

**MEDIA INFORMATION**

**Life constantly escapes**

Group Exhibition

**Opening:** TH, 25 02 2021, 4:00 – 7:30 pm

**Duration:** FR, 26 02 2021 – SA, 03 04 2021

**Artists:** manuel arturo abreu, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, Sean Bonney, Octavia E. Butler, Jesse Darling, Luna Ghisetti, James Goodwin, Grant Jonathon/HTMLflowers, Rohini Kapil, Kashif Sharma-Patel & Anuka Ramischwili-Schäfer, Ahya Simone and Bri Williams

**Guest curator:** Andrea Popelka

**PRESS TOUR:** WE, 24 02 2021, 10:00 am

**PRESS and  
IMAGE MATERIAL:** [www.kunstraum.net/en/press](http://www.kunstraum.net/en/press)

**PROGRAMME:**

**Curator Tour**

SA, 06 03 2021, 1:00 pm

**Public Guided Tours**

SA, 20 03 2021, 1:00 pm

SA, 03 04 2021, 1:00 pm **Come One by One-Führung**

**Performance Workshops**

Under the title *The senses are inexhaustible*, the workshops explore the haptic, tactile, and experiential dimensions of the body.

**Fake Therapy & Political Therapy (with Beata Absalon) (online)**

TH, 11 03 2021, 4:00 – 7:00 pm

My body is at best when I am silent (with Sophie Utikal) **(online)**

TH, 25 03 2021, 6:30 – 8:00 pm

### **Life constantly escapes**

In light of how it stands with current developments in the world and their impact on life on Earth, the desire that it would come to an end is not so strange as one might think. The modern world as we know it since the Enlightenment, it is a specific historical construct, which has evolved over the centuries. Originating in the dominant centres, it has covered life on the planet like a blanket and divided it into separate entities: human/nature, subject/object, man/woman. People declare other people property, so to trade them and generate profits. At the heart of this world resides a specific white, patriarchal and capitalist idea of a human, an individual, a subject. It thrives off the violent power structures that it created.

But what if life would now and then evade the privatising categorisations of this world, and we could conceive it differently? Could we imagine other worlds and bring them to life? Could we learn to sense those alternative realities and forms of life, which are already there, smouldering under the surface? The exhibition **Life constantly escapes** invites us to rethink the prevailing understanding of the world and to play with the new possibilities and imaginations that arise.

The division of this world, which relates to humans in terms of their use, is present in art as well. Hence, it is natural to assume individual artists, artworks, and viewers. **Life constantly escapes** refuses this practice of separation. Inspired by theorists of the Black Radical Tradition and Black feminism such as Fred Moten and Denise Ferreira da Silva, guest curator Andrea Popelka brings together artists and poets who defy the modern logic and its violence and propose alternatives. Here, artists, art objects, and viewers are not seen as separate from one another, rather they become one – transcending time and space – on a sensual level.

*“Art may not be a space where material circumstances and living conditions transform, but it is perhaps a space that facilitates sensual and imaginative experiences. The exhibition **Life constantly escapes** is an invitation to toil towards a new perception, a de- and reconstruction*

*of the world(s). It is an ode to imagination and dream, and a game with the senses.”*  
(Andrea Popelka)

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication with poetic contributions by manuel arturo abreu, Sean Bonney, Diane di Prima, James Goodwin, Caspar Heinemann, Keguro M’acharia, Momtaza Mehri, Kashif Sharma-Patel, Ridwan Oyindamola Tijani, and Bri Williams.

## The curator

### Andrea Popelka

Andrea Popelka is a curator and cultural scientist. She studied in Klagenfurt, Vienna, Hildesheim, Berlin, and London, most recently for her master’s degree in contemporary art theory at Goldsmiths College, University of London and a master’s degree in cultural science at Humboldt University of Berlin. Her curatorial projects include: *New Views On Same-Olds*, exhibit, art space of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna; *Heartbreaks. Or: Loving you is complicated* at the Vereinigung Bildender Künstler\_innen Österreichs; *Neue Horizonte 2030* in a private apartment in Berlin, *Posthuman Complicities*, also at exhibit, *I hear the waters’ song*, mumok kino, as well as exhibitions in Kunsthalle Wien, ACUD gallery Berlin, the Phyletic Museum in Jena, and with the collective GEIST.

Andrea Popelka lives and works in Berlin (D).

## Artistic Positions

### manuel arturo abreu

manuel arturo abreu are poets and artists from the Bronx in New York. They completed studies in linguistics at Reed College. abreu work in text, ephemeral sculpture, photography, and in a process of magical thinking that conjures the ritual aspects of aesthetics. Together with other protagonists, abreu run the *home school*, a publicly accessible art school in Portland, which promotes critical engagement in contemporary art.

manuel arturo abreu live and work in Portland (US).

