

# back coupling

transnational  
artistic cooperations



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transnational  
artistic cooperations

achtzehnkommazwei  
RAUM FÜR KUNST



curated by

K A R I N E  
W I M M E R

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City of Munich  
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Arts and Culture

super+CENTERCOURT

ein Projekt des super+e.V.

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Photo credits: the artists

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# Introduction

Ernst Wagner

The idea and the concept for this exhibition came about in 2020/21 in my seminars at the Munich Art Academy. These dealt with the question of how art education can be understood today, in a globalised world. One of the basic assumptions has always been that all art is "transculturally constituted". And so it seemed obvious, especially at an art academy where future teachers prepare for their work at school, to try out such transculturality artistically – preferably in cooperation with partners from all possible parts of the world: How is artistic cooperation possible across cultures and national borders, across great distances and language barriers? And to what results does it lead?

For over a year, six students of art education in Munich worked together artistically with young artists from Ghana, Hong Kong, Japan, Iran, Spain and South Africa. The resulting works range from video and sound to sculpture and painting, from textiles to installations. The group exhibition now taking place in three different galleries or off-spaces in Munich shows these results.

In recent months, the focus has been primarily on researching how collaboration across borders can succeed at eye level. Current topics such as cultural appropriation, postcolonialism, the return of looted art or the adequate presentation of artists who are not (or do not want to be) categorised as Eurocentric mainstream art, have played a major role. Creating an artistic work that also brings up the respective culturally influenced perspectives of both partners is what connects all approaches. And yet each tandem came up with its own processes of exchange and communication and solutions. I want to briefly discuss this, also because this is where the real potential for future art education lies.

**Yi Lam April Kam** (Hong Kong) and **Mira Johanna Sattelberger** (Munich), who exhibit in **achtzehnkommazwei – Raum für Kunst**, went beyond the originally intended bilateral framework early on, not only by including more countries but also more participants. In their process, a global and at the same time flexible network of artists emerged who – as the report shows – obviously perceived themselves from the very beginning as confidants, as members of a community of global avant-garde. Borders or local anchors then played no role in the production. Consequently, the actors do without language (which may or may not be understood – as the printed commentary in Farsi shows) and images: an accumulation and processing of recorded sound from the respective environment, which then flows indistinguishably into one another during the processing.

Quite different, indeed in contrast, are the works in wood by **Shigeyuki Myagawa** (Japan) and **Martin Lehmer** (Germany) in the same gallery space: classical wooden sculptures at a high level of craftsmanship stand in a spatial constellation to each other. Two works already existed in advance. Because of their subject matters (Buddha, a female nude), they can be clearly assigned to either the Japanese or the German artist. What is new, however, is the combination of the two and the resulting tension between two culturally defined poles. A third figure – now without the possibility of attribution – was created by Shigeyuki Myagawa especially for this exhibition.

In the next gallery, **super+CENTERCOURT**, **Lawrence Kyere** (Winneba in Ghana) and **Rosa Pfluger** (Munich) are exhibiting. Both started with the theme of traditional clothing made of colourfully printed fabric. These exist in their respective local contexts, in Ghana and in Germany. The use of colourful decoration in clothing is thus obviously a universal phenomenon, but the respective concrete form is site- and context-specific. This also applies to the meaning of the patterns. Thus, despite a common underlying theme, two approaches initially simply stood side by side. The killing of George Floyd on 25 May 2020 – globally perceived – brought the approaches together into a common work, a new, a "third idea": (protective) clothing or body protectors (designed in Germany) with a highly political decoration (designed in Ghana). In doing so, the artists take up the usual form of production based on the division of labour. Since the body protector speaks of safeguarding and the decor speaks of racism, the threat of the pandemic and environmental destruction, the result is a clear message that is of global relevance, i.e. across all borders and regional conditions.

**Clara Lizasoain Ciriquiain** (Spain) and **Maria Obermeier** (Germany), who exhibit in the same gallery, met at the Munich Art Academy. Clara Lizasoain Ciriquiain came to Munich through the EU Erasmus programme: temporary migration in a protected space. Living together in one city naturally makes collaboration easier at first, especially since the two paintings emerged from conversations between the two artists, face to face as well as – not only due to the pandemic – digitally. Both had to use the lingua franca English, an experience shared by all tandems. But this did not interfere with the development of a trusting atmosphere. Geographical proximity, cultural as well as personal familiarity have contributed to a cohesive, unified result that even makes it impossible to assign the paintings stylistically to one of the two artists.

