

For Kiyoko, 2017

Inkjet on paper, mounted on
aluminium
20 x 29 cm
Courtesy of the artist &
ChertLüdde, Berlin

**If you keep looking the other
way there will be soon no
other way to look, 2020**

Ashes from burned wood out of
Angeles National Forest on wall
17 x 8000 cm
Courtesy of the artist &
ChertLüdde, Berlin
Illustration p. 77

Jaeger, Elizabeth

Brine, 2019

Installation with 7 sculp-
tures, all hand-blown glass,
copper, blackened steel and
shards of ceramic moulds

fish stand with fish #1, 2019

123 x 50 x 22 cm
Collection Bürger-Ruxtorff

fish stand with fish #2, 2019

123 x 70 x 22 cm
Courtesy the artist and
Klemm's, Berlin

fishstand #3, 2019

163 x 50 x 22 cm
Private Collection, Munich

fish stand with fish #4, 2019

190 x 73 x 22 cm
Courtesy the artist and
Klemm's, Berlin
Illustration detail p. 83

fish stand with fish #5, 2019

163 x 65 x 22 cm
ES Collection, Hamburg

fishstand #6, 2019

123 x 60 x 22 cm
Private Collection, Frankfurt
am Main

fish stand with fish #7, 2019

172 x 80 x 22 cm
ES Collection, Hamburg

Kelley, Mike

The Banana Man, 1983

Video, colour, sound
28:15 min
Electronic Arts Intermix
(EAI), New York

Primal Architecture, 1995

Acrylic, wood, steel, pencil,
paper
270 x 220 cm
Museum Ludwig, Cologne
Leihgabe Gesellschaft für
Moderne Kunst am Museum Ludwig
e.V. 2006, Wolfgang-Hahn-Preis
2006
ML/Dep. 7339
Illustration p. 63

**Superman Recites Selections
from 'The Bell Jar' and Other
Works by Sylvia Plath, 1999**

Video, colour, sound, 7:19 min
Electronic Arts Intermix
(EAI), New York

**Extracurricular Activity
Projective Reconstruction #1
(Domestic Scene), 2000**

Video, black-and-white, sound
29:44 min
Electronic Arts Intermix
(EAI), New York

**From My Institution to Yours,
1987/2003**

Acrylic on paper mounted on
board, ribbon, carrot, carpet,
wood, steel, aluminium
492.76 x 473.39 x 313.69 cm
Eric Decelle, Brussels

Kresta, Martina

**Rausch (Rapture), Aufzeichnung
(Notes) 1 February 2002-31
January 2003**

(12 drawings with artist's
blood on paper, each 60 x 100
cm; feeding trace of flies;
365 smear sheets, DIN A4; case
with dead flies, which were
found in the studio; case with
used quills)
Blood on paper, wood, glass,
flies, quills
60 x 100 cm; 29.7 x 21 cm;
40 x 50 cm; 40 x 50 cm
Martina Kresta, Jochen Humburg,
(Artmark Galerie Vienna)

**Mittagspause (Lunchbreak),
Notes 7-13 November 2005**

(7 labels of Inzersdorfer tin
cans from Jochen Humburg, with
drawings on the back)

Pencil on paper

7.9 x 28 cm

Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

**Ablage (Filing), Notes 18 July
2007-23 March 2008**

(250 daily ink drawings on
paper in DIN A4, inside a
folder at an unreachable
height on a shelf in an
office; one bun in drawer;
concept of presentation by
Jochen Humburg)

Ink on paper, folder, bun
31.8 x 8 x 28.5 cm

Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

**Blüten (Funny Money), Notes 25
April-20 September 2008**

(149 drawings with ink on
cash register roll, tied with
rubber band, in peanut tin;
time of drawing is marked in
one line, which divided 3576
hours in 2.1 cm. 2 hours each
day were stolen.)

Ink on thermal paper

7.9 x 7500 cm

Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

Illustrations p. 75

**immer nichts zu tun (always
nothing to do), Notes while
waiting in 2012**

(21 pin drawings on thermal
paper, selection of koans by
Jochen Humburg)

Thermal Paper

8 x 100 cm

Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

**Blues, Notes 26 April-14
September 2016**

(4 of 39 pin drawings in
common formats of vinyl
records on X-ray photographs
in various sizes (Sprengel
Museum LP, maxi, single,
talking doll format))
Scratching on X-ray photograph

Dimensions variable
Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

**Bigs1, Notes 15 September
2016-31 May 2017**

(Drawing with ink on paper,
diameter of drawing 190 cm,
27 packs of smear sheets)

