

**Ines Doujak**

**Not Dressed For Conquering**

October 15, 2016 – January 15, 2017

Press conference: Friday, October 14, 2016, 11 a.m.



**An exhibition by**

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

**Curators**

Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler

## Introduction

From October 15, 2016, to January 15, 2017, the Württembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart will be taking the form of a “fashion boutique”—to be exact, a set of different “pop-up stores”—within the scope of the exhibition *Not Dressed For Conquering* by the Austrian artist Ines Doujak (b. 1959, participated in Documenta 12, São Paulo Biennial 2014, among others). This exhibition is based on Doujak’s long term art and research project *Loomshuttles / Warpaths* that has embraced since 2010 different forms and formats in exploring the interconnections between textiles, fashion, colonialism, violence, and globalized production conditions.

The art and research project *Loomshuttles / Warpaths* involves an extensive (an “eccentric”) archive on the history of textile production reaching from the early Inca cultures to the present day, a series of posters and collages (based on the archive), a number of sculptures, performances, and video works, and also a fashion line. The latter encompasses the design and production of fabrics, as well as the drafting and manufacturing of dresses, shirts, bags, and accessories or the staging of “fashion shows”.

Highlighting the fashion line the exhibition at the Württembergischer Kunstverein integrates each of the mentioned elements into the framework of an overall installation that comprises nine “pop-up stores”, displays, fashion goods, archival objects, booklets, workshops, special sales personnel, cloth racks, labels, paper bags et cetera, but also “rioters” and “looters”.

Referring to the aesthetic languages of glamour and the fashion world, the exhibition aims to explore the suppressive facets of textile production: from the colonial plundering of resources in the fifteenth century to the industrialization-driven exploitation of seamstresses in the nineteenth century to today’s catastrophic working conditions in the textile industry in Bangladesh and other low-income countries—including the related fatal consequences.

In addition to the critical analysis of the economic and exploitation structures of textile production, the project also addresses the relations between fashion and the construction of gender, race, and class or the indigenous traditions of textile design that are largely ignored—or even concealed—within Western discourses.

All of these contexts are directly inscribed in the fabrics—the very medium of fashion—and other elements of the exhibition.

The exhibition will be accompanied by several events, such as talks, lectures, performances and workshops, as well as a series of publications comprising various “handouts”: each referring to one of the nine *Haute Couture Lines* (respectively “pop-up stores”) and each being designed specifically.

**Ines Doujak.** Artist's Note

*We enter the a-historical and hermetic world of fashion to dirty its surface with beautifully printed images and texts inscribing the colonial, gender and class histories of clothing on its own media, cloth, and with performances, a crucial component of the business of fashion.*

*The collection plays with notions of high and low art, and the way textiles have been firmly categorized as both feminine and the handicraft. Its inspiration comes from the rejection of power-dressing made by those on the streets of 19th century Lima who when asked why they were not working replied that they were not dressed for conquering.*

*Fashion had its origins in Haute Couture, derived literally from cutting and, as a necessary consequence, the stitching together, of clothes. As such it sets itself against so much non-Western clothing that consists of uncut cloth and relegated to the categories of the ethnic or 'primitive'. Haute couture persists as the most exclusive form of social distinction, while fashion is a global business financially dependent on ready-to-wear clothes and the accessories that go with it, which produces social distinctions of class and gender stereotypes. Its significant role in global capital accumulation is especially dependent on 'dispersed manufacture' in search of low wages because sewing has not or cannot be automated.*

*Some of the themed lines of the collection will contain designed cloth(s) for display and including the patterns for making the cloth into items like shirts. Other items and accessories will be ready to wear and available at site-specific boutiques. The themes will be developed and amplified in other media: mixes of text and image as posters or hand-outs; performances; sculpture, music and film. In other lines these media take center stage.*

*Performance, film and song are translations in motion of the rhythmic textiles of cultures which, using the off-beat phrasing of music, are a vibrant visual attack where the colors must talk to each other or literally argue. The intention is for such motion to break the cultural paradigm in which patterns exist only within borders, so that they may permeate the world at large.*

*The testimonials of each line will be descendants in spirit of the idlers and vagabonds of Lima who were not dressed for conquering, and the rioting looters of today: a veritable Flash Mob.*

**Fashion Lines / 'Pop-Up Stores'**

## HC01 FIRES: The War Against the Poor

The war against the poor whereby locked in workers with overloaded electricity circuits live under threat of death and horrible injury by fire to fulfill skin-tight clothing contracts.

