

Wolfgang Obermair
Solo works
2012-2026

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SOFTSHELL ARCHIPEL
with *Sasha Auerbakh, Jason Bunton, Vasco Costa,
Uladzimir Hramovich, Bögdana Kosmina, Wolfgang
Obermair, Lesia Pcholka und Ekaterina Shapiro-
Obermair*
February 13 – April 10, 2026
Fünfzigzwanzig, Salzburg (AT)



BLOW UP
Tyvek, fan, 3D-Print, paint
2025

RUBBER SOULS
with Anny Wass
August 01 - 29, 2025
Periscope, Salzburg (AT)



BRAVO!
PLA, EVA-foam, nylon flocking, silver foil
50 x 100 x 100 cm
2025



EISENSTEIN GOAT
PLA, EVA-foam, nylon flocking, silver foil
30 x 50 x 40 cm
2025





SAUSAGES
PLA, EVA-foam, nylon flocking, silver foil
50 x 35 x 35 cm
2025



BRAVO!
PLA, EVA-foam, nylon flocking, silver foil
50 x 100 x 100 cm
2025



PEPE CROSSING
Shellac, wood, PLA 3D print, tubes, pipe cleaner
120 × 120 × 10 cm
2022



MADE IN CHINA
November 3 – 11, 2023
GalerijaGallery, Ljubljana (SI)



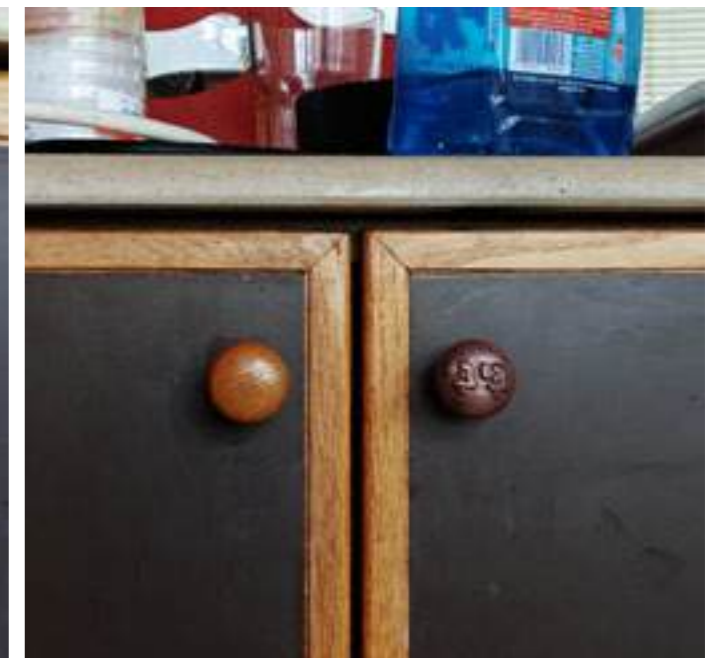
MALERHEMDCHEN DECKENKLOPPER
Textile, timer, broom sticks, electromagnetic engine
200 × 200 × 150 cm
2023

OPEN STUDIO
and other works
July – September, 2023
BMKOE, Auslandsatelier, Tel Aviv
Theartistresidence, Herzliya (ISR)



*Zex Shlufod Knubs
6 cooper plated drawer knobs
2023*

Upon moving into Studio 1 at The Artist Residence Herzliya, Obermair undertook practical improvements to the kitchen space. Finding half the drawer knobs missing, he crafted replacements with copper-surfaced handles using galvanic plating—an upgrade that would benefit all future studio users. Each knob was named after a political leader from Israel’s coalition government, transforming this functional intervention into a commentary on the 2023 protests. The work’s Yiddish title, *Zex Shlufod Knubs*, embodies the principle that politics should serve the people rather than the reverse. This daily interaction with the kitchen fixtures becomes a recurring reminder of political responsibility. Obermair frames the work as both an act of care-taking and applied politics—a monument to the contemporary political moment that operates through the mundane gestures of domestic life.





PNEUMA
(Where do we go wrong?)
Inflatable sculpture
600 x 40 x 40 cm
2023



COINS
Aluminium (beer cans)
8 x 8 cm
2023

Where Did We Go Wrong? is the title of an inflatable sculpture that stands almost 6 meters high in the middle of the Negev desert. The work has a clear modernist reference, transforming hard-edged minimalism into something soft. It also acts as a signpost and a column that questions its own boundaries: the phrase "Where Did We Go Wrong?" is written on the four sides of the sculpture. It invites a self-reflective and philosophical inquiry that can be applied to an individual or to society as a whole.



Drawings
Ink on A4 paper
2023



A HAIL TO HERR EDDING
June 15 - 29, 2023
White Dwarf, Vienna (AT)



*A Hail to Herr Edding
Installation, inflatable sculpture
PLA, corn shrimps, LED, acrylic, polyester fiber, fan
2023*

UNCANNY VALLEY
with
Nika Kupyrova
Wolfgang Obermair
Marie Reichel
Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair
Zsolt Tibor
March 22 – April 11, 2023
Studio PRÁM, Prague (CZ)



*UNCANNY VALLEY
exhibition view*

The exhibition UNCANNY VALLEY invites the viewer to move in the environment of the contradiction between the familiar and the unknown, thereby experience the unease that arises from this liminal space. The displayed artworks remind us that aesthetic experience is not necessarily associated with pleasant feelings, but with feelings of fear, anxiety, and unease as was already described by Kant, Schiller, and Lyotard.