Ink on paper

300 x 193 cm

Martina Kresta, Jochen
Humburg, (Artmark Galerie
Vienna)

Lê, An-My

**From the series 29 Palms,
2003-2004**

All gelatin silver prints
67.3 x 96.5 cm

Courtesy the artist and Marian
Goodman Gallery

**Combat Operations Center
Guard, 2003-2004**

**Combat Support Service
Operations, 2003-2004**

**Infantry Officers' Brief,
2003-2004**

Marine Palms, 2003-2004

Night Operations IV, 2003-2004

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From the series
Silent General, since 2015

All pigment print
101.6 x 143.5 cm

Courtesy the artist and Marian
Goodman Gallery

**Fragment II: Migrant Workers
Harvesting Asparagus, Mendota,
California, 2019**

**Fragment IV: General Robert
E. Lee Monument, New Orleans,
Louisiana, 2016**

**Fragment VII: High School
Students Protesting Gun
Violence, Washington Square
Park, New York, 2018**

**Fragment VIII: Cars along the
Rio Grande, US-Mexico Border,
Ojinaga, Mexico, 2019**

Metzger, Gustav

Untitled, 1958

Oil on galvanised mild steel
91.5 x 91.5 cm
Sprengel Museum Hannover
Leihgabe Kunststiftung
Bernhard Sprengel und Freunde,
Hannover

Untitled, 1958-59

Oil on galvanised mild steel
91.5 x 91.5 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Gustav Metzger, London

Manifesto Auto-Destructive-Art, 1961*

St. Martins' Printers, London
Courtesy of the Estate of
Gustav Metzger, London
Illustration p. 51

Mobbile, (1970) 2020

Car, tube, exhaust fumes,
plexiglass, branches
Re-enactment as certified by
Studio of Gustav Metzger
Courtesy of the Estate of
Gustav Metzger, London

**Gustav Metzger behind the
"Model for an Auto-Destructive
Monument", 1960***

In: Gustav Metzger.
Geschichte Geschichte, ed.
Sabine Breitwieser, Generali
Foundation, Vienna 2005, p. 18
Illustration p. 52

**Historic Photographs: To Crawl
Into, Anschluss, Vienna, March
1938, (1996) 2020**

Black-and-white photograph on
vinyl, yellow cotton
315 x 425 cm
Re-enactment as certified by
Studio of Gustav Metzger
Courtesy of the Estate of
Gustav Metzger, London

**RAF (Reduce Art Flights)
Münster, 2007***

Flyer in DIN A5, graphic
design: Carsten Eisfeld
Private collection
Illustration p. 53

Mirror Tree, (2010) 2020

Willow tree, concrete
310 x approx. 100 x 100 cm
Re-enactment as certified by
Studio of Gustav Metzger
Courtesy of the Estate of
Gustav Metzger, London

Olmedo, Berenice

Ballet Dancers, 2020

If not noted otherwise
Orthosis, ballet shoes, nylon
thread
Courtesy the artist and Jan
Kaps, Cologne

Regina, 2020

Isabela, 2020

Lià, 2020

Paula, 2020

Orthosis, ballet shoes, nylon
thread, control box

Szapocznikow, Alina

**Okragła - La Ronde (The
Round), 1968**

Artist's own technique
polyurethane
120 x 117 x 20 cm
Muzeum Susch, Schweiz

**Documentation on Alina
Szapocznikow's series of works
"Expansion", 1968***

Contact print
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski / Galerie
Loevenbruck, Paris
Inv. No.: ASDOC2293
Illustration p. 57

Sculpture-Lamp, 1970

Coloured polyester resin,
light bulb, electrical wiring
and metal
54 x 37 x 23 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski, Galerie
Loevenbruck and Hauser & Wirth

**Sans titre (Love 1970)
(Untitled (Love 1970)), 1970**

Polyester resin and gauze
5 x 8 x 7 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski, Galerie
Loevenbruck and Hauser & Wirth

Tumeur (Tumour), 1970

Coloured polyester resin and
gauze
4.6 x 6.5 x 8 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski, Galerie
Loevenbruck and Hauser & Wirth

**Fotorzezby (Photosculpture),
(1971) 2007**

Twenty gelatin silver prints
and collage with text on paper
Photography: Roman Cieslewicz
Edition 5/12 + 2 AP
42.5 x 36 x 4 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski, Galerie
Loevenbruck and Hauser & Wirth
Illustration p. 55

**Autoportret - Zielnik (Self-
portrait - Herbarium), 1971**

Polyester, wood (in plexiglass
display case)
81 x 52 x 5 cm
Muzeum Susch, Switzerland