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Two textile prints as bolts; shirts, trousers as samples on ladder; video (of a performance); hand-out (on what happened after the Karachi fire); audio-interview with Chun Soonok; wrapping paper; sticker



In Greek myth Prometheus steals fire from the Gods and was then punished in perpetuity by Zeus, tied to a rock, his liver pecked by a bird, then restored overnight to be pecked again and again. For Karl Marx he is a heroic figure, both allowing humans to develop productive forces by transforming nature with the use of fire, and also a 'saint' for freedom. At the same time in *Das Kapital*, Prometheus represents the proletariat chained to capital and its machinery. 'Chained' ironically rather than tied because of the very technological development fire has enabled, and repeated endlessly in the modern clothing industry that exists as a globalized production chain, constantly being outsourced to lower cost locations with power in the hands of large retailers in the richer parts of the world. They command a downward hierarchy of contractors and sub-contractors with the dangers of death and injury by fire and burn-out increased all the way down the chain to those who make the clothes.

The ambivalent nature of the myth of Prometheus was normal for the ancient Greeks so that in one version by Hesiod for workers of the time the freedom given by the gift of fire is accompanied by Pandora's box which, when opened, released all sorts of evils into the world. This version has been taken up by anti-industrialisation ideologists for whom Prometheus is the enemy. Such a crude reading loses the real ambivalence which is that the promise of productive plenty is compromised by capitalist social relations whereby producers from colonial Peru to modern day Bangladesh are literally chained inside their workshops and factories. In the modern world technological development has made for highly sophisticated production processes, yet which co-exist with and are co-dependent on ultra-exploitative working conditions especially in the making of clothes. Here workers are not just chained in

under lock and key, but like Prometheus and his liver, they are exhausted each working day but with no choice but to keep themselves alive for the next.

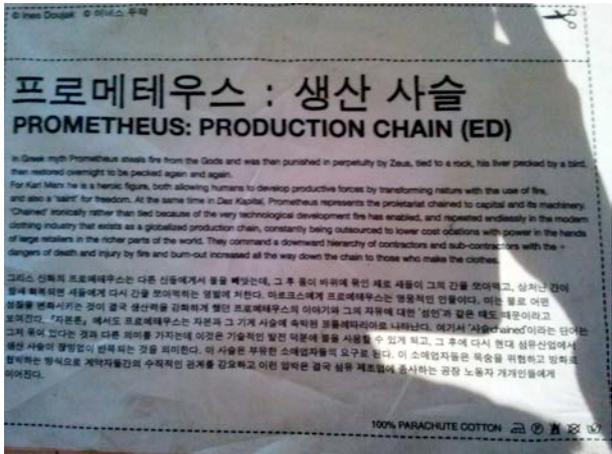
It was in just such conditions that Chun Tae-il, a textile worker cried out in the agony of his self-immolated death, "WE ARE NOT MACHINES." That was 1970 Korea. Over a hundred years ago, workers in England and the USA must have felt the same. In Korea it was young women workers he spoke for, working a minimum of 14 hours a day in unventilated spaces full of dust where they could not stand up, and it is they who have been the real creators of Asian economic miracles from yarn spinners in early 20th century Japan, to the rippers and seamstresses of Korea's clothing industry in the latter part of the 20th century. The symbiotic relation between capital accumulation and patriarchy has never been clearer. They were its 'Industrial Warriors' on the 'Export Front' in the gung-ho language of its authoritarian governments, but were abused and their health damaged in this 'war', subject to early Burn-Out ...