A few hundred metres away, **Hosein Gafouri** (Iran) and **Georg Schatz** (Germany) are exhibiting in the **Digital Art Space**. They didn't know each other before the collaboration, language communication was difficult, they are living in completely different contexts and they could not meet. Accordingly, their process got off to a slow start, the approaches, themes and interests were too different. The idea to explore the theme 'shelter' came from Hosein Gafouri and it took time until Georg Schatz could follow it up with his own and independent ideas. Thus, in the final product, two works stand in clear contrast to each other. But, on the one hand, they have a common theme that is universal, shelter, protection. On the other

hand, they show great differences in form and above all material. These differences are based on very banal experiences, such as contexts, climatic zones, weather, elementary influences, which are usually not mentioned in today's discourses on diversity in art and culture.

**Octavia Roodt** (Pretoria) and **Stela Vula** (Munich) also have extremely different artistic processes and use completely different materials and media (hand drawing vs. digital installations). No wonder that this also leads to very different visual languages that seem completely incompatible at first glance. Yet the differences are less of geographical and cultural nature than they are in the approach. Octavia and Stela accept the challenge posed by the divergence and enter into an intensive, joint debate that ultimately leads to a new, convincing overall form (a theatre-like peep-show construction). This does not eliminate the differences but enhances them, it brings both into dialogue. It is a work of art from 18th century England that triggered the idea for the overall form that unleashes the dialogue. The fact that both then also involve interaction with the viewer makes the dialogue a polylogue.

In summary, the following overall picture emerges with regard to the initial question of how the differences between the partners are dealt with. The table begins at the top with approaches in which a "third party" resolves the diversity and ends with approaches in which diversity / differences are clearly addressed. In the last cases, the third, common factor (theme or material) only forms the bracket that still enables artistic communication.

Artist	The specific handling of differences
Clara Lizasoain Ciriquiain (Spain) and Maria Obermeier	Mutually familiar proximity of culture, milieu and space makes the usual and perceptible distinctions disappear. Diversity occurs in nuances that can no longer be seen from the outside.
Yi Lam April Kam (Hong Kong) and Mira Johanna Sattelberger	Diversity is only recognisable in the source material. Differences are eliminated in a process of fusion. The result is a placeless, global, contemporary art that is located beyond differences.
Octavia Roodt (South Africa) and Stela Vula	Diversity here is rooted in the different visual languages of the artists, which are united into one work by a third visual language (theatre), a new "super-form".

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Lawrence Kyere (Ghana) and Rosa Pfluger

Diversity remains visible through different artistic practices as well as visual languages that are usually assigned to specific cultural spaces, even if it is ultimately cancelled out in the one, now common product.

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Hosein Gafouri (Iran) and Georg Schatz

Diversity remains here above all at the level of the materials in the respective individual works. Their connection to each other is rooted in the common theme. In the gallery space, the tension between the different approaches develops.

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Shigeyuki Myagawa (Japan) and Martin Lehmer

The existing differences are set (abruptly and unchanged) against each other. The common material wood and the fact of the common exhibition in the gallery allow the viewer to establish a reference from the outside.

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It seems fundamental for future art educators to recognise and try out this broad repertoire of solutions through their own (collaborative) work. This is one of the reasons why the Akademie der Bildenden Künste and the Akademieverein have supported the project financially, for which I would like to express my gratitude. I would also like to thank the off-spaces and galleries that are now showing the results: Digital Art Space (Karin Wimmer), achtzehnkommazwei – Raum für Kunst (Anna Wondrak and Kilian Ihler) and super-CEN-TERCOURT (Sophie-Charlotte Bombeck). I would like to thank the gallery owners for their enthusiastic interest in our approach. Also thanks to Rosa Pfluger for (additionally) taking care of the funding and Georg Schatz for (also additionally) designing the catalogue, flyer and postcards.

The exhibition is part of the project "Exploring Visual Cultures" ([www.explore-vc.org](http://www.explore-vc.org)) chaired by Avi Sooful from Pretoria, in cooperation with the Munich Art Academy. The idea of this exhibition and the initial spark grew out of this project. "Exploring Visual Cultures" also made its international network available to find and win partners in Ghana and South Africa.

## Project rooms / Exhibitions

**super+CENTERCOURT**  
ein Projekt des **super+e.V.**

### super+CENTERCOURT

The super+CENTERCOURT is a non-institutionalised, non-profit exhibition space that aims to inspire a desire for art without falling into a banal aesthetization. Once simply a passageway, it is now a space that has been kept apart sporadically from the public sphere, a space that shifts on the periphery between the inside and the outside. In this sense, it should remain a place of dialogue: between passers-by and our exhibitions; between artists and curators; between the arts; between the art ivory tower and pop; between art lovers and artists. We want confrontation!

