

KUNSTRAUM NIEDEROESTERREICH

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PROGRAMMPRÄSENTATION

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2020

Media – Information

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Programme Presentation 2020

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Programme Presentation 2020

Media Information

Do you know how Google decides which search results you receive? What does it mean when we no longer really understand the technologies we live and work with? Or in other words: Are the black boxes that surround us every day transforming us from citizens with agency into executive users?

Welcome in the Black Box!

In 2020 the Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, under the artistic direction of Katharina Brandl, will explore the status of the black box in society from perspectives of contemporary art. Black boxes are omnipresent in both artistic production and reception, just think of the dark room in photography or video art presentation techniques in exhibition spaces. Metaphorically, artistic works themselves can also be understood as black boxes, which always retain a certain element of mystery – however, in contrast to the technological black box, the ambiguity of our opposite can reveal unfamiliar realms of experience.

DURST – the first exhibition of the year (opening on March 31) – explores an enigmatic yet culturally omnipresent figure: Curated by Alice Wilke, the exhibition focuses on the vampire as a pop cultural myth, sociological phenomenon, and a symbol for parasitic relations and toxic conditions.

The second exhibition Stormy Weather (opening on June 4) merges the reality of cloud storage and computing with the current emotionally charged political climate. Curated by Katharina Brandl and Claire Hoffmann, the project is conceived together with the Paris-based Centre Culturel Suisse and will be presented first in the Kunstraum Niederoesterreich before travelling to Paris.

Andrea Popelka will curate the third exhibition of the year in autumn 2020 (opening on October 1): Life Constantly Escapes examines the reception of Fred Moten's writings on "blackness" as a thriving energy and ponders artistic approaches to an evasive, resistant life.

In addition to its exhibitions, the Kunstraum continues to reinforce its position as a major protagonist in the realm of performance art: For the 14th time already, a highlight of 2020 will be the H13 Lower Austria Prize for Performance with the presentation of the award-winning performance project in the form of an exhibition. The Kunstraum's own performance series represents another cornerstone to support emerging performance art in the year 2020. And a multifaceted discourse and art education programme complements the annual agenda.

Quote

"Contemporary art enables us to reflect on the contemporary in ways that are not only linguistic. The exhibition program 2020 at Kunstraum Niederoesterreich confronts us with the realm of the inaccessible black boxes of our time. "DURST", the first exhibition this year, focuses on vampirism as a metaphor of the interpersonal and ecological parasite; "Stormy Weather" focuses on the seemingly ephemeral (technological) cloud and its real-world effects, and "Life Constantly Escapes" deals with what is made invisible – a resistant life."

Katharina Brandl,
Artistic Director Kunstraum Niederoesterreich

Exhibition Programme

DURST

Opening: TH 02 04 2020
Duration: FR 03 04 – SA 16 05 2020
Artists: Inka ter Haar, Lauren Huret, Céline Manz, Alexandra Meyer, Sarah Rechberger, Katharina Swoboda, Cathrin Ulikowski
Curator: Alice Wilke

Immortality, seduction, violence – the combination of these attributes associated with the figure of the vampire has laid the ground for popular sex & crime stories for centuries. The myth of the blood-sucking creature is firmly anchored in society's collective desires, fears, and drives.

As is well known, Irishman Bram Stoker was not the first writer to focus on the figure of the vampire more closely – his famous novel *Dracula* (1897) was highly influenced by the work of his compatriot Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu and his female vampire *Carmilla*. But it was Stoker's *Dracula* character who became the quintessential vampire. His tale is not only a classic of Gothic literature; it has also been interpreted as a metaphor for the hypocrisy and prudery of the Victorian era. With his Count, he created the perfect anti-hero: superhumanly strong, supernatural, uninhibited.

Ever since, the vampire myth has adapted to societal contexts and conditions, along with a changing external appearance (from *Nosferatu* to *Twilight*). Secrets, power, sex, fetish, and anarchy are the political as well as aesthetic dimensions of the figure. The exhibition DURST (=THIRST) addresses the vampire and his/her enigmatic lifestyle as a fundamental sociocultural phenomenon: When vampirism is defined as the symbolic sucking of energy and resources from other living beings and our environment, the term can also be expanded to parasitic relations and toxic conditions – and doesn't end with the fascinating character of a living blood-sucking undead. This exhibition stakes out the reception of the vampire myth in contemporary art, which is often conveyed through pop culture, and a broader semantic field that unfolds through the figure of the vampire.

Further information about performances and curator tours in the framework of the exhibition can be found in the enclosed half-year programme.