The accumulated capital which the work of those super-exploited young Korean women created was invested either in new more hi-tech, capital-intensive production, or used to outsource the labour intensive end of the garment industry to new low-waged areas of the world, so that women exploited in Bangladesh or Honduras are likely to be working in South Korean owned and managed clothing factories under similar conditions to the 1970s Pyounghwa Market. In Bangladesh in 2010, just days before yet one more fatal factory fire, a worker was shot dead by the police for protesting at conditions in a South Korean owned factory. In Honduras burn-out is such that only 6.3% of women have worked longer than 10 years in such factories ...

... Textile and clothing workers have fought against their exploitation for hundreds of years with strikes, riots and the struggle to create trade unions, knowing that only they can change the conditions of work. In some instances fire itself has been used as a direct means of attack against oppressive conditions.





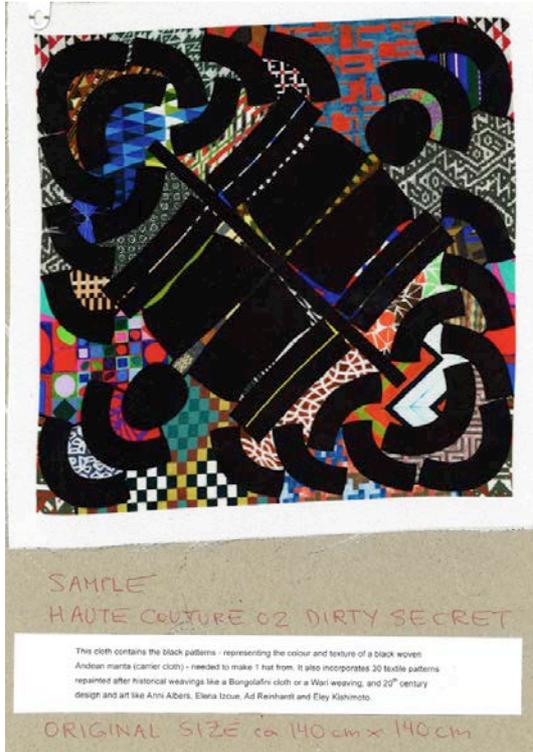


## HC 02 DIRTY SECRETS: Tradition

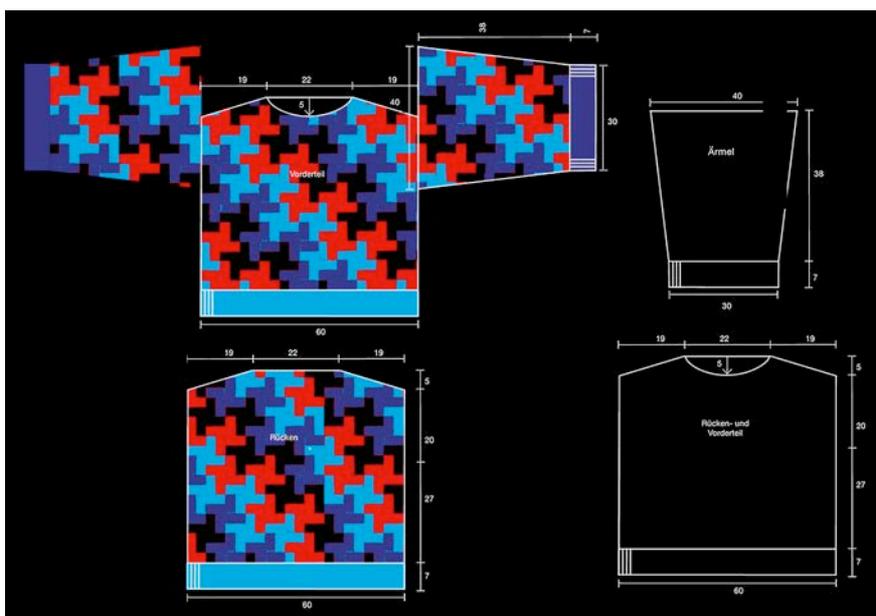
Good Marks for Social Cohesion, Bad When it Resists Enclosure of the Common. Inside the clean-cut Black Square the dirty secret of a thousand years of textile patterns.

