

Post-Peace

February 25 – May 7, 2017

Pressinformation

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Curator

Katia Krupennikova

An exhibition by

Württembergischer
Kunstverein Stuttgart



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The exhibition *Post-Peace*, which includes works from nearly twenty artists from different cultural areas, traces the present-day manifestations of and relationships between war and peace. How much war is embedded within our peace? This is the pivotal question.

The exhibition proposes to express our present situation, in which the "peace" of global capitalism is dearly bought through constant violence and war, with the term "Post-Peace," the time after peace. *Post-Peace* spans a historical arc from the Second World War to the present day. Against the background that history is known to be always written by the victors, the exhibition takes a critical look at our cultures of memory and encourages a redetermination of historical discourse. In video works, photographs, installations, and performances, the artists address issues like colonialism and fascism in Europe, the Holocaust, or the so-called Middle East conflict. Explored are topics like the ramifications of 9/11, the cynicism of global arms trafficking, the contemporary forms of nationalism and militarism, and the conflicts involving Ukraine or the Kurdish population.

Post-Peace was originally produced in 2016 for Istanbul as part of the curator prize bestowed by the Turkish financial institution Akbank. However, shortly before the opening, the exhibition was censored and cancelled. In Stuttgart, it will be seen for the first time, now in an expanded form.

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Introduction

**Even the fierceness of war and all
the disquietude of men make
towards this one end of peace,
which every nature desires.**

(Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, 19th book, chapter 12)

From February 24 to May 7, 2017, the Württembergischer Kunstverein will be showing the exhibition *Post-Peace* curated by the Amsterdam-based Russian curator Katia Krupennikova. The exhibition, which includes works from nearly twenty artists from different cultural areas, traces the present-day manifestations of and relationships between war and peace. How much war is embedded within our peace? This is the pivotal question.

The idea, still dominant today, that war is a means of achieving peace harks back to the early Christian theologian Saint Augustine from Late Antiquity. Around 1,500 years later, Field Marshal Earl Wavell asserted just the opposite, that the Versailles treaties of 1919 represented “a peace to end peace.” In taking up Wavell’s assessment, the exhibition proposes that our present-day situation, in which the “peace” of global capitalism is dearly bought through constant violence and war, be expressed with the term “Post-Peace,” the time after peace.

Indeed, *Post-Peace* spans a historical arc from the Second World War to the present day. Against the background that history is known to be always written by the victors, the exhibition takes a critical look at our cultures of memory and encourages a redetermination of historical discourse: issues like colonialism and fascism in Europe, the Holocaust, or the so-called Middle East conflict. Explored by the artists are topics like the ramifications of 9/11, the cynicism of global arms trafficking, the contemporary forms of nationalism and militarism, and the conflicts involving Ukraine or the Kurdish population.

The Dutch artist **Anna Dasović**, for example, uses film fragments from the unfinished Special Film Project 186 of 1945 in her four-part work about Holocaust cultures of memory. This film project, which was commissioned by the U.S. Air Force, for instance comprises footage of Buchenwald immediately after its liberation, showing how residents of the nearby town of Weimar were confronted with the conditions of the concentration camp on site. Dasovic interweaves the suggestive aims of this visual production with current political speeches about the Holocaust.

Alongside such works probing the documentary, other pieces investigate the potential of the imaginary. The Russian artist **Lyubov Matyunina**, in her video work, zeroes in on the fairy tale "Little Zaches Called Cinnabar" by E. T. A. Hoffmann—a carnivalesque story about illusion and reality—and relocates the story to various venues in Kaliningrad. This city, which was once called Königsberg and was decimated during the Second World War, was not only the birthplace of Hoffmann and Kant, but also of the artist herself.

The Jordan-born artist **Lawrence Abu Hamdan**, in turn, follows the homicide of two youths by Israeli soldiers in the West Bank in his artwork, involving methods of audio-ballistic analysis with shooting range equipment.

In addition to presenting works of contemporary art, the exhibition is also conceived as an open platform for articulation and performance. To this end, the collective **Anonymous Stateless Immigrants (A.S.I.)** is building a special stage based on a model by the Russian avant-garde artist Alexandra Exter, which is especially meant to be at the disposal of refugees. Opposing to the concept of closed borders and nation-states, **A.S.I. group** invites visitors of the exhibition to use the stage over the course of the show: to think aloud, rehearse, meet in the format of the open mic sessions. During the opening evening, a live performance titled *I Must Seek Refugee Again* will take place on the stage.

On the Censoring and Cancellation of the *Post-Peace* Exhibition in Istanbul

Post-Peace was the winning exhibition of the Akbank Sanat International Curator Competition 2015. Jury members were Paul O'Neil (director of the graduate program at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, New York), Bassam El Baroni (curator and tutor at the Dutch Art Institute, Arnheim), and Hans D. Christ and Iris Dressler (directors of the Württembergischer Kunstverein). The prize was meant to finance the exhibition to be hosted at the venue Akbank Sanat in the heart of Istanbul. However, it was censored and cancelled by the bank four days before the opening in March 2016.