**Szalona biała narzeczona /
Fiancée folle blanche (Crazy
White Fiancée), 1971**

Polyester, plastic mesh
46 x 25,5 x 22 cm
Muzeum Susch, Switzerland
Tumeur personnifiée
(Personified Tumour), c. 1971
Polyester resin, gauze tape,
photographs
8.5 x 12.5 x 10 cm
Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris /
Private collection France

**Typewritten letter by Alina
Szapocznikow, 22 June 1977***

Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski / Galerie
Loevenbruck, Paris
Inv. No.: ASDOC7379
Illustration p. 54

**Poster of the exhibition
"Alina Szapocznikow, 1926-1973
Tumeurs, Herbar", 1973***

Musée d'Art moderne de la
Ville de Paris, France,
08.05.1973-03.06.1973
Offset printing on paper
65 x 40 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of
Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr
Stanislawski / Galerie
Loevenbruck, Paris
Inv. No.: ASDOC6816C
Illustration p. 56

Tanaka, Kōki

**Precarious Tasks #8 Going home
could not be daily routine.,
June 2014**

Collective acts, video
documentation
Length: 25:20 min, 9:22 min;
27:46 min; 46:35 min; 7:22 min
Participants: Dominique Dunne,
Mala Naiker, Shona Phillips
and Steven Cummings
The suburbs of London,
Commissioned of the Institute
of Contemporary Arts (ICA),
London
Courtesy the artist, Kyoto
Illustration p. 73

*not exhibited

Acknowledgments

Like many others in 2020, this project was dominated by exceptional challenges. Caught off guard in the late concept phase in autumn 2019 by the energy of Fridays for Future, which posed the question of ecological survival as forcefully as Gustav Metzger had in the 1950s; slowed down in spring 2020 by the first wave of COVID-19 infections and the exploding costs that made transport from the USA and Japan impossible; buoyed up in the summer by the hope that the talks essential for the project could take place; halted in autumn by the second lockdown, a fortnight before the opening. The result is an exhibition that cannot be seen in analogue form and does not allow the close encounter with the audience that is so important for the project and the speakers, Jean-Pascal Flavien's premises being intended as their discussion location in the exhibition.

At the same time, this situation highlighted the need for the question even more strongly and made it all the more urgent for everyone involved. I am very glad and grateful that, through the continuous exploration of the theme of survival through art and artistic strategies, a kind of mutually supportive community has emerged at short notice. Artists I couldn't meet, works we couldn't preview, installations that we had to set up all at once by ourselves - all this was only possible here thanks to the care, diligence and special commitment of everyone involved.

My first thanks therefore go to the artists who persevered despite the adverse circumstances, who entrusted us with their works and contributions and with whom it has been a great pleasure and source of inspiration and fascination to work. The representatives of the estates, and particularly Ula Dajerling and Leanne Dmyterko of the Gustav Metzger Studio in London, Miwako Tezuka of the Reversible Destiny Foundation in New York, Hervé Loevenbruck and Piotr Stanislawski, Paris, and Krzysztof Kosciuczuk of the Muzeum Susch, have become important and valuable contacts and comrades in spirit who have made many things possible. Graczyna Kulcik has supported the exhibition from the beginning with her wonderful Szapocznikow loans. Anda Rottenberg and Jaroslav Suchan along with Agnieszka Pindera and Anna Saciuk-Gasowska of the Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, have been a source of valuable guidance. Our director, Reinhard Spieler, introduced me to the work of Martina Kresta. Daniela Steinfeld opened my eyes for the work of Tracey Emin in a conversation. Yilmaz Dziewior, director of Museum Ludwig, Cologne, has advocated for the wonderful loan of Mike Kelley. Eric Decelle, Cathérine Bastide and Dirk Snauwaert along with Mark Lightcap from the Mike Kelley Foundation helped us when the lockdown threatened the very important presence of a Mike Kelley installation. The private lenders willingly parted with their works even through the period of extension. Esther Schipper, Florian Wojnar, Adela Yawitz and Manuel Miseur accompanied Jean-Pascal Flavien's project through the ups and downs. Johannes Haller from artmark Galerie assisted with the transport of Martina Kresta's works. I would like to thank the galleries - Jan Kaps, Peter Kilchmann, Klemm's, Hauser und Wirth, and Barbara Thumm - for arranging private loans and their dedication to the artists.