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Three scarves; twenty different ponchos; costume from Andean wrist bands; 8 booklets and historical display with the inscription: "Lest. Verbreitet gute Schriften (Read! \* Spread Good Writings!); poster; wrapping paper; old tailors mannequins, knitted pull-over



Sample (left); cover of booklet (right): pattern (bottom)



## *Content of the eight booklets*

### 1 / OUT OF THE JUNGLE AND INTO THE FACTORY

In which the dirty footprints of colonialism are spread all over the contemporary world most visibly in global trade and forms of labor discipline.

### 2 / THE GARDENER'S DOG

In which colonialism's omnivorous sense of entitlement is made in the name of efficiency while it fetishizes authenticity or puts it on display in safe spaces.

### 3 / THE SORCERERS' GEOMETRY

In which the Western world claims for itself a unique ability to change and being creative. It equates this with individualism and so must denigrate the communal, especially dance, even while freely taking from it.

### 4 / UNEASY CO-EXISTENCE

In which a pick and choose attitude to the past is used to create modernity by enforcement or by disguising itself in the deceits of nostalgia.

### 5 / ESSENTIAL VULGARITY

In which archaic intolerances are presented with the most sophisticated means by modern actors with a modern agenda.

### 6 / FATAL OBSTACLES

In which women's autonomy confronts a variety of patriarchal claims to their well-being using contemporary and archaic rationalisations.

### 7 / DANGEROUS ELEGANCE

In which a consumerism prompted by colonialism with claims of innovation and fashion while in the interests of trade and labour motivation is played with and subverted by its users in the colonised world.

### 8 / BITTER ABSTRACTION

In which the distance between cause and effect is developed with the aid of weaponry and mathematics to produce morbid symptoms in the economy, environment, and the use of force.

### HC 03 CARNIVAL

Where Masterless Voices Sing Songs in the Dark of Unforgiving Joy, the Masters' Voice Falter.

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*Video (with John Barker); body suits; masks; body-adaptions; wrapping paper; produced with the support of the São Paulo Biennial*



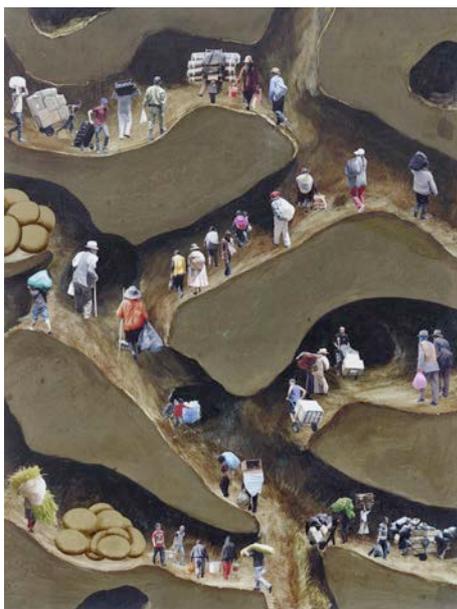
Ines Doujak, John Barker, *A Mask is Always Active*, 2014, video

### HC 04 TRANSPORT

Chains of Lean Retailing, their Wheels Oiled by Bar Codes and Human load Carriers.

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Textile print; bullet textile; boots; necklaces; two bags (one with textile print with potato sack and bullets as background); metal boxes; wrapping paper



Cloth (Detail)

## HC 05 APES, KRIMINALAFFE: Why Are Things As They Are?

When Paradise was lost to men and women, the Ape stayed put. In captivity the lazy rascal must work for his supper, and asks: Why Are Things As they Are?