Open and subtle censorship in the art world is on the rise, even in democratic societies—often these acts of censorship are kept secret and pass off discretely behind the scenes. However, if a case is made public, it often turns out that those who had been censored are accused of being the aggressors themselves, as they supposedly were only interested in producing a scandal. At the same time, quite a few protagonists in the art world appear to have internalized censorship as a sometimes unavoidable means to an end.

The directors of the Württembergischer Kunstverein, Hans D. Christ and Iris Dressler, together with their colleagues Valentín Roma and Paul B. Preciado, also experienced a case of censorship, in 2015, at MACBA in the context of the exhibition *The Beast and the Sovereign*. Only due to public pressure was the cancellation of the exhibition finally undone. MACBA has still never publicly addressed this scandal. As in the case of *The Beast and the*

Sovereign, the exhibition *Post-Peace* can no longer be negotiated without the topic of censorship, which now appears to count among the main symptoms of “the time after peace.”

The presentation of *Post-Peace* at the Württembergischer Kunstverein in Stuttgart aims not only to lend strong public visibility to a brilliant exhibition on peace and war, but also to continue the highly tabooed debate on open and subtle forms of censorship that are increasingly restricting the liberty of art in the minds of many artists and curators.

Conference: How I Learned to Start Worrying: Symptoms of Post-Peace

Saturday, February 25, and Sunday, February 26, 2017

On the opening weekend of *Post-Peace*, a two-day conference will be hosted for international artists and theorists. Titled *How I Learned to Start Worrying: Symptoms of Post-Peace*, it will first contextualize and reflect on “Post-Peace” as a concept. Moreover, the conference will embark on a detailed analysis of the phenomena of censorship, self-censorship, precarious working conditions, neoliberal structures, and lack of transparency in the art world—along with the pertinent forms of resistance. In addition to the case of the *Post-Peace* exhibition in Istanbul, as well as the special situation in Turkey, other examples of censorship will be discussed, along with basic censorship mechanisms.

Works in the Exhibition (Selection)

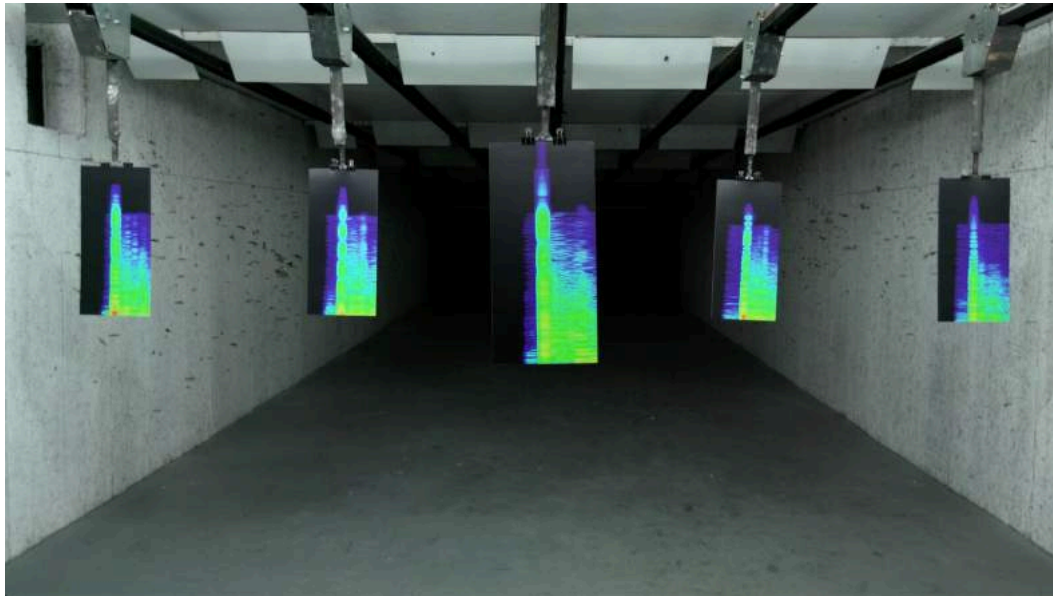
Courtesy (unless otherwise noted): the artists

// **Lawrence Abu Hamdan**

*1985 in Amman, lives in Beirut

Rubber Coated Steel, 2016

HD video, 21'



In May 2014, Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank (Palestine) shot and killed two teenagers, Nadeem Nawara and Mohamad Abu Daher. The human rights organization Defence for Children International contacted Forensic Architecture, a Goldsmiths College-based agency that undertakes advanced architectural and media research. They worked with Abu Hamdan to investigate the incident. The case hinged upon an audio-ballistic analysis of the recorded gunshots to determine whether the soldiers had used rubber bullets, as they asserted, or broken the law by firing live ammunition at the two unarmed teenagers. A little over a year after Abu Hamdan completed his report, he returned to the case of Abu Daher and Nawara in his video *Rubber Coated Steel*. The video acts as a tribunal for these serial killing sounds. It does not preside over the voices of the victims but rather seeks to amplify their silence, fundamentally questioning the ways in which rights are being heard today.