Is what you see really what you suppose? This question is also posed by the sculptures of artist Wolfgang Obermair. In the case of surrealistic-looking assemblage sculptures, the viewer is first captivated by the play with the balance between the individual parts of the objects. A closer look at the sculpture reveals that the used materials, seemingly clearly recognizable, are not what they seem to be. This fact causes a feeling of uncertainty and throws us off balance. The one thing that was the link between us and reality has blown in the air. Excerpt exhibition text: Anežka Jabůrková



*APE MOTHER
Wood, Shellac, PLA, Nylon
Flocking, Ceramic, Shoe Strings, Oogoo
220 x 90 x 50 cm
2021*



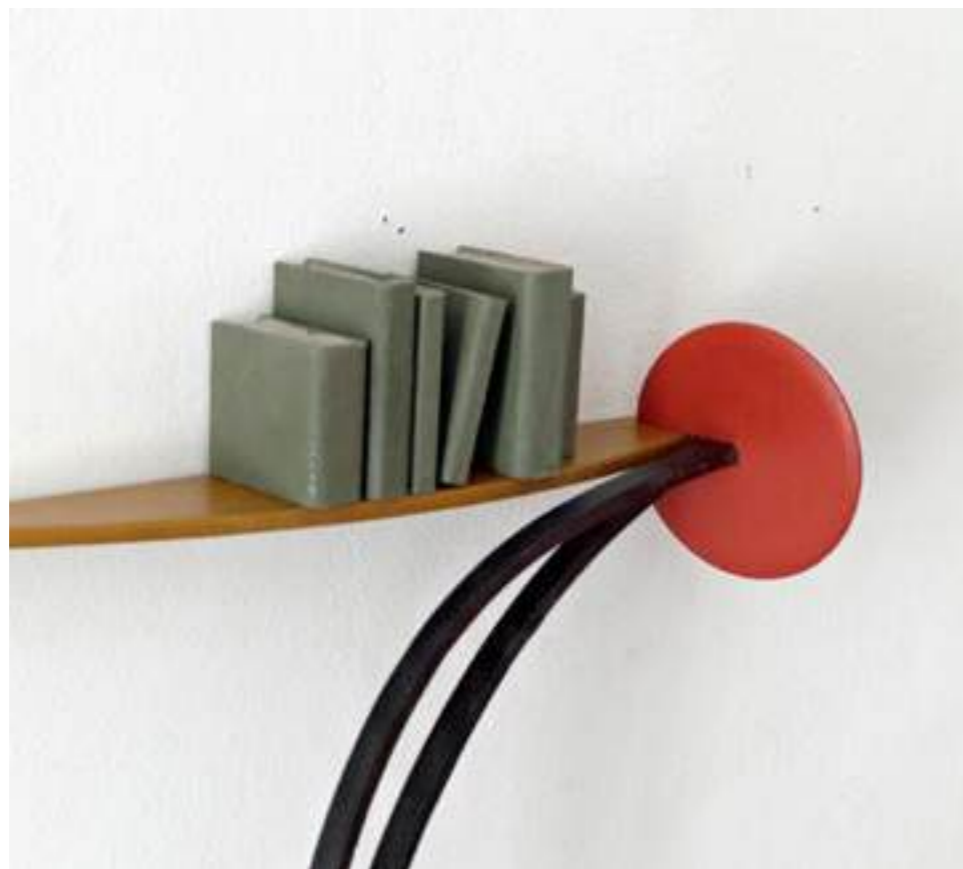
*APE MOTHER
Details*



*LIFT
Foam, Shellac, parabolic mirror, plaast
60 x 20 x 30 cm,
2021*



SCHULE DES SEHENS
HDPE tube, plaster, wood, PLA, nylon flocking,
120 × 50 × 30 cm
2021



UNREAD BOOKS
Wood, PLA, shellac
70 x 40 x 15 cm
2021



BIRDMAN
HDPE, oogoo, woogoo
70 x 50 x 30 cm
2024

EKTOPLASTIK
with
Lisa Biedlingmaier, Nathalie Koger,
Wolfgang Obermair und Michl Schmidt
February 16 - March 18, 2018
AKKU
Künstlerbund Baden-Württemberg,
Stuttgart (DE)



KLAPPT NICHT, INVOCATION OF OSKAR
SCHLEMMER, Wood, radio, speakers, HDPE
tube, RISO print, doormat
2018



FROM SHOES TO TOES
wood, oogoo, shoe string, copper
2019

LIGHTNESSND MATTER,
MATTER AND LIGHTNESS
Groupshow
January 20 - April 22, 2017
Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna (AT)