Stormy Weather

Opening: TH 04 06 2020, 7:00 pm
Duration: FR 05 06 2020 – SA 25 07 2020 (Kunstraum Niederoesterreich)
& SUN, 29 11 2020 – SUN 31 01 2021 (Centre culturel suisse. Paris)
Artists: Fragmentin (Laura Perrenoud, David Colombini und Marc Dubois), Total Refusal (Robin Klengel, Leonhard Müllner and Michael Stumpf), Stefan Karrer, Till Langschied, Yein Lee, Marc Lee, Susanna Flock & Leonhard Müllner, Christiane Peschek, Christoph Wachter & Mathias Jud
Curators: Katharina Brandl & Claire Hoffmann

“Today the cloud is the central metaphor of the internet: a global system of great power and energy that nevertheless retains the aura of something monumental and numinous, something almost impossible to grasp. We connect to the cloud; we work in it; we store and retrieve stuff from it; we think through it.” (James Bridle)

In the months leading up to November 2020, a fateful point in time for world politics as Donald Trump stands for re-election, there will likely be less talk explicitly about the weather. The emotionally charged macro-political climate is unimaginable without today's technological developments. Both the metaphor and the reality of the “cloud” are omnipresent in our daily lives. It is not only the place where data are stored but also – by cloud computing, cloud gaming, or cloud streaming – the place where the central functions of computational power and auto-learning artificial intelligence have migrated to. The cloud is not a storage folder – it is our super brain.

The metaphoric imagery of the cloud makes us think of something fleeting; our data become zeros and ones floating across the sky, carried weightlessly by the wind. In reality, these ephemeral visions of data clouds require infrastructures, which are operated (and controlled) by private companies and, at the same time, have direct impacts on the real climate. Hence, talking about clouds, the weather, and weather metaphors is quite topical, and, in the near future, they will not only be subjects of unmotivated small talk. The exhibition Stormy Weather showcases works that survey the field between seemingly ephemeral infrastructures (data clouds) and their concrete manifestations in the real world. How do artists interact with the non-human counterpart, the cloud? Do metaphors or the realities of the cloud become affective carriers themselves in their artistic reception?

The project is realised in cooperation with the Centre culturel suisse, Paris, where it will be shown from November 2020 to January 2021.

Further information about performances and curators' tours in the framework of the exhibition can be found in the enclosed half-year programme.

Lower Austria Prize for Performance Presentation and Exhibition

Prize presentation: TH 03 09 2020, 7:00 pm
Exhibition: FR 04 09 2020 – SA 12 09 2020
Curator: Katharina Brandl

In autumn 2020 the H13 Lower Austria Prize for Performance will be awarded for the 14th time by the Kunstraum Niederoesterreich. The only award in Austria to date for performance as a medium of the fine arts is announced annually, and the decision is made by an alternating international jury consisting of theorists, artists, and the Kunstraum team. In order to showcase the award-winning performance for a broader audience and reflect the relevance and presentation conditions of young performance art, in 2020 the performance of the award-winning project will again be flanked by an exhibition starting on the evening of the prize presentation. Details about the exhibition are developed in cooperation with the H13 winner during the course of the year.

Life Constantly Escapes

Opening: TH 01 10 2020 , 7:00 pm
Duration: FR 02 10 2020 – SA 28 11 2020
Curator: Andrea Popelka

The capitalist modern age is a socio-ecological catastrophe, a perpetual attack on life. At its core are certain ways of being, certain forms of subjectivisation and global conditions, which separate humans from the material of the world and put them in an extractive, value-based relation with it.

Theorists, poets, and artists of the Black Radical Tradition as well as queer, feminist, and indigenous voices have been criticising this violent process since longer. Amongst the former, Fred Moten, for example, along with Saidiya Hartman or Denise Ferreira da Silva, speaks of blackness. It refers to a social power that precedes modernity, opposes and surpasses it. Blackness is irreducibly connected with the coercion and brutality with which it is pursued as the social life and alleged attribute of black people. Herein, modern logic's violent nature is blatantly obvious. Just like the desire to stipulate existence and draw dividing lines between the self and others, human, world, land, animal kingdom, or nature. Moten, Hortense Spillers, Ferreira da Silva, and indigenous authors radically challenge these notions. They conjure a hereafter of modernity, which—in light of the global state of emergency and conflict—we must urgently devote attention to.

What happens now, when the realm of contemporary art focuses on this hereafter? When it is not organised by the dominant concepts of the world, humans, or subjectivity? This is Ferreira da Silva's question, and the exhibition is dedicated to it. A celebration of what is smouldering and throbbing under the corset of modernity, what comes before its borders and transcends them, what escapes its attacks out of pure necessity and opens a different world in the process. Where alternatives blossoms despite all adversities: a party, a garden, a dance. Where visitors stroll through the space as space, a sculpture becomes part of the body, a sound strokes along the wall and on the skin and stabs into the heart. Where subjects become objects and objects subjects, and within the shared materiality of all those directly and indirectly present a broken beauty emerges.

Further information about performances and curators' tours in the framework of the exhibition can be found in the enclosed half-year programme.

Performance Series 2020

In 2020 supporting, presenting, and mediating emerging performance art continues to be one of the main objectives in our work at the Kunstraum Niederoesterreich. The thematic focus is on experimental and transdisciplinary formats and projects, which deal with present-day aesthetic and sociopolitical discourses. The performances are related to the annual programme in different ways.