// A.S.I. group (Ehsan Fardjadniya)
*1980 in Kermanschäh, lives in Amsterdam

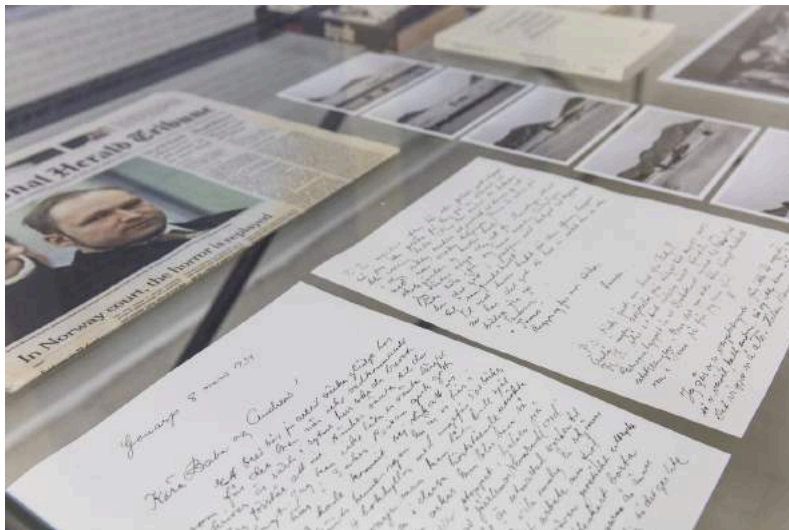
Hinterland, after 'Stage for Tragedy' (Interpretation of Alexandra Exter's drawing for a constructivist setting for a tragedy, 1924), 2017
Euro pallets, dimensions variable



Opposed to the concept of closed borders and nation-states, A.S.I. group invites visitors of the exhibition to use the stage over the course of the show: to think aloud, rehearse, meet in the format of the open mic sessions. During the opening evening, a live performance titled *I Must Seek Refuge Again* will take place on stage.

// Sven Augustijnen
*1970 in Mechelen, lives in Brussels

Summer Thoughts, 2012-ongoing
Installation, dimensions variable
Courtesy: the artist and Jan Mot



Summer Thoughts is a long-term research project that originated in an invitation from A Prior Magazine to react to dOCUMENTA 13 (Kassel, 2012). Inspired by the tapestries of Norwegian artist Hannah Ryggen (1894–1970), Sven Augustijnen responded in the form of a letter to curator Marta Kuzma.

The series of letters spanning the period from 2012 until today, along with newspapers, photographs, books, and other archival materials, bring together temporalities, personalities, and topographies. They constitute a layered network of references, associations, personal experiences, cultural occurrences, and political events

happening in the time of writing.

Summer Thoughts questions the present state of crisis in Europe as not merely an economic or political one, but as a moral and cultural challenge marked by the twisted meaning of democracy and freedom, personal responsibility, and, as a consequence, fertile ground for the resurgence of far-right movements.

// Ella de Búrca

*1986 in Dublin, lives in Brussels

Roof Without Walls (Defiance), 2017

Concrete floor tiles cast from concrete roof tiles, dimensions variable



We have entered the era of post-peace, to which the past posts pieces of itself. One such communiqué, inscribed on a humble roof tile, silently declares: "DEFIANCE." This, along with the "Saorstát Éireann" logo, was assiduously inscribed on all products of Irish labor during the economic war that immediately followed Ireland's liberation proper, in 1938, from 800 years of British occupation.

Ireland refused to repay debt that had been forced upon it by Britain as a condition of leaving the United Kingdom. Britain responded to this turnaround by choking Irish trade with obscene import duties, effectively paralyzing the fledgling Irish economy. Understanding economic servitude to be the complete anathema to political independence, the Irish labor classes strove on, bearing their agony with pride, carving "DEFIANCE" into all they created: the republic was finally free, financially and ideologically, from all colonial influence.

Caught gratefully lapping debt from the heels of bureaucratic madams in EU pleasure dungeons, how should Ireland's present-self respond to a love letter received from its past, which is dedicated to a creature so wholly unlike itself?

And how the tables have turned as British DEFIANCE prepares to leave the EU's single market, subverting the power play, or repeating history as farce. In this work, Ella de Búrca examines the legacy of political idealism by recasting the roof tiles as floor tiles and placing them on the ground, for your feet to stamp down.