SOFT SHELL I
Cyanotype on terry
60 x 65cm
2017



SOFT SHELL II
Cyanotype on terry
60 x 65cm
2017



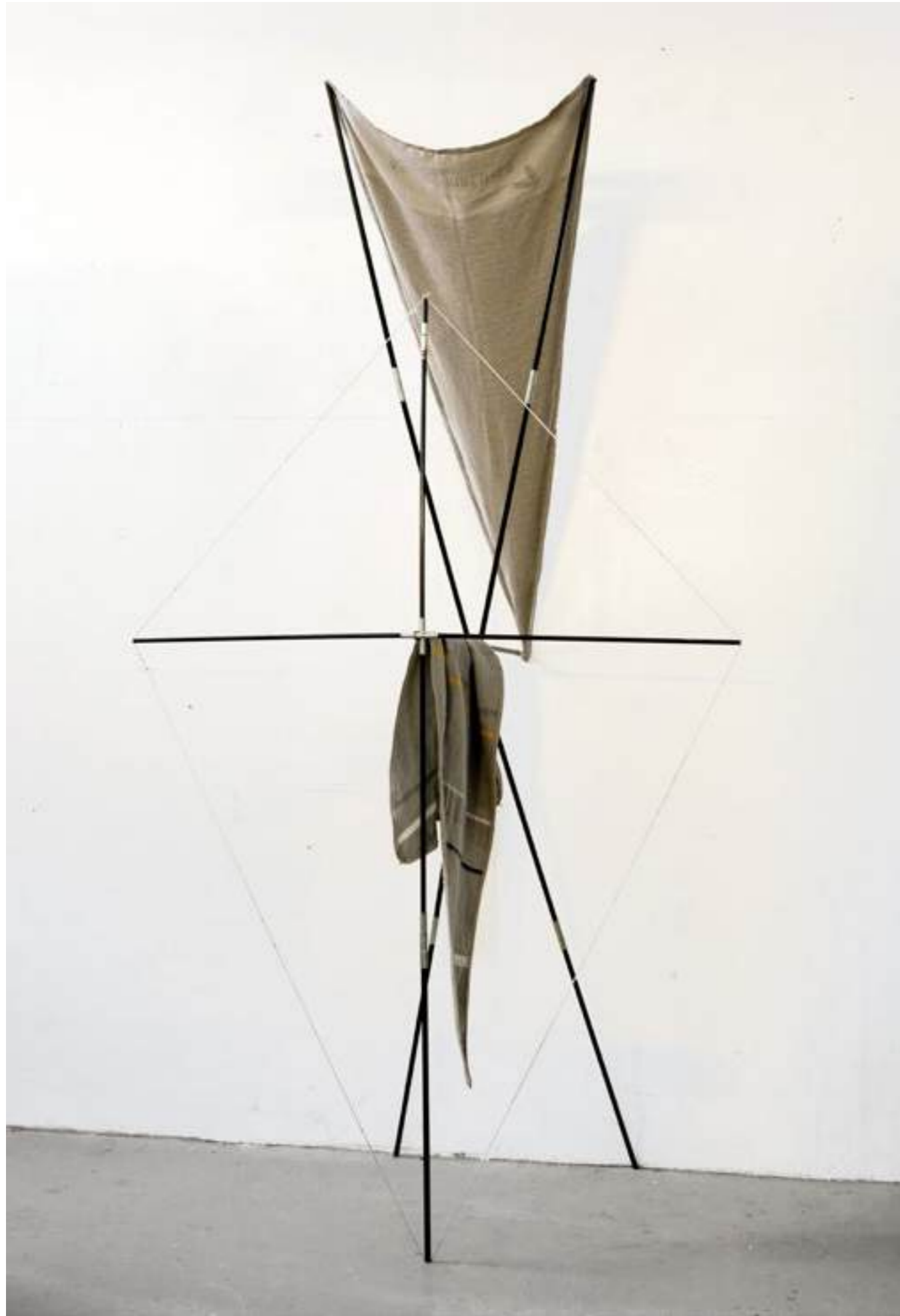
SKOPJE AQUEDUCT WET TOWEL TRY
Inkjetprint on rice paper
85x120 cm
2016

During a one-month artist residency in Skopje (North Macedonia), I attempted to respond artistically to the city's infrastructure and urban situation, exploring the question of to what extent Skopje can be viewed as a body. Among other things, I was interested in the relationship between the predominantly Roma-populated district of Opština Šuto Orizari (commonly known as Shutka) and the city center.

After the devastating earthquake of 1963, many Roma people were resettled in Shutka. Today, it is home to around 30,000 residents and is relatively isolated from public life, making it the largest Roma community in Europe. The district's coat of arms features, among other things, a Roman aqueduct that was decommissioned in the 18th century—an overlooked landmark of Skopje. From an urban planning perspective, the approximately 400-meter-long aqueduct forms a kind of vector linking Shutka with the city center.

Roma people are a constant presence on the streets of Skopje, collecting empty plastic water bottles from trash bins to later sell them as recyclable material. The image of the decommissioned aqueduct and the circulation of plastic water bottles has left a lasting impression on me—it reflects the precarious situation of the Roma more clearly than the aqueduct alone, which stands as a relic of a bygone era that feels largely disconnected from the present.

As an artist, I believe one cannot formulate a scientific thesis or offer a solution to a social problem. What one can do, however, is create images that raise open-ended questions. In that sense, the photographic work "Skopje Aqueduct Wet Towel Try" is a result of this engagement.