We are convinced that art depends on the artist as well as on the viewer and that the site itself is crucial. The works are thus constructed materially, physically as well as conceptually in their relationship to the space. In this specific practice, however, there is no restriction to a particular type of visual art, means of expression or technique used. In other words, this visual art practice is hybrid and open to different forms of contemporary artistic expression. We see ourselves as a place of mediation and experimental, exploratory and processual art-making. A central concern is to give young artists and art protagonists free space and to support them in this process.

The super+CENTERCOURT was opened in May 2014. Since 2019, the space has been curated by art historian and curator Sophie-Charlotte Bombeck.

**super+CENTERCOURT / Adalbertstr. 44 80799 Munich / [info@centercourt.gallery](mailto:info@centercourt.gallery)**

**[www.centercourt.gallery](http://www.centercourt.gallery)**



### Digital Art Space

Exhibitions of national and international artists, although preference will be given to Munich artists who deal with various focal points of the digital world. The use of digital technology is in the foreground. The aim of the project is to look at complex topics, such as the handling of data, the effects of digitalization on our communication culture, or the problems of artificial intelligence, from an artistic perspective. The intention is to critically address and reflect on the dimensions of the digital world as a profound upheaval for society.

**Amalienstraße 14, 80333 Munich, Germany / +49 89 50 00 69 40 / +49 176 24 75 66 01**

**[mail@karinwimmer.com](mailto:mail@karinwimmer.com) / [www.digitalartspace.de](http://www.digitalartspace.de)**

**achtzehnkommazwei**  
RAUM FÜR KUNST

### achtzehnkommazwei – Raum für Kunst

On 18 February 2021, art educator and therapist Kilian Ihler and art historian and curator Anna Wondrak opened a new space for art in Munich at Georgenstraße 72. With a floor space of 18.2 square meters, Kunstraum achtzehnkommazwei is intended to offer local cultural practitioners in particular a platform for their artistic production and thus promote networking into the cultural life of Munich.

"The topic of diversity is very important to us," the operators Anna Wondrak and Kilian Ihler proclaim.

Both have years of experience in the arts and culture business as well as in inclusive cultural work.

"We understand diversity as an attitude of openness. It is important to us to address artists with the most diverse backgrounds. We want the diversity of their different positions to be reflected in the shape of our program."

Thus, it is planned to make the space available to cultural workers as a temporary workplace in order to be able to further develop their artistic thoughts and design processes. The operators want to specifically support this interdisciplinary dialogue of changing exhibitions and work phases and use the synergies that potentially arise from this.

**Georgenstr. 72, 80799 Munich, Germany / [info@achtzehnkommazwei.de](mailto:info@achtzehnkommazwei.de)**

**[www.achtzehnkommazwei.de](http://www.achtzehnkommazwei.de)**

*“There's a voice that doesn't use words – listen to it.” (Rumi)<sup>1</sup>*

## Alien Nation – experiment on communication

### Kam Yi Lam April, Mira Johanna Sattelberger & Friends at achtzehnkommazwei – Raum für Kunst

#### Hong Kong x Munich: The Initial Conversation

Beginning of 2020 we initiated a project called Alien Nation. The title should not be understood as a group of aliens or anything like that, rather it is describing the experiment itself. It is a documentation of conversations in unconventional ways, that include more than just spoken human words. The language of Alien Nation is creating a discourse of environments on a meta-level, an exchange of individual and common feelings, that can be understood without specific intellectual or national background. It's a dialogue directly from heart to heart, mind to mind, spirit to spirit, or however you want to call it.

The project was created in a seminar on globalization and transcultural held in Munich at the academy of arts by Prof. Ernst Wagner. Together with a partner from another part of the world or cultural background, a work should be developed and the artistic process documented. Mira Johanna Sattelberger together with a friend, April Kam, who grew up in Hong Kong, living in Munich today, emerged with the idea to establish a connection to Hong Kong without words. April acted as an interface and invited artists from Hong Kong to participate in this experiment. Apart from the renouncement of words, there were no fixed rules, communication should be able to develop undisturbed.

Three artists from Hong Kong (Tracy Tse, Tracy Wong and Ka Yan Luk) crossed paths with two artists from Germany. Would we be able to get to know each other? What opportunities for exchange would we discover?

It all began with the first sound track on June 24, 2020, it was the recording of a gong that was sent from Munich to Hong Kong. From there the process grew organically. Recordings from Munich were replied by a track from Hong Kong and vice versa. They were recordings from daily life situations, from nature and urban noises such as car traffic, demonstrations, music, chirping and so on. It was a dialogue of sound recordings between the artists in different cultural environments. It was deliberately done through WhatsApp to use but also to mimic the instant messaging in our daily globalised lifestyle. In the first two months there was a lot of traffic, often daily. After around two months the momentum got slow, for almost one month the group was silent. However, in retrospect, we realised this does not mean that we lost passion in the project. Like most conversations, participants are sometimes just “not in