// Anna Dasović

*1982 in Amsterdam, lives in Amsterdam

And He Knew That Someone Who Had Witnessed These Things Might Be Too Stunned to Speak, 2016 - 2017

16 mm Projektion, 3" Loop; Video, 17' 56", Loop, framed letter, 26 x 31 cm, image on forex, 277 x 250 cm



This installation deals with how the claim to an impossibility of 'witnessing' the Holocaust is retained through political speech. Why are notions like 'the unimaginable' and 'the unthinkable' activated whenever politicians speak about the Holocaust?

The presented footage consists of fragments of Special Film Project 186, assigned by US Army Air forces to a crew of cameramen and movie directors – mostly from Hollywood – with the task of producing “the most complete and comprehensive propaganda color film of the war ever made.” Primarily devoted to documenting the Allied aerial bombing campaign on Germany, a few reels of film depict the consequences of Nazi terror in the Buchenwald concentration camp in April 1945. Rather than showing these scenes, the focus is on German citizens of the nearby town of Weimar that are being forced by the US army to walk through Buchenwald promptly after its liberation. Declassified in the 1960's, the final release of these film reels marks a significant moment in which Holocaust discourses began to emerge throughout the West.

Also on display is a press photograph of the exhibition “Lest we Forget” (June 30—July 14, 1945, Library of Congress, Washington DC) featuring visitors standing in front of an image taken in Buchenwald.

Significantly, Barack Obama repeatedly made reference to these documents during his presidency. The work reveals how representations of the Holocaust are activated through political speech to shape dominant views on the past and the present.

On “The last Face” And Other Images, 2017 – ongoing

photographic prints, book, dimensions variable

Borrowing its title from the wooden sculpture *Das letzte Gesicht* (*The last Face*), this collection of visual documents shares a material history via the so-called Goethe Oak.

In 1937 when Buchenwald concentration camp was erected, the forest was cleared away by the SS, and only one oak tree remained of its flora. Legend had it that Goethe rested under that tree, and thus the camp was built around it. In August 1944, US Air Forces bombed the armament factory located directly next to Buchenwald, leaving the camp intact. Of this bombing – and its planning – aerial images exist. As artist Harun Farocki argued, there is a complexity revealed in the very production of these type of images, an intrinsic link between the logics of war and photography: the same plane that drops bombs is equipped with a camera. Both involve a privileged position of enlightenment (*Aufklärung*): “to be able to see, one can remain at a distance of its object.” Spreading flames from the bombing caused the Goethe Oak to catch fire and the SS ordered the tree to be felled. Bruno Apitz then carved the death mask out a piece of the destroyed oak and smuggled it out of the camp.

Reassembled into a new constellation, the documents on display become acts rather than things. They reveal some of the interests and logics underlying the waging of war from World War II till the present day.

// Köken Ergun

* 1976 in Istanbul, lives in Istanbul

The Flag, 2006

Zwei-Kanal Videoinstallation, 8' 54"



The Flag is the second part of Köken Ergun's video series about the state-controlled national day ceremonies of the Turkish Republic. Shot during the "April 23rd Children's Day," which marks the establishment of the new Turkish Parliament and the official demise of the Ottoman Empire back in 1920, this split-screen film documents a pompous, patriotic performance devised by elders to be performed by children. Hosted by the mayor and governor of Istanbul, with the participation of a high-ranking general, the ceremony features poems and oaths read out loud by primary school students. Here, patriotism becomes a hard-lined nationalism. One of the texts, "The Flag," is recited passionately by a girl who vows to "destroy the nest of any bird who doesn't salute [her country's] flag in flight" and to "dig the grave of anyone who doesn't look at the flag the way [she does]."

// Johan Grimonprez

* 1962 in Roeselare, lives in Brussels and New York

Blue Orchids (Blaue Orchideen), 2016

HD-Film, 48'

Courtesy: Der Künstler und Historic England Archive 1940 Fox Photos



We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office.
—Aesop

In *Blue Orchids*, Grimonprez creates a portrait diptych of two experts situated on opposite ends of the same issue: the global arms trade. The stories of Chris Hedges, the former war correspondent of *The New York Times*, and Riccardo Privitera, a former arms and equipment dealer at Talisman Europe Ltd (now dissolved), provide an unusual and disturbing context for shocking revelations about the industry of war. While interviewing Privitera and Hedges for Grimonprez's recently released feature-length film *Shadow World*, it became clear that the two men were describing the same anguish but from paradoxical perspectives. One has dedicated his life to unmasking lies and the other has built his life on lies. Making use of both their personal and political histories, Grimonprez gradually reveals the depths of trauma and duplicity, situating the arms trade as a symptom of a profound illness: greed.

// Alevtina Kakhidze

*1973 in Zhdanovka, lives in Muzychi

One Man's Meat Is Another Man's Poison, 2017

Drawn map based on interviews about the Second World War conducted by the artist in Saint Petersburg from January to February 2017



This new work commissioned for *Post-Peace* falls in line with the artist's earlier research, which looks at the contemporary history of Maidan and the subsequent war in Ukraine through a personal perspective of a participant of these events. The artist herself was an active supporter of Maidan, while her mother lives in the middle of the conflict territory. In her drawings and performances, Kakhidze confronts the public with discontent with media representation and confusion through absurd mythologies that are being created in front of our eyes.