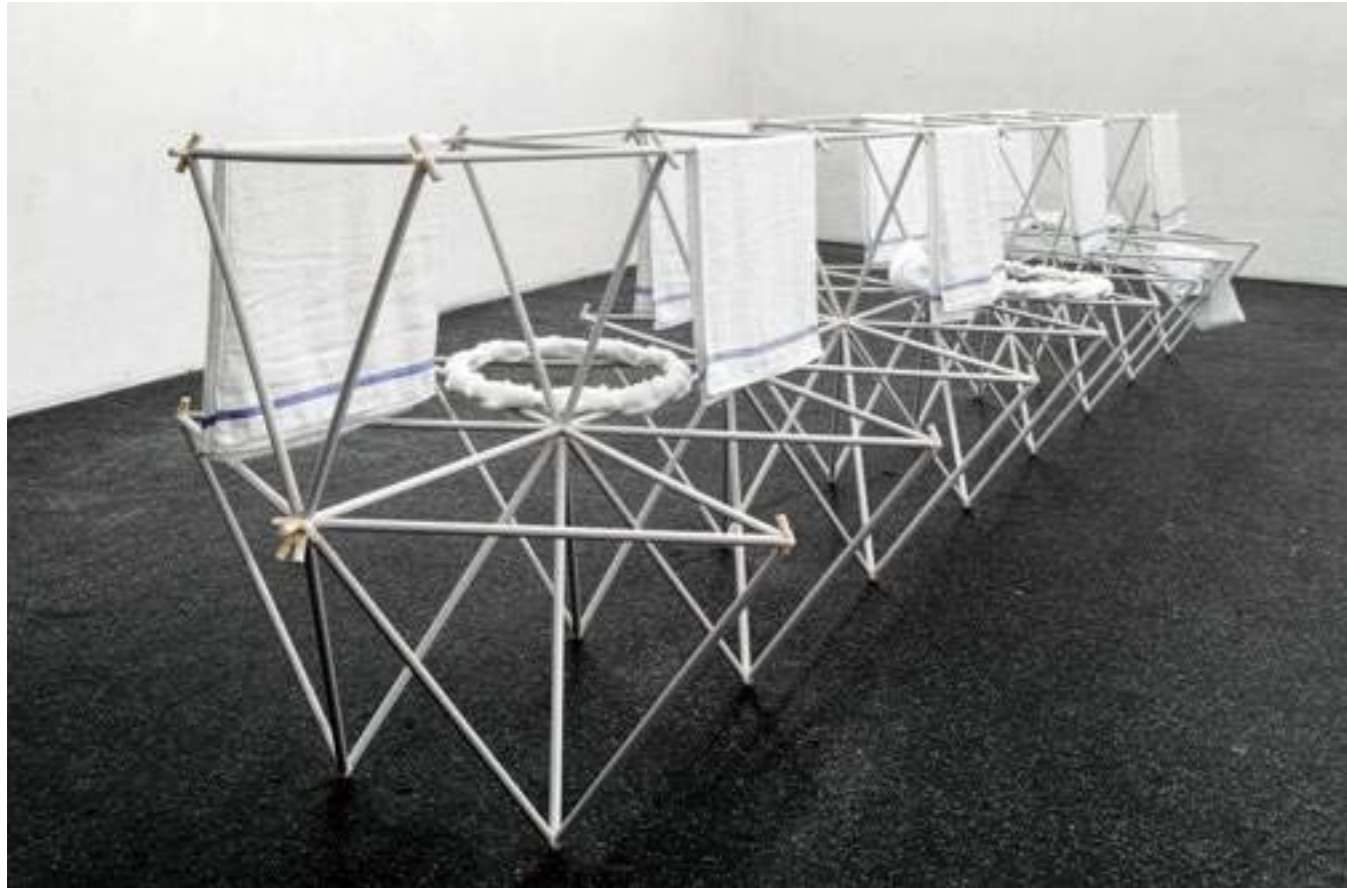


LOST AIRLINES
Blankets, tent posts, lines
2016



INFLATABLE SITUATION
Metal, wood, plastic toad
2015

FILMTEICH
26 June - 19 July 2015
VESCH, Vienna (AT)



TAKE A MUTUAL SHOWER I
Towels, PVC, PUR, soap
500 x 120 x 120 cm
2015

*"Some artists see an infinite number of movies. [...] Artists that like Horror tend toward the emotive, while artists who like Sci-fic tend toward the perceptive."
Robert Smithson, Entropy And The New Monuments, 1966*

Filmteich ("film lake") is a place in Vienna, defined both historically and geographically. Due to its local characteristics and its name, Filmteich carries the potential to generate fiction. It is, therefore, also the name of an imaginary space of production. In this sense, Filmteich becomes a place for the future in reverse — an occult invocation of intimacy and community.



TAKE A MUTUAL SHOWER II
Detail,



TAKE A MUTUAL SHOWER I
Detail



TAKE A MUTUAL SHOWER II,
Towels, PVC, PUR, soap,
450 x 280 x 40 cm
2015



OUT OF SIGHT II
Aluminium structure, PUR
240 x 120 x 120 cm
2014



*„TROMADERIANS CONSIDER ANYTHING BLUE EXTREMELY
PORNOGRAPHIC“ (PETER HUTCHINSON);*
Cyanotype on terry
2015



FILMTEICH
Wood, bulbs, fabric,
155 x 160 x 40 cm, 2015,,

H-A-L-F-A-M-A-N
with Jagrut Raval
February 07 – 21, 2015
AOTU, Beijing (CN)



The exhibition of Indian artist Jagrut Raval and German-Austrian artist Wolfgang Obermair explores the fundamental meaning of the term “sharing.” The German word *teilen* (to divide something into parts) and the Hindi word *bhaag* (a portion of the whole) both express the dual sense of “to share” and “to divide.” The ambiguity of the word sharing evokes multiple layers of meaning, touching upon social, military, and geopolitical dimensions. There is a latent potential for aggression and frustration embedded in the term, which also conveys a sense of loss: to share something is, in a way, to destroy the whole



OPERA BUFFA: DO WITH LESS; SO THEY'LL HAVE ENOUGH,
Detail, 2015

The installation, built from a fragile tent-pole structure, forms the framework for two narratives unfolding through a single object and five cyanotypes, both addressing the concept of the “locked room mystery.” This literary topos centers on the paradox of a closed system — a space where an action occurs that should be impossible without external intervention. The resolution of such riddles is always unusual, often defying conventional logic.

One early example is Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), where an orangutan, mimicking its master with a razor, decapitates one woman, strangles another, and hides her body up a chimney after entering a supposedly sealed room. Among the most famous illustrations of this story is Aubrey Beardsley’s 1894 drawing, which not only captures the room’s enclosed nature but also reflects a society unsettled by the blurred boundary between human and animal in the wake of Darwin’s theories. By the late 19th century, the locked room — and a fascination with the bestial — had become emblematic of the era’s dominant scientific currents: Darwinism and positivism.

The second narrative references a recent case involving a German art-transport employee imprisoned in China: “Each prisoner receives soap and a toothbrush, shortened by half so it cannot be used as a weapon.” Whatever the reasoning — a practice common in prisons elsewhere — the breaking of an object tied to personal care disrupts one’s perception of reality in a precarious, hermetic environment. Within the installation, a segmented hand evokes what Guillaume Apollinaire termed a “*drame surréaliste*,” functioning both as an overarching structural principle and as a signifier of a mysterious action. What remains is the opening of the lock.



*OPERA BUFFA: DO WITH LESS; SO THEY'LL
HAVE ENOUGH
Tent poles, silicon, Cyanotypes
2015*



*OPENING OF THE LOOK
Photography
2015*

IN-BETWEEN YOU AND ME
 with
 Christiane Huber, Enrique Lanz,
 Wolfgang Obermair, Jagrut Raval
 December 27, 2014
 Meridan 77, Beijing (CN)



Photo: Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair

PENDING
 Inkjet on rice paper
 MOVING STOLLS
 collaborative work of a line of
 moving stolls
 2014

“In-Between You and Me” is an attempt to understand the spatial temporality formed between individuals in a foreign land. The exhibition endeavors to comprehend various artistic visions from disparate locations around the world and present them in a liminal space. The space is a starting point that triggers the interactions and juxtaposes different narratives. The boundary between the viewer and the viewed gets diminished in this liminal space. The actions, sounds and gestures construct a dynamic aura within the space that leads to a potent question – Does the space between ‘Us’ and the ‘Other’ exist? Or is it merely a fictitious cavity that we imagine?