Quantum Brittle Stars (Johanna Bruckner)

Johanna Bruckner's performance "Quantum Brittle Stars" explores interactions and desires between different types of black boxes – human performers, sex robots, and brittle stars – and inspires thought on established notions of corporeality. *(Find more information about the performance evening enclosed.)*

Performanc evening Quantum Brittle Stars: TH 23 01 2020, 7:00 pm

Talking Sensibilities: Artists Talk with Johanna Bruckner: FR 24 01 2020, 5:30 pm

Summer show of the Studio Performative Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

The Kunstraum Niederoesterreich becomes a stage for the summer show of student works by the Studio Performative Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. In an intensive content-based exchange between the Studio and the artistic direction of the Kunstraum, the performers have the opportunity to develop their project in relation to the exhibition programme and present it to the public.

Summer show: MO, 15 06 2020, 7:00 pm

H13 Lower Austria Prize for Performance

Open to a broad thematic spectrum as always, the H13 Lower Austria Prize for Performance will be awarded on September 3, 2020 for the 14th time, along with the presentation of the award-winning performance. The aim is to showcase the diversity of performative works by young artists. The H13 serves as a springboard for performers: The list of renowned winners in the last years includes Helena Eribenne, Robert Lima, Jakob Lena Knebl, Christian Falsnaes, and many others.

Prize presentation: TH 03 09 2020, 7:00 pm

Exhibition: FR 04 09 2020 – SA 12 09 2020

Hands on! Art Education Thematic Focuses in 2020

“Penser avec les mains” – the title of the book by Swiss philosopher and pioneer of European integration, Denis de Rougemont, inspired filmmakers such as Jean-Luc Godard or Harun Farocki to find the nexus between theory and practice in the mediating role of hands. The 2020 thematic focuses in the Kunstrraum Niederoesterreich are informed by the guiding motif “thinking with your hands”: A series of (performance) workshops addresses the topics of the annual programme and conveys them to a broad audience with the intention to communicate knowledge and art also with our hands. All of our art education projects are free of charge, whether low-threshold formats for school classes or targeted activities for expert audiences and students.

Burrowing into the Archive (Marlies Surtmann & Olivia Jaques)

Since the beginning of 2019 Marlies Surtmann has been conducting research on the possibilities of archiving and passing on knowledge about performance art for future generations on the basis of the Kunstrraum Niederoesterreich archive. In two performance workshops led by Surtmann together with Olivia Jaques the bodies of participants become living archives.

Burrowing into the Archive – Performanceworkshop:
SA 11 07 2020, 11:00 am & SA 20 11 2020 3:00 pm

ATTAKK the TRAKK. Workshop for Young People on Digital Self-Defence

Who knows the most about us actually – our best friends or Google? Which traces do we leave behind on the Internet and is it even possible to be invisible out there? The workshop ATTAKK the TRAKK with artist Daniela Brugger provides an exchange forum for young people on the topic of “digital self-defence”. With artistic techniques, technical handicraft, and a readiness to share knowledge, this workshop oscillates between cryptolab and theatre stage.

Workshop for youth and young adults: FR 07 02 2020, 2:30 – 5:00 pm

TRAKKATAKK (Daniela Brugger): Performance-Workshop & Cloud Bar

In the performance workshop, artist Daniela Brugger and participants address questions concerning visibility and invisibility on the Internet. TRAKKATAKK is inspired by cryptoparties, but interpreted with artistic means: a camp for creative, digital self-defence and a format for knowledge exchange. Cryptoparties are taking place around the world, events at which people share knowledge and teach each other encryption techniques.

Daniela Brugger adapts this exchange format to thematise visibility and invisibility on the Internet but also to intervene in concrete contexts with artistic methods.

Performance Workshop & Cloud Bar: SA 08 02 2020, 1:00 – 5:00 pm
Public Cloud Bar from 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Bending over Backwards. Hysterical Performances (Johanna Braun)

In her performance workshop the artist and cultural scientist Johanna Braun investigates the performance of hysteria, how it entered the archive of French hysteria researcher Jean-Martin Charcot and later became an iconic image of 21st century popular culture as a representation of “the bridge-building hysterical body”. Gender, insanity, but also contemporary political defamations unite in the renaissance of hysteria and illustrate the transformation of Charcot’s images into the present-day rhetorical image language of social media and into artistic and politically motivated gestures.

Performance-Workshop: 18 04 2020, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Podcast Im Kunstraum

Initiated in 2019, the podcast continues in 2020 with the presentation of the contents of the Kunstraum, with or without a visit to the place. As an audio guide on site, at home, or on the go, you can listen to background information about our exhibitions, interviews with curators and artists, or discussion rounds at any time. Another feature on the podcast is the discussion series Throwback #tb, which picks up on topics from exhibition projects in the Kunstraum’s past and inspects their relevance for today and tomorrow.

www.kunstraum.net/de/vermittlung/kunstraum-podcast-1

An overview of all programme points can be found in the enclosed half-year programme.

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Opening hours: Tuesday–Friday, 11:00 am – 7:00 pm, and Saturday 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
Free entrance