// Yazan Khalili

born 1981 in Damascus, lives in Ramallah

The Day We Saw Nothing in Front of Us, 2015

Series of scratched photographs, 100 x 66 cm

Courtesy: the artist and Lawrie Shabibi Gallery



This photographic series is of Israeli settlements in Occupied Palestine. The Israeli settlements are scratched out of the photo, revealing not only the possibility of an iconoclastic future, but the materiality of the image itself, whereby violence can be enacted upon the violence depicted—the construction of the landscape as an image, and the violence embodied in its layers.

// Lyubov Matyunina

*1985 in Kaliningrad, lives in Amsterdam

Post Fairy Tale, 2016

HD-video and installation, 15' 55"



Post Fairy Tale is an experimental documentary film based on E. T. A. Hoffmann's fairy tale "Klein Zaches, genannt Zinnober" (Little Zaches Called Cinnabar, 1819). It is filmed in the city of Königsberg (formerly part of the Kingdom of Prussia), today the city of Kaliningrad (Russian Federation enclave on the Baltic sea), the birthplace of Immanuel Kant, E. T. A. Hoffman, and the artist herself. 70 percent of the city was destroyed during World War II and not rebuilt until now. Landscapes that appear in the film are those "remains" of Königsberg. The film is based on three storylines. The first one is active, the dynamic fairy tale; the second one focuses on passive observation of life, a poetic capturing of reality. The third unit is virtual reality, specifically the social reality of Facebook, which Matyunina compares with contemporary magic spells and fairy tales, represented through typography and sound.

In a time when the term *post-truth* has won its position as Word of the Year 2016 according to Oxford Dictionaries, the moral of Hoffmann's fairy tale teaches us to become aware of mere appearances and to always look for grounded reasons and explanations.

Matyunina questions the function of self-representation and the social media in today's life, where it is so easy to refer to reality as fiction and to turn fiction into reality

// Adrian Melis

*1985 in Havana, lives in Athens

Moments that Shaped the World I, II, III, IV, 2012–2015

Series of video sketches in 4 chapters, respective duration: 2' 45", 4' 49", 3' 36", 5' 54'



These are the first chapters in a series of videos where the juxtaposition of image and sound modifies perception and suggests new meanings.

Moments that Shaped the World I – Havana-Berlin juxtaposes the long shot of a street in La Habana, taken recently, and the audio archive from CNN live broadcasting the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This simple disjunction between image and sound suggests the persistence of an ideological system which already fell apart in certain parts of the world but still conditions life in Cuba.

Moments that Shaped the World II – Primavera Sound contrasts images from a popular music festival in the city of Barcelona and the audio archive of the manifestations and street protests of the M-15 movement, which marked the most recent sociopolitical events in Spain. The video suggests certain frustration toward political protests which are in the end reduced to mere spectacle.

Moments that Shaped the World III – The East Is Red shows images of flickering neon lights in contemporary and developed China, contrasting with audio of an extract from a song entitled "The East is Red" about Chinese communism, sung by Raúl Castro in 2008. It aims at portraying the irony of past ideals to build an ideological future path as compared to the country's actual blooming of capitalism.

Moments that Shaped the World IV – Never Ending Story is an emotional story found by the artist on YouTube in the summer of 2015, during the Greek debt crisis. It is told by a German tourist, whose luggage was lost by an air company on her way to Greece. The woman is very unhappy: she had to spend two days of her vacation without her favorite things, and in some cases was even forced to buy new ones. The contrasting video consists of fragments featuring economic disaster in Greece, revealing the fragility and failure of so-called "European values."

// Pinar Öğrenci

*1973 in Van, lives in Istanbul

Erika and the Night, 2016

Full HD-Video, 13' 28''



Öğrenci stays in Erica Schlik's house in Munich. Eighty-four years old, Erika soliloquizes and refreshes her memory at night. Öğrenci spontaneously decided to follow her with the camera.

The particularities of daily life—its chance encounters, surprises, routines, repetitions, memories, habits, and coincidences—form the content and materials of Öğrenci's practice. Her investigation into these details demonstrates how knowledge and experience inherited from history may be transferred into our behaviors and attempts to shape our environments.

The artist is interested in the way in which communication tools and media such as television act as mediators for remembering and forgetting. Öğrenci accumulates material for her video works by capturing the moving images that influence her in daily life, with a photographer's instinct. From this perspective, the artist's house, the streets, the countries where she travels and the people she meets, the activist movements she participates in, online news, social media and so on, form an archive from which she creates her works. *Erika and the Night* is the first short film made by the artist.