SPIT
 Performance in collaboration with Jagrut Raval
 2014



PENDING
Photography on rice paper
2015



OUT OF SIGHT,
HD video, 5 min
2014

A kinetic head construction slowly begins to spin. The rotation of the camouflage textile transforms the blunt cone shape into a wavy parasol. As it lifts, it reveals the face of the protagonist, who seems to resist communication with the viewer — even after his disclosure. Only when the pattern accelerates does the regularity of its structure emerge. The movement itself becomes a film within a film, spatializing the ornament and deconstructing the camouflage. Set against a garden-like backdrop, *Out of Sight* presents an ambivalent sequence oscillating between visibility and invisibility, between presence and deprivation. The scene evokes a fragment of a dystopian film, its full plot remaining unknowable.

O.T
July 16 – September 7, 2014
O.T, Project Space, Max Lust Gallery,
Vienna (AT)



O.T
Pvc construction, ink on towel
2014



The reigning belief today is that closeness between persons is a moral good. The reigning aspiration today is to develop individual personality through experiences of closeness and warmth with others. The reigning myth today is that the evils of society can all be understood as evils of impersonality, alienation, and coldness. The sum of these three is an ideology of intimacy: social relationships of all kinds are real, believable, and authentic the closer they approach the inner psychological concerns of each person. This ideology transmutes political categories into psychological categories. (Richard Sennett, The Fall of public Men)

GEFAELSCHE SONNE
September 06 – 13 2012
Schneiderei Home Studio Gallery,
Vienna (AT)



GEFAELSCHE SONNE
Exhibition view
2012



STOOL
rubber, Astro magazines
2012



WHEEL
Rubber, air
2012



BLACK, RED, WHITE MAMMOTH
Wooden stick, rubber cylinder,
black and white plot
2012



STABILIZING CROSS
Wood, foam, soap, tension belt, spray paint
2012

Wolfgang Obermair
Collaborations
2012–2026

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BUSTOPIA
Works and performances in collaboration
with Peter Fritzenwallner
May 14 – 24, 2021
Supergau Festival, Flachgau (AT)



DOPPELMAYR CROSS-COUNTRY - MOVING A BUS
Sculpture and performance
2021

Peter Fritzenwallner and Wolfgang Obermair will synchronize their objects and actions for SUPERGAU on site with the public postal bus network of the Flachgau region. The bus line 150 from Salzburg to the Wolfgangsee is the focus of their artistic work. Bus stations and bus interiors become places of performative and sculptural confrontation with commuters, travelers and festival visitors. The individual movement, the daily routine of the journey to the workplace, but also the waiting of people for the bus and for a better life, are starting points for the artists to hold conversations and to involve people in artistic processes. The surprising and the absurd play a special role in laying new routes and paths into the unknown.



SIGNALTOWER
Bustopia, sculpture
2021



HAVE A LIGHTTIGER?
Objects and performance,
2021

FREISCHWINGER
Works and performances in collaboration
with Peter Fritzenwallner
September 17 – October 4 2020
NonStopScheiner, Art in Public Space Styria, Graz (AT)



In the two-hour performance "Freischwinger (How to Explain Dead Loans to Deutsche Bank)," conceived by artists Peter Fritzenwallner and Wolfgang Obermair, the historical artist personalities Joseph Beuys and Martin Kippenberger meet by chance at a gas station in Graz. There, they enter into a fictional dialogue about current social phenomena. The performance took place on September 17, 2020, at 5 p.m. at NonStopScheiner (Opernring Graz, next to the Opera Pavilion). Afterwards, the accompanying art installation, featuring two video works, was on display until October 4, 2020.



Freischwinger
Performance, Installation with various objects, 2020



FREISCHWINGER: STAIRS
Sculpture and film prop
2020

BOETROMIOS
Works and performances in collaboration
with Peter Fritzenwallner
23. - 25.01.2020
minus20degree, festival for art & architecture
Flachau (AT)



*BOETROMIOS,
Performance / video HD 23 min
2020*

Flachau Boëdromios is a series of scripted and improvised performances in and around the ski resort Flachau for the Minus20degree festival. Fritzenwallner and Obermair combine eclectic art phenomena and world politics into concise pieces. Performances take place at fixed times in the form of participatory video shoots. Flachau Boëdromios is like a road movie that seeks to channel the aggression, fears, and fantasies of everyone in the face of global challenges toward a collective catharsis on the eve of the impending corona epidemic. The performances were realized with support from students of the Department of Architecture, FH Münster, Germany.”





BOETROMIOS,
Performance / video
Scene: march of the loathly
2020

NO BACKGROUND CHECK FOR TREBUCHET
December 2018
Daihatsu Rooftop Gallery at Salzburger Kunstverein
Salzburg (AT)