### **Mei-mei Berssenbrugge**

Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, born in China and grew up in Massachusetts, is a poet. Her books include: *The Heat Bird* (Burning Deck); *Empathy* (Station Hill); *Sphericity*; and *Four Year Old Girl* (Kelsey Street). Since 1978 she has been a co-editor of *Conjunctions Magazine*. She teaches at Brown University and at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

Mei-mei Berssenbrugge lives in New Mexico (US) und New York City (US).

### **Sean Bonney**

Sean Bonney was an English poet and critic. His work, which was influenced by the British Poetry Revival of the 1960s and 70s, was notorious for its political activism and progressive ideals. Bonney taught a seminar about poetry and revolution at the University of Cambridge and was the organiser of the Poetry and Revolution Conference 2012 in Birkbeck, University of London.

Sean Bonney \*1969 in Brighton (GB), †2019 in Berlin (D).

### **Octavia E. Butler**

The US American author Octavia Estelle Butler was one of the few Black writers in the science fiction genre and the first to achieve great acclaim. Her work often centres around topics of feminism and resistance against racism. She was the first science fiction author to be awarded a MacArthur Fellowship.

Octavia E. Butler \*1947 in Pasadena (US), †2006 in Lake Forest Park, Seattle (US).

### **Jesse Darling**

Selected solo exhibitions: *Selva Oscura*, Galerie Sultana, Paris, FR, 2019; *Crevé*, Triangle France-Astérides, Marseille, FR, 2019. Selected group exhibitions: *Kunstpreis der Böttcherstraße*, Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, DE, 2020; *Afterglow*, Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama, JP, 2020; *The same room: Julie Becker in dialogue*, Galerie Neu, Berlin, DE, 2020.

Jesse Darling live and work in Berlin (DE).

### **Luna Ghisetti**

Luna Ghisetti studied at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. She often integrates self-welded chains and arm bands into her site-specific and installation-based works. They

decorate the body and are a protective talisman, while also delineating it and restraining its ability to move.

Luna Ghisetti lives and works in Vienna. (AT).

### **James Goodwin**

James Goodwin is a poet and PhD student at the Department of English and Humanities in Birkbeck, University of London. His research focus is blacksociopoetics, a variant based on a poetic, philosophical, theoretical, critical, and ethical notion of the social life of poetry.

James Goodwin lives and works in London (GB).

### **Grant Jonathon/HTMLflowers**

Works by the US American artist Grant Jonathon / HTMLflowers deal with chronic diseases, drug addiction, masturbation, self-hatred, and the failures of capitalism. Currently, he is working on the auto-fiction series *No Visitors*, is co-author/illustrator of *Werewolf Jones & Sons*, and writes occasionally for *Megg & Mogg*. His texts and drawings have been published in various magazines, books, and websites.

Grant Jonathon / HTMLflowers lives and works in Melbourne (AUS).

### **Rohini Kapil**

Rohini Kapil is a British artist. In her practice she is currently experimenting with ideas of abstraction and architectonic imaginations informed by her time in Los Angeles and her research into modern architecture at subtropical and tropical locations.

Rohini Kapil lives and works in London (GB) and the USA.

### **Kashif Sharma-Patel & Anuka Ramischwili-Schäfer**

Kashif Sharma-Patel is a writer, poet and editor at the 87 press. They work at the interface of sonic, visual and written cultures with particular reference to queer and racialised experimental work.

Anuka Ramischwili-Schäfer is a Georgian-German filmmaker working in sound and multimedia. Their work questions themes of displacement, translation, diaspora, gossip, bodybuilding and dysphoria. They attempt to work against ethnocentrism, in particular in terms of West Asia and the diaspora, disentangling ideas of 'the (near) East'.

Kashif Sharma-Patel & Anuka Ramischwili-Schäfer live and work in London (EN).

### **Ahya Simone**

Ahya Simone is a harpist, singer, artist, and organiser. She graduated from Wayne State University, where she was active as a solo harp player in 2011. Her multifaceted approach to the harp and vocal arts embraces classical music, jazz, and soul. She is also an up-and-coming filmmaker and was awarded a Knight-Sundance Fellowship in 2018. She is currently working on the development of the web series *Femme Queen Chronicles*.

Ahya Simone lives and works in Detroit (US).

### **Bri Williams**

Bri Williams is a sculptor and installation artist. She works with found objects, often with personal associations, in order to conjure a powerful psychic effect. Williams employs soap as a metaphorical material in her investigations of trauma and concepts of cleanliness as spiritual purity. Her works often evoke sexual violence and a narrative of exorcism and rebirth.

Bri Williams lives and works in Los Angeles (US).

#### **Press contact:**

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Image material: [www.kunstraum.net/en/press](http://www.kunstraum.net/en/press)

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

Free entrance