// Dorian de Rijk

lives in Amsterdam

Winging It, 2015

Full HD-video, 2' 43''



Winging It is a short visual essay on slow motion hysteria in New York City that explores to what extent fear is ingrained within our support structures. Sixteen years after 9/11, the embodiment of fear continues in NYC.

On the street you can find billboards urging you “to make an emergency plan with your kids.” *Winging It* shows Wall Street and Ground Zero between 3 and 4 a.m. This is one of the most tightly controlled and painstakingly secured areas of the United States, and the financial center of the so-called “Western world.” In the heart of NYC, security guards are sleeping at their desks in the big marble halls of major rating agencies. Consumed by the system and probably having these jobs as a means to keep afloat, the guardians are helpless to protect it. In this paranoid climate, the voice of Taylor Swift speaking on Good Morning America sounds like an appeal for subversion.

On the subway people are reminded of the terror threat via the following audio message: “Stay alive, stay alert. It’s your life and that of the ones around you.” How do you build your life when fear has taken over the environment? How could you expect someone to stay alert 24/7? And what exactly are we to stay alert for? What is the function of fear and to what extent can it be used as a tool of power? Is the fear a justification for populist appeals to drain the swamp or fuck the system, made on both sides of the political spectrum?

// **belit sağ**

lives in Amsterdam

Ayhan ve ben (Ayhan And Me), 2016

HD-video, 13' 48''



Freedom of expression is certainly one of the basic characteristics of a peaceful and healthy society. The repression of it is inevitably connected to a dictatorial regime. In order to maintain power, every “enemy” has to be defeated—not only physically, but also psychologically. Censorship by the regime might lead to censorship by the cultural institutions that can become arbitrary, case-specific, and self-imposed.

At the same time, the degree of repression and the freedom of expression are both defined by the state according to whom that repression is exercised on. Some people get censored, and through their expression might also be recognized, while some others may receive harsher punishment, even death, because their expression is not recognized as part of the field of freedom of speech. This video essay examines the limits of visibility and freedom of expression in the cultural sphere in relation to other spheres in society. It explores the questions: “What can be seen and what can be shown?,” “What are the filters of the visible?,” and “What is the role and power of images under repression?” The artist uses diverse sources from different media, focusing on the context of and a specific case in Turkey. It is a personal journey in the world of images and speaks about artistic expression when faced with censorship, as well as the value of life under repression.

Kirk Kere Söylersen ... (If You Say It Forty Times ...), 2017

HD video, 5' 05''

Sound: Sergio González Cuervo / Translation: Aslı Özgen Tuncer, Sevil Tunaboğlu, Fatoş İrven

Titles: Selj & Sinan



The work investigates the mental state of political amnesia by looking at the media images in Turkey, mainly of public figures claiming amnesia in order to avoid charges or threats. Some are part of the mafia / state / drug-and-arms traffic triangle, and they should not know what they know; others can only explain their acts (like their support of the Kurdish people during a live TV show) by claiming to not be mentally present in those moments. On the other hand, there are people who claim to never forget anything and they keep talking. As they keep talking, they lose visibility and have to claim it via other channels than mainstream media. The video oscillates between personal amnesia toward the public amnesia, through the cracks created by people who keep remembering and reminding. Ayhan Çarkın from the video Ayhan and me is one of these figures, but he claims to never forget anything.

// Anika Schwarzlose

* 1982 in Berlin, lives in Amsterdam

Agendas And Containers, 2016

Plexiglass, carpet, mesh fabric, dimensions variable



Peace can be established in many ways. The end of a bloody war may once have signified peace, but the well-defined battlefields and treaties suggested by history would seem to provide flawed, even illusory sets of criteria for understanding the shape of contemporary conflicts. Despite our updated and sanitized image of modern warfare, brutality has not vanished; it has in fact flourished through new and elaborate methodologies in step with ever more sophisticated approaches to image management. New paradigms of warfare would even seem to be at work in a wider variety of institutional sectors. John Perkins in his 2004 book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, for instance, suggests that international bodies such as the World Bank can be implicated in the violent displacement of sovereign governments.

Agendas and Containers is a collage of fragments from official international institutions. Tasked with the establishment and maintenance of global peace, they serve as a point of mediation between nation-states. Through the dislocation and recombination of the iconic visual identities of these international bodies, a hybrid spatial continuum is staged. With the semblances of both blockbuster movie set and metropolitan construction site, the work discloses a certain illusionist character of our notions of sustainability and peace.

// Radek Szlaga

*1979 in Gliwice, lives in Warsaw

What We Think that They Think that We Think... (Freedom Club), 2012 – ongoing
Installation



The collection of visual and textual cross-evidence compiled by the artist on the two pinboards is just a tiny part of his long-term *Freedom Club* project.