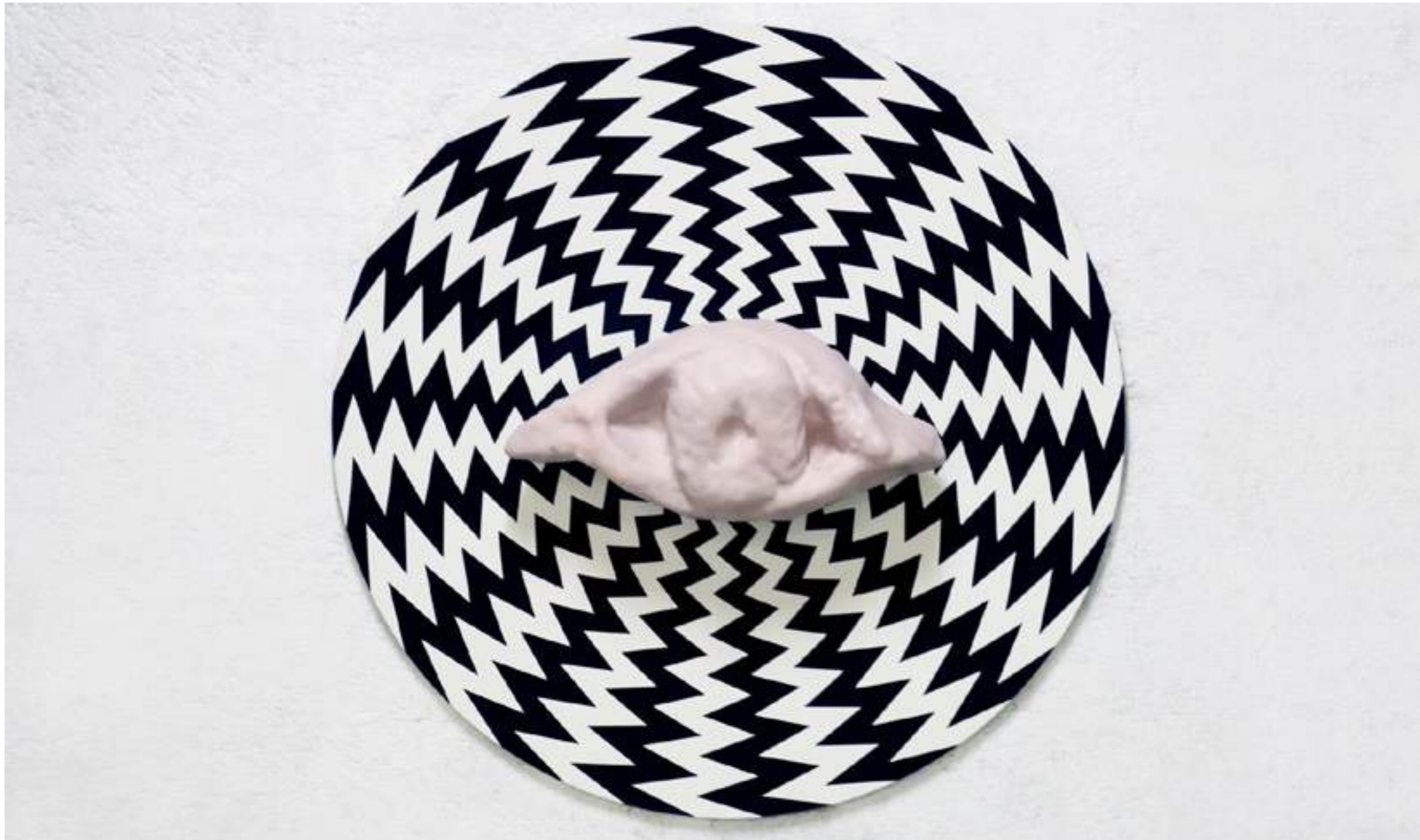
*NO BACKGROUND CHECK FOR TREBUCHET
Two sculptures for a collaborative performance with
Peter Fritzenwallner
Wood, fabric, aluminium
2018*

The sculpture – a functioning trebuchet – of Wolfgang Obermair is a project for the Daihatsu roof top gallery. It was presented in a collaborative performance with Peter Fritzenwallner at the annual exhibition “A passenger” of the Salzburger Kunstverein, curated by Andrea Kopranovic.



*NO BACKGROUND CHECK FOR TREBUCHET
two sculptures for a collaborative performance with Peter
Fritzenwallner, wood, fabric, aluminium, 2018*

TOMBOLA VII
work in collaboration
with Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair
October 4 – 24, 2024
ES49, Vienna (AT)



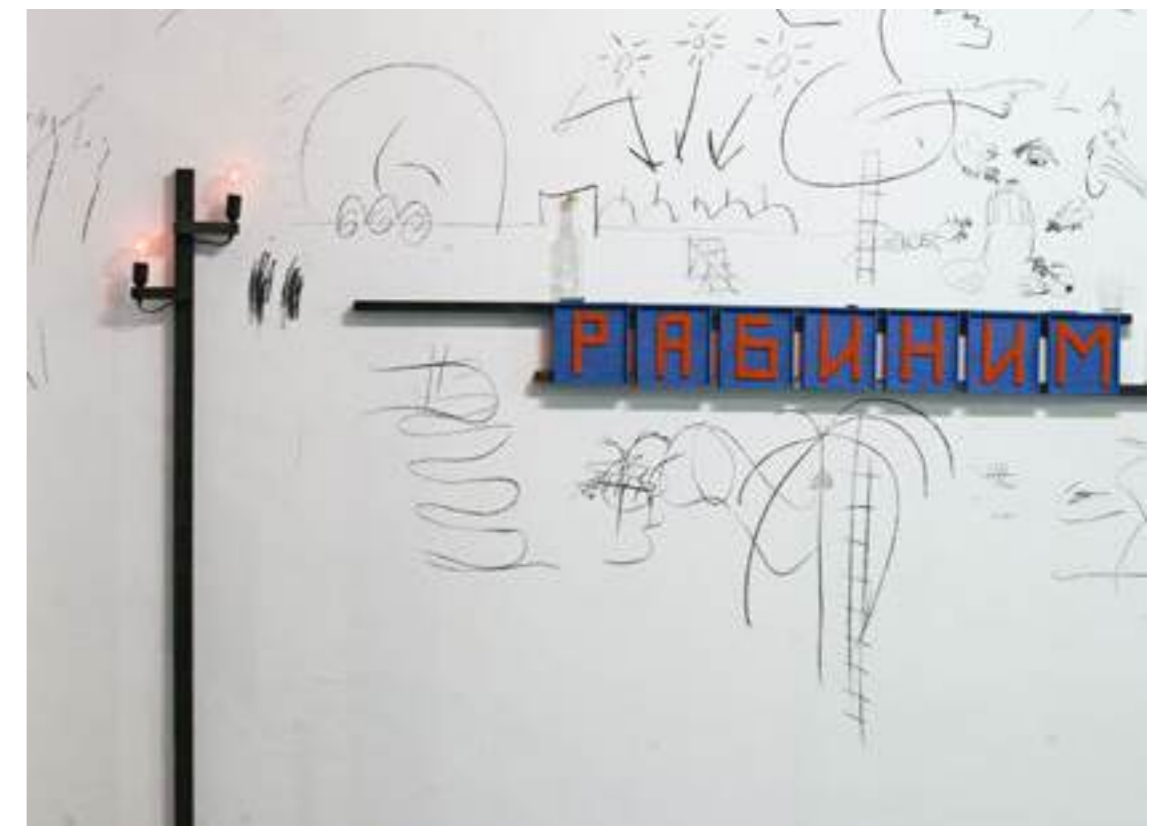
PARS PRO TOTO - MONOVISION
Gouache on wood, tin can, 3D print, shellac
130 × 130 × 50 cm
2024