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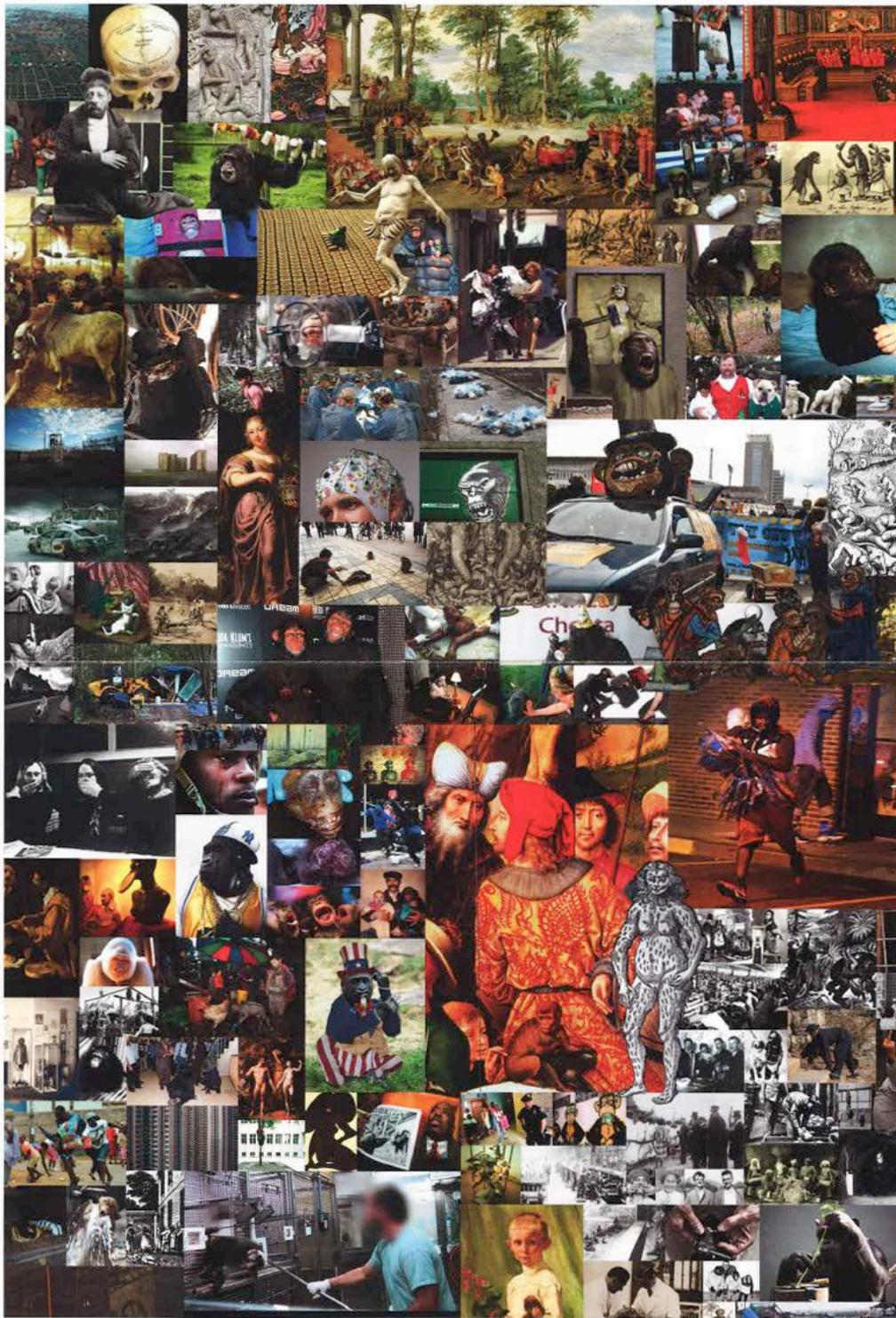
Two textile prints; t-shirt; 3 Dapper Dan outfits (one little for a rioter); sweat suit; pyjamas; sculpture; performance



Performance, Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HWK), Berlin, 2015, photo: Sebastian Boles

"F.W. Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management was published in 1903. In it, he describes a worker both as an 'intelligent gorilla' and – unwittingly endorsing the worker-gorilla's intelligence – as one who "deliberately plans to do as little as he safely can." Nine years later in 1912, the Prussian Academy of Sciences opened a station on Tenerife devoted to experimentation with the 'mental capacities' of apes, and especially chimpanzees. Tenerife itself was the last of the Canary Islands to be conquered by the Spanish in 1496. Half the indigenous population sided with the invaders, the others in the north of the island resisted and, when finally defeated, were enslaved to work on sugarcane plantations – a laboratory for colonial capitalism. It was chosen as a location for the station because of its climate and because of its proximity to Cameroon, then a German colony, from where nine chimpanzees were captured and transported over the sea. It became famous for the 'experiments' of psychologist Wolfgang Koehler. He has been acclaimed as a co-founder of Gestalt theory, for offering an alternative to the behaviourism of Pavlov and Thorndike and as anti-Nazi, but he also laid some groundwork for an instrumentalized psychology of work ..."

(From: Ines Doujak, John Barker: "Kriminalaffe: Sultan at the Dole Office", see: <http://continentcontinent.cc/index.php/continent/article/view/214>)



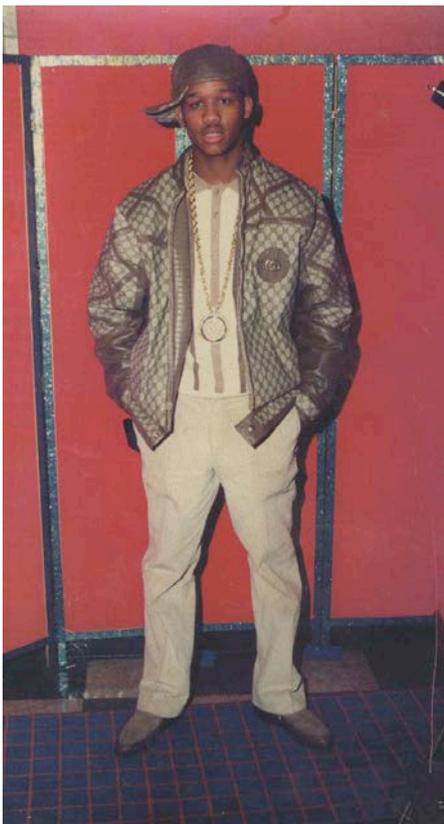
06 Kriminalaffe, Inao Doujak, 2015 (Ausschnitt, 140 cm x 340 cm)

Ape / Kriminalaffe, Why Are Things As They Are?, 2015, collage

### *Dapper Dan* (Reference)

"Designer Dapper Dan described his way of working as 'sampling', a unique interpretation of mixing existing designs and logos with his own interpretation ... Dapper is often considered the godfather of hip-hop style, and for good reason. If it wasn't for him, Eric B. and Rakim's Gucci jackets on the cover of *Paid in Full* would not exist. Neither would all the Louis Vuitton, Fendi, and MCM outfits that LL Cool J, Big Daddy Kane, and KRS-ONE wore ... But it's the 'hustlers and street people' Dapper really got to thank for his success. 'They were my primary clientele. The look spread outside the hustler culture and was embraced by the whole rap world, and they just took it everywhere', Dapper explained ...

No one was more aware of the importance of the logo than Dapper Dan. The Harlem entrepreneur, born Daniel Day, developed a proprietary process for screen-printing on leather in the '80s, just as logomania was cresting. He opened a boutique on 125th Street in 1982, and soon, he was outfitting the leading hip-hop stars in his takes on the popular logos of the time. ... His logo designs soon spread to custom car interiors, curtains, and furniture, and his store was open 24 hours a day to satisfy his customers' voracious appetite for all things logo. (<https://agnautacouture.com/2016/04/03/dapper-dan-of-harlem-the-power-of-logos>)



References (Dapper Dan)

## HC 06 THE DEVIL

The Devil Opens a Night School to Teach the Uses of Drugs in War, the War Against Drugs, Drugs as War and the Drug of War.