FC was an abbreviation on a letter that scientists and corporate executives in the US could potentially receive in their mailboxes between 1978 and 1995. Freedom Club was founded by Theodore John "Ted" Kaczynski, better known as the "Unabomber," who apparently remains its sole member. A prodigy mathematician, Harvard graduate, and professor at Berkeley, he retreated into the woods in search of primitive life and from there carried out sixteen letter-bomb attacks. The confused investigators were exhausted looking for a large group of people. Only because of the publication of the "Unabomber Manifesto" (1995) in the press did Kaczynski's brother rec-

ognize his writing and report it to the police. With his radical actions, the Unabomber tried to turn society's attention to the deadly effect of the Industrial Revolution, gradually destroying local, human-scale communities, suppressing individual freedom, irreparably damaging nature, and potentially leading to the extinction of humankind in general.

Heterogeneous at the first glance, the ensemble is "para-documentation" of what FC could have been, a record of a failed investigation that connects hints into the conspiracy around the existence and operation of the Freedom Club before and after Kaczynski's arrest in 1996.

Three double manuscripts, each divided into two books, serve as this project's "iconology." Titled *What We Think that They Think that We Think* (right) and *What They Think that We Think that They Think* (left), the books should be browsed simultaneously to propose a juxtaposition of two fictive realities.

// Aleksei Taruts

*1984 in Moscow , lives in Moscow

High-Energy Objects, 2015–2017

Audio installation, series of objects, imaginary model of Apophis asteroid 99942, brass
sound: Körpa Klauz



The notion of *High-Energy Objects* appears in a MH17 preliminary report by the Dutch Safety Board and relates to a destructive agent which has been the cause for the air disaster over the war zone in the East Ukraine. In this context, *High-Energy Objects* represent an abstract and yet extreme hazard, which is always very concrete. They don't exist, and at the same time they exist everywhere. *High-Energy Objects* can be found, for instance, in the Stuttgart State Museum of Natural History (Museum am Löwentor) or in the jewelery shop *Jan Hofmann* at Königstraße.

What other objects contain a lethal potential? How can we evaluate the amount of insecurity within social relations and objects from the surrounding reality?

The soundtrack that accompanies the object is an improvisation by Stuttgart-based rapper Körpa Klauz, commissioned by the artist.

// Anastasiya Yarovenko
*1983 in Tula, lives in Vienna

For Humans By Humans, 2015–2016
Research project: posters and foam objects
Graphic design: Richard Zazworka



Objects, devices, and strategies aimed at influencing the behavior of people in ways that benefit particular social groups. Unwanted behavioral problems, uncomfortable people, abnormal lifestyle, antisocial behavior which can be unacceptable for “normal” people. Cities become better at hiding poverty, circumstances of economical crisis, introducing systemic society rules through urban design and architecture. The problem remains, but it’s being rendered into a fancy shape of the invisible. Such tools as design and architecture become defensive and are used “to enforce social divisions.”

Program

Conference

How I Learned to Start Worrying: Symptoms of Post-Peace

February 25–26, 2017

Sven Augustijnen, Ella de Búrca, Anna Dasovic, Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler, Ehsan Fardjadniya, Edyta Jarząb, Alevtina Kakhidze, Yazan Khalili, Jaha Koo, Katia Krupennikova, Lyubov Matyunina, Pinar Öğrenci, Dorian de Rijk, belit sağ, Alexei Taruts, Ece Temelkuran, Anika Schwarzlose, Radek Szlaga

Language: English

Saturday, February 25, 2017

2.00 p.m.

Tour through the exhibition with the artists and the curator

4.00 p.m.

Introduction to the conference

Katia Krupennikova (curator, Amsterdam), Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ (directors of the Württembergischer Kunstverein)

4.15 p.m.

Alevtina Kakhidze (artist, Muzychi), ***About the Wars, Colorado Beatles, Chicken and Slugs***

Performance in the format of a welcome speech for the conference

The performance is based on the recent war conflicts between the Ukraine and Russia—knit with Second World War stories. The speech is rather a fiction created without deep knowledge about the complexity of backgrounds and mentioned contexts. Language: English with free translation into German.

4.30 p.m.

This is not censorship, and please keep silence

Conversation about the censorship of *Post-Peace* by Akbank Sanat, Istanbul, and *The Beast and the Sovereign* by MACBA, Barcelona

belit sağ (artist, Amsterdam) / **Katia Krupennikova, Hans D. Christ / Iris Dressler**

Followed by discussion

Open and subtle censorship in the art world is on the rise, even in democratic societies—often these acts of censorship are kept secret and pass off discretely behind the scenes. However, if a case is made public, it often turns out that those who had been censored are accused of being the aggressors themselves, as they supposedly were only interested in producing a scandal. At the same time, quite a few protagonists in the art world appear to have internalized censorship as a sometimes unavoidable means to an end. The discussion will be focused on two case studies: *Post-Peace* censored by Akbank Sanat, Istanbul and *The Beast and the Sovereign* censored by MACBA, Barcelona.

6.10 p.m.