Through his writings and research, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is considered a pioneer of perceptual psychology. However, few people know that he was nearsighted in one eye and had normal vision in the other. In optometric terms, this form of vision is called Goetheblick.

The image consists of two overlapping fields of depth, composed in the brain. The work *Pars pro toto - Monovision* depicts an eye that is neither left nor right. It floats—fixed to a tin can—centered in front of a disc with a radial, hypnotic black-and-white pattern. The painting's strong contrast evokes a restless circular motion, while the

flesh-colored eye object appears as an organic, yet immobile, body. Can this eye see at all? And if so, is it looking outward—or inward? The work is a collaboration between visual artists Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair and Wolfgang Obermair, together with their nine-year-old daughter, Hannah. The eye is a direct translation of a clay miniature she sculpted. The entire piece can be read as a social sculpture within a parental context. It reflects an ambivalence between observation and attention, grounded in both mythological and childlike ideas

BARMINI
Works and performance in collaboration with
Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair
Guest; DJ Masha Dabelka
November 28 – December 12, 2019
Kluckyland, Vienna (AT)



BARMINI, a collective work by Wolfgang Obermair and Ekaterina Shapiro-Obermair, invites all guests to drink vodka from one shared glass. The glass is placed in the middle of a fan and is permanently filmed by a camera fixed to one of the blades. The video signal is streamed live as a back projection on the window. The moments of pouring vodka create a video effect when the hand rotates at high speed around the glass. In this image, it seems that one is already drunk, even before starting to drink. The letters that the word “minibar” consists of are placed in random order in two languages – Russian and English – and serve as special shelves. Pieces of coal placed there encourage everyone to draw on the walls. For the opening, DJ Masha Dabelka is playing the soundtrack to the performative installation.

KLUCKYLAND is an artist-run space by Andrea Lüth and Gerald Roßbacher

*BARMINI
Installation views
Wood, coal, bulbs, vodka bottles, camera,
video projection
2010-2020*

BIG SCREENS SHATTER EASILY
With Luiza Margan, Lydia Nsiah, Nathalie Koger/
Wolfgang Obermair, Marlies Pöschl, Viktoria Schmid,
Kamen Stoyanov, Katharina Swoboda, Lisa Truttmann
April 11 – May 15, 2019
Oberösterreichischer Kunstverein, Linz (AT)



*SLEEP IS THE CRAWLING IN HUMAN
INTO ITSELF
Work in collaboration with Nathalie Koger
Wood, oogoo, varnish
2019*

PLACES THAT ARE BUILT ONLY AS SIGNS FROM AFAR.
GETTING CLOSER, THEY DO NOT HAVE A NAME
Works in collaboration with Nathalie Koger
October 30 – November 10, 2018
Blickle Raum Spiegelgasse, Vienna (AT)
Curated by Carola Dertnig and Claudia Slanar



*PLACES THAT ARE BUILT ONLY AS SIGNS FROM AFAR. GETTING CLOSER, THEY DO NOT HAVE A NAME.,
Installation view and performative lecture by Johannes Siegmund
2018*



*PLACES THAT ARE BUILT ONLY AS SIGNS FROM AFAR. GETTING CLOSER, THEY DO NOT HAVE A NAME.,
Installation view, wood, starch, silicone, jute,
2018*

Within a topographical space setting with mats and objects, the visitors are invited to bring themselves into a haptic and physical relationship to the surfaces and volumes. Mindfulness is enhanced by wooden objects, which hang from the ceiling and sway gently as they seek their balance. A vaporizer emits the smell of hops. The silicone objects are taken from a negative mould, analogous to a printing process with a positive pressure plate. The serial “prints” of the mats slowly remove parts of the mould, clean it and change it.

The objects and olfactory elements contribute to an atmosphere that turns space into an organic container. In this environment, the philosopher Johannes Siegmund guides the visitors through a experiment that strives for a symbiosis of mental and physical experience.



*PLACES THAT ARE BUILT ONLY AS SIGNS FROM AFAR. GETTING
CLOSER, THEY DO NOT HAVE A NAME.,
Installation view, wood, starch, silicone, jute,
2018*

ECHO POINT
Works in collaboration
with Vasco Costa
July 2017
hoast, Vienna (AT)



ECHO POINT
HD 2 channel synched video, projection and screen, 16 min
2017



SOLVING ENGINE MOUNTAIN
Working cloth, drawing on venetian blinds
2017

In summer 2016, Vasco Costa and Wolfgang Obermair had the opportunity to work together in Seyðisfjörður on projects related to the specific social environment of the village in northeast Iceland. Through sculptures, performances, and videos they explored the history and cultural potential of a former fish factory owned by Sigurbergur and Þorgeir Sigurðsson. The brothers are passionate art lovers, fishermen, poets, farmers, car collectors, and experts in concrete and construction. The space had recently been transformed by the Czech artist Monika Fryčová into an artist-in-residence project called Blue Factory. At their exhibition ECHO POINT at hoast, Vasco and Wolfgang returned to the material they had collected, using it as a starting point for a series of new works.

VISIBLE SIDE WHEN INSTALLED
Works in collaboration with Vasco Costa
July 2016
Skafffell bookshop-projectspace,
Blue Factory
Seyðisfjörður (IS)



During their three-week residency at the Blue Factory in Seyðisfjörður, Iceland, Vasco Costa and Wolfgang Obermair have been working on a visual structure as a physical and social platform to interact with the surrounding area and public space, for the people and visitors of the Blue Factory. The development and the building process involve the owners of the place, Sigurbergur Sigurðsson, Þorgeir Sigurðsson, and the artist Monika Fryčová. Vasco and Wolfgang presented their work in progress in Skafffell's Bookshop Projectspace, through video screenings and objects.



*REVOLVING BLUE FROM BOTH SIDES,
Performance at the opening of the exhibition
VISIBLE SIDE WHEN INSTALLED, 2016
Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/177682550>*

SANTA LUCIA
2013
with Vasco Costa
Viana do Castelo (PT)



SANTA LUCIA
Photography
2013



The temple Santuário de Santa Luzia, which began in 1904 and was only finished in the early 1940s, played a central role in the project. Since the finalization of its construction a photographer has been taking pictures of tourists and visitors in front of the church. Almost everybody in Viana do Castelo keeps a photo taken by him at their home. In times where everybody takes pictures all the time with ease, his analog working process and his continuous attitude towards the very same motif emanate a certain kind of fascination. With the passage of time, his carefully arranged visual work has become almost as strong as the architecture of the temple itself.

Costa and Obermair intervened in this given situation in two ways: on the one hand they brought their own anachronistic, object-like camera with them to record in a long exposure process the setting from behind. On the other hand they placed an oval life-size mirror on the stairs of the church to ask the photographer to take a portrait of himself. "Santa Luzia" is part of a series of collaborative works that question photography on a basic level as a tool to give insight to the world around us.

During their stay in the AIR programme of AISCA – an art association in Viana do Castelo – Costa and Obermair worked with cameras as objects of art in a sculptural manner. How are eyes and hands linked? How is perception transferred to action?

OLHO DE PEIXE
September 23 – 15 2013
with Vasco Costa
AISCA, Viana do Castelo (PT)



OLHO DE PEIXE,
Photographies
2013

Vasco Costa and Wolfgang Obermair are presenting in OLHO DE PEIXE the collaborative results of their three weeks stay at the artist in residency program of the art association AISCA in Viana do Castelo. Their activities create a draft for the discussion on visual culture and document their ambivalent relationship to the outer world's visibility through sensitized material and techniques. The cooperation of the artists is inspired by specific local conditions, such as the history and architecture of the former shipyard building, where AISCA is located, the fishing industry, the hub of the tides and the position of the sun.



TIDAL NEWSPAPER
Wood, ropes, paint
2013

VASCO COSTA/WOLFGANG OBERMAIR
July 15 – 30, 2012
part 1, UP AND DOWN
part 2, SINGLE-UNIT HUNTER STYLE
part 3, THE QUIET MIDDLE BODY
Schneiderei Home Studio Gallery
Vienna (AT)



During their residency at Schneiderei, a non-commercial art association in Vienna, Portuguese artist Vasco Costa and German artist Wolfgang Obermair developed a collaborative project in three parts. This project was inspired by the cultural investigations of the American ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax, particularly his studies in Choreometrics—a program examining the relationship between human behavior and cultural expression. Choreometrics focused on the formalized, culturally conditioned communicative behavior found in dance, a study Lomax conducted in collaboration with choreographers Irmgard Bartenieff and Forrestine Paulay in the early 1960s. Costa and Obermair integrated Lomax's theories with their own artistic exploration of urban life and politics, drawing from their experiences walking through the city of Vienna. The titles of the three parts of their project reflect Lomax's concept of mapping everyday movements.



*Pt.1, UP AND DOWN, installation views,
2012*



Part 1, UP AND DOWN
 Part 2, SINGLE-UNIT HUNTER STYLE
 Part 3, THE QUIET MIDDLE BODY

Beach Boys like bus drivers conveying a school picnic; they look happy and responsible, while the passengers are having a ball. Exaggeration of the head is the new thing, almost pecking. Thrusting, poker-faced, basically Arcticstyle is only slightly African. Trunk is one unit. Very simultaneous movement, jerky, linear, simple reversal. Low in variation. Low in fluidity. Steady, fast tempo. (Alan Lomax)

In the first part of their collaboration, Costa and Obermair created a vertically and horizontally structured environment placing the audience within a courtroom constructed from mattresses, ladders, and ancient Greek thinkers. Two large display boards displayed photographs of the Herodotus and Xenophon sculptures in front of the Austrian parliament, which was under renovation. Around the neck of Herodotus, workers had tied a rope to secure a shade cloth in the hot summer sun. In the exhibition, the ladders suggest access to—or an ascent towards—the foundational principles meant to govern democracy.

The subsequent phase of their collaboration presented a 40-minute basketball performance, inviting the audience to observe from an exterior vantage point akin to a cinematic experience. Accompanying this visual spectacle was the audio track of “Screening Room,” a 1975 television program featuring Alan Lomax’s discussions on choreometrics interspersed with excerpts from his film “Dance and Human History.” In this performance, the narrated movements of the dancers in Lomax’s film were replaced by the live actions of the basketball players on the court.

THE QUIET MIDDLE BODY is an environmental situation dedicated to the artists interpretation of a spiral movement. It is an attempt to set up an ethnographic shamanic scenery full of inter-subjective moments. An installation of different things: rugs, clay, a rotating platform in the middle, full of stuff, touched by a cloth on a tripod. Candles are lighting the room. The audience were invited to put their head in a piece of cold clay and leave a cast of their forehead. The installation is a reference to Alan Lomax’s passionate side, which goes beyond standard scientific research.



Pt.1, UP AND DOWN, installation views, 2012



*THE QUIET MIDDLE BODY, installation
2012*