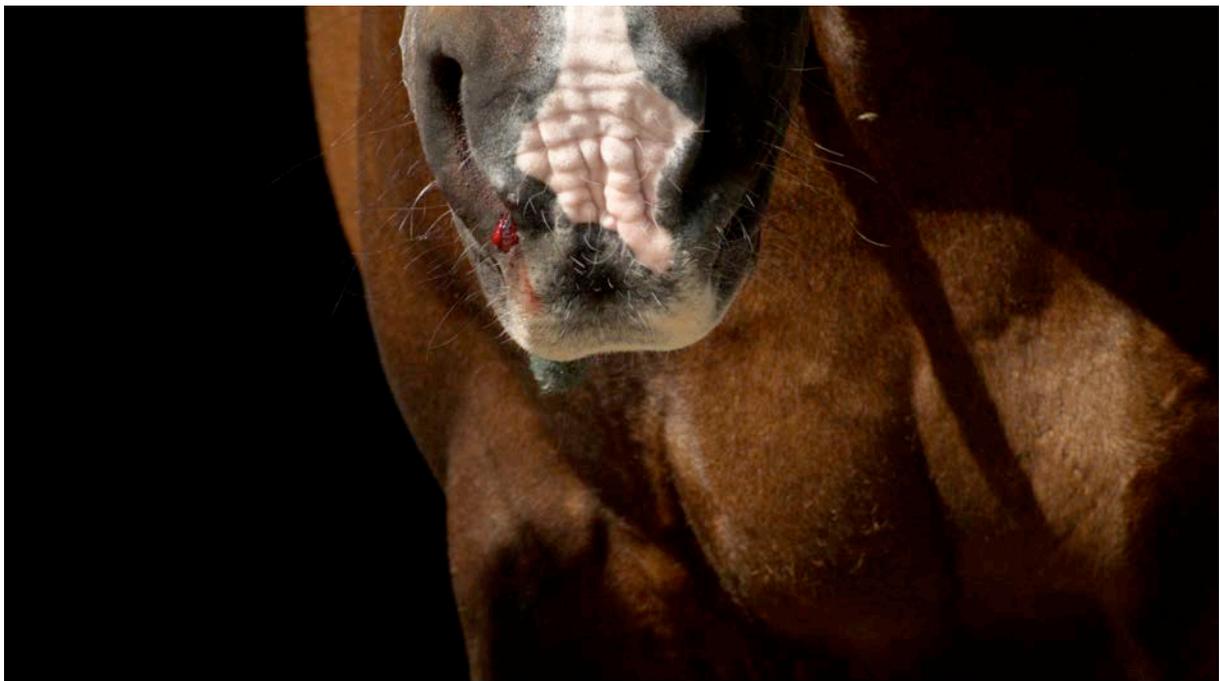
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With John Barker. Video (30'); devil film costumes; coat, suit, shirt, dresses, blouse, umbrellas, and skirts made of blood polka dot pattern; seven hats; drug film costumes; jackets, trousers, and ten caps made of military camouflage, produced with the support of the Kyiv Biennial

The devil opens a night school in Kyiv to teach the secrets of success and failure. The curriculum includes the uses of drugs in war, the war against drugs, drugs as war and the drug of war. This wandering school will made its first stops in Ukraine and Spain, where the crises are acute and provide stark examples of the forces of profit as violence and the resultant break-downs. The artists use the figure of the devil and its many names and guises to dramatize and amalgamate the businesses of war and drugs. A movable tent with a specially designed and printed cloth on which there are horses, rotting grapes and close-up charred wood becomes the devil's night school location. As a start the devil will offer two types of drug: heroin, as a legacy to the world from the wars in Vietnam and then Afghanistan, and crystal meth.



Ines Doujak, John Barker, *The Devil Opens a Night School to Teach the Secrets of Success and Failure*, 2015, video



Ines Doujak, John Barker, *The Devil Opens a Night School to Teach the Secrets of Success and Failure*, 2015, video



### HC 07 AQUA VIVA: What Forms the Outside of the Inside?

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25 framed collages; outfits; 2 textile prints (to be sold as panels plus pattern how to make a dress); leech dress; t-shirt



## **HC 08 WORK**

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Workwear out of batik cloth; cloth with handprints; sabots (hand carved and painted with the word "sabotage"); fountain

## **HC 09 LANDGRAB**

Your Land is My Land

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Container with black toxic flowers (papier-mâché) on the back of a black truck (pick-up); twenty posters; jewelry; belt; t-shirts; video, produced with the support of the Kyiv Biennial

A set of posters present a history of the justifications for land grabs from the 16th century to the present from the mouths of who made them. The language changes but the claims are always the same, that is of more efficient land use, claims that are untested in the long run.

## **Ines Doujak (\* 1959 in Klagenfurt, lives in Vienna and London)**

### **Solo exhibitions (selection)**

Johann Jacobs Museum Zurich (2015); Galerie Krobath, Vienna (2007); Salzburger Kunstverein (2005); Wiener Secession, Vienna (2002)

### **Group Solo exhibitions (selection)**

**2016** *Peace-Treaty*, San Sebastian (Cultural Capital); *Sans peau / No Skin*, SBC Gallery of Contemporary Art, Montreal, QC

**2015** *School of Kiev*, Kiev-Biennale; *Creating Common Good*, KunstHaus Vienna; *All Men Become Sisters*, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz; *The Beast and is the Sovereign*, MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani Barcelona), Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart; *Social Glitch*, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna; *Utopian Pulse – Flares In The Darkroom*, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart; *Wow! Woven? Entering the (sub)Textiles*, Künstlerhaus. Halle für Kunst und Medien, Graz; *Share – Too Much History, More Future*, Museum of Contemporary Art Banja Luka, Banja Luka

**2014** *Ejemplos a seguir! Expediciones en estética y sostenibilidad*, Museo Metropolitano de Lima, Lima; *Share – Too Much History, More Future*, MMKK, Klagenfurt; *Utopian Pulse – Flares In The Darkroom*, Wiener Secession, Vienna; 31<sup>a</sup> São Paulo Biennale; *Punctum. Bemerkungen zur Photographie*, Salzburger Kunstverein; *Zur Nachahmung empfohlen. Expeditionen in Ästhetik und Nachhaltigkeit*, Zollverein, Essen; *Ten Million Rooms of Yearning Sex in Hong Kong*, Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong

**2012** *re.act.feminism #2. A Performing Archive*: Fundación Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde; Galerija Miroslav Kraljevic, Zagreb; *Acts of Voicing*, Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart; *Busan Biennale 2012*, Busan, South Korea; *Reflecting Fashion. Kunst und Mode seit der Moderne*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, MUMOK, Vienna

**2013** *¡Ejemplos a seguir! Exploraciones en estética y sustentabilidad*, Capilla del Arte, Puebla; *54th October Salon. No one belongs here more than you*, Belgrade Cultural Center, Belgrade; *Acts of Voicing*, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul

**2010** *Principio Potosí*: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Museo Nacional de Arte La Paz, Bolivien; *Triennale Linz 1.0. Gegenwartskunst in Österreich*, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz

**2008** *Peripheral Vision and Collective Body*, MUSEION, Bozen

**2007** *documenta 12*, Kassel

**2004** *Be What You Want, But Stay Where You Are*, Witte de With, Rotterdam; *Die Regierung. Paradiesische Handlungsräume*, Secession, Vienna;

**2003** *How Do We Want to be Governed?*, MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani Barcelona); *Being in the World*, Miami Art Central, Miami

**2000** *Dinge, die wir nicht verstehen*, Generali Foundation, Vienna

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**Curators**

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**Opening**

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**Supported by**

Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst des Landes Baden-Württemberg

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Stiftung Landesbank Baden-Württemberg

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Marli Hoppe-Ritter-Stiftung zur Förderung der Kunst

and others