Financing the project was a particular challenge. In order to expand our own modest budget, I submitted numerous applications and some were approved; Simon Grabow, as head of finance, was an important ally in steering us through the unpredictable situation until his departure at the end of 2020. Private supporters deserve special mention here - Gisela Sperling made it possible for a painting by Gustav Metzger to be transferred to the collection of the Sprengel Museum Hannover on loan from the Kunststiftung Bernhard Sprengel und Freunde. The AKB-Stiftung, Felix Büchting, gave a swift and positive response to the project. In the crisis of rising costs, Günter Haese, board member of Gartenheim e.V. in Hannover, provided help at short notice.

In addition to the staff of the Ministry of Science and Culture, which is generously supporting the project, and of the state capital Hannover, I would like to thank my colleague Gregor Janssen of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf for his advice as an expert on Japan. At the national foundations, I would like to thank director Keiichi Aizawa as well as Thomas Golk and Angela Ziegenbein of the Japanese Institute in Cologne, Madeleine Schuppli and Aline Juchler at Pro Helvetia and Marie Graftieaux and Stefanie Steps of the bureau des arts plastiques/Institut français for their crucial support of the transnational work with the artists.

The team at the museum was hampered not only by the exceptional circumstances but also by vacancies in production and administration. The tour de force, lasting from the preparations in April to the three-week set-up starting in October due to the constraining factors, could not have been mastered without the dedication of everyone involved. Paula Schwerdtfeger stepped in as curatorial assistant from her first day on the job in spring 2020 and was instantly indispensable. I wish to thank her and the rest of the core team, the other academic volunteers Olga Nevzorova and Benedikt Fahrnschon, as well as Nicole Dubis at the press office and Katja Peters in the secretariat, for the support, ideas and energy they have invested in the project.

Our restorers Pamela Bannehr, Kristina Blaschke-Walther, Bianca Floss and Maike Schmidt were key figures in the overview and planning with their prudence and expertise, the registrar's department and especially Runa König and Sergej Missal, the museum's administrative staff with Yasin Asci and Volkan Yildirim and the set-up team, who had to socially distance while handling the art in line with the COVID rules, our technicians Christoph Titsch, Max Makalov, Torben Sudhop and Mario Schwinghammer, who worked magic with video and orthotic technology and light, our carpenter Marianne Lietz with advice and her proven precision - they all did their important bit working efficiently as a team. I would like to thank the press department under Isabelle Schwarz for their ideas and important input. Our photo workshop shot numerous clips and videos; Kirsten Kutzinski from marketing rigorously implemented the COVID hygiene strategies; our administration and the secretariat with Elke Schmidt have had to reschedule several times - I owe my thanks to them and all others who have supported the project with their commitment.

Special thanks go to Gabi Sand for her solidarity and her design of the exhibition guide and to Andreas Karl Schulze for the deft pencil numbering in the exhibition. Private time and a car were kindly provided by Elena Höckmann as the driver and Hiltrud Mariot for Gustav Metzger's "Mobbile" re-enactment. From the state capital Hannover we received uncomplicated and competent help from our colleagues: from Casiano Puga-Dominguez in particular at the Department of the Environment and Urban Greenery, from Katharina Marx and Caroline Arndt in particular in Building Management and from Thorsten Bartnicki at the Town Hall printing office.

The Friends of the Sprengel Museum Hannover, chaired by Stefan Becker, and the Young Friends with their spokesperson Franziska Sprengel helped in particular with the digital 360° photography and the event evening in the "Sprengel readymades" format.

This was a lot of fun and gave an audience access that would otherwise never have seen the exhibition during lockdown.

The exhibition is, after all, also an expression of its own limitations. The B&W photographs of the model of our temporary exhibition hall in this volume are therefore reflections of the various stages of design over the past year. Finally, the dates for the How to Survive talks remain undecided; some will be transferred to the web, and I hope that we will be able to host most of them in analogue form in the spring of 2021. I should like to take this opportunity to thank all partners for their endurance and contributions.

For the printing on demand of this sustainable catalogue based on a model from the pre-digital era, I would like to thank Paula Schwerdtfeger and our graphic designer Carsten Eisfeld, Eberle & Eisfeld, Berlin, who took pleasure in devising the concept and showed patience during the COVID-related hold-ups. The authors Fiona McGovern and Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez and the artists have covered the theoretical, but also the artistic, poetic and radical sides of the project with their valuable contributions. Lucinda Devlin kindly supplied with us the illustration of and rights to a work. I thank Olaf Peters for his support and access to his always helpful analogue library, and Undine and Alice for their patience, enthusiasm and youthful points of view.

Carina Plath

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Art as Survival Strategy
14 November 2020
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Coordination of
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