Ece Temelkuran (writer, Istanbul), ***Singular Passages in the Age of Collective Evil***

Talk

What is rational in the age of “there-is-no-war-but-millions-of-casulties”? Does sense and therefore art belong to singularity? Does art belong to the only peaceful space, the market? Then here we are singular, market-situated, and constantly in-between in the post-peace era where bombs are exploding and babies dying around the space of art. Yes the “prophet of doom is wiping every smile” and we are like Antigone in

Brecht's version, carrying our doors on our backs, for singular passages that end up in several singularities but never a collective. Indecisive, hesitant singulars we are, never sure if we have to bury our dead brothers or put their photos out there for them to live forever.

7.00 p.m.

Jaha Koo (artist, Amsterdam), *Lolling and Rolling*

Performance

Followed by conversation with Hans D. Christ on South Korea's role in context of *Post-Peace*.

Lolling and Rolling penetrates Korean's tragic social phenomenon related to English education. In South Korea, there was a big controversy concerning children's tongue surgery for better English pronunciation of the "R" sound known as a lingual frenectomy. A fictional story, video, and sound work contextualizes not only contemporary issues but also historical events related to colonialism and imperialism.

Language: English

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Sunday, February 26, 2017
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12.00 p.m.

Artist Talks

Yazan Khalili (artist, Ramallah), *Freedom of Censorship*

Khalili explores power structures that influence freedom of speech and the paradox that artists have to deal with when speaking politically to power or about it: a double challenge of avoiding both censorship and freedom of speech.

Anna Dasović (artist, Amsterdam), *When People Are Exhibited to Disappear*

Questions surrounding the representation of the Holocaust have been crucial in understanding the history of suffering and its depiction. One might argue that the Holocaust has defined representation in modern and contemporary society as such. Anna Dasović will lay out images from various sources in order to consider how politics, media, and society deal with the depiction of people as suffering subjects today. Is this not where barbarism truly constitutes itself: in a Western political imagination that created the conditions in which some of us are entitled to look at how the "Other" is disappearing?

belit sağ (artist, Amsterdam), *Do Fictive Images Have Tangible Consequences?*

belit will explore informally, associatively, the politics, violence, and aesthetics of images, what they mean to us, and how they affect us, our lives and realities. We'll look at a wide array of images from Hollywood movies to ISIS videos, from 1960s Turkish films to TV series, from YouTube clips to news photographs, from an assassination in an art gallery to ...

1.40 p.m.

How to affect the system that affects us?

Final discussion with

Sven Augustijnen, Ella de Búrca, Anna Dasovic, Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler, Ehsan Fardjadniya, Alevtina Kakhidze, Yazan Khalili, Jaha Koo, Katia Krupennikova, Lyubov Matyunina, Pinar Öğrenci, Dorian de Rijk, belit sağ, Alexei Taruts, Ece Tamekuran, Anika Schwarzlose, Radek Szlaga, and others

The discussion will embark on a detailed analysis of the phenomena of precarious working conditions, neoliberal structures, and lack of transparency in the art world—along with the pertinent forms of resistance. Everyone is invited to participate.

3.00 p.m.

Edyta Jarzab (artist, Warschau), *More Bark, More Bite*

Sound performance, 15 min.

Edyta Jarzab will tell a short story of a female voice modulation, in a public space/speech context. Trying to explore the sounding of a peaceful street demonstration, the sounding of consensus.

3.30 p.m.

A.S.I. group (Ehsan Fardjajniya, artist, Amsterdam), *Ammunition Boxing*

Performative talk

Venue: Schlossplatz and Stuttgart Mainstation

The performance talk is based on the soapboxing outdoor speech practice that originated in London in the decades immediately preceding World War I. Soapboxing talks manifested the right for everyone to speak politically, gathering an incidental audience on the streets. Starting at Schlossplatz with quatrains by eleventh-century Persian poet Baba Tahir and a reading of "The Schuman Declaration" (from 9 May, 1950), *Ammunition Boxing* will round up with The Laments of the Anonymous Stateless Immigrants — the story of "Costumer's Control," a post-artistic anti-fascist performance by Ehsan Fardjadniya at the Stuttgart train station.

Guided Tours

Curator's tours

Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 12, 2017, 7 p.m.

Sunday, May 7, 2017, 4:30 p.m.

Free Tours

Sundays, 3 p.m.

Individual Tours

Dates on request

Admission and tour: 50 euros plus reduced entrance fee

Contact: mocko@wkv-stuttgart.de

Information and Credits

Post-Peace

February 25 – May 7, 2017

An exhibition by

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

Curator

Katia Krupennikova

Supported by

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

Kulturamt der Stadt Stuttgart

Mondriaan Fonds

stichting stokroos

Bundeskanzleramt Österreich

Press Tour

Friday, February 24, 2016, 11 a.m.

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Press Images and Portfolio

www.wkv-stuttgart.de/en/press

Opening Hours

Tues., Thurs.–Sun.: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Wed.: 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Admission

5 euros, 3 euros (reduced) / WKV members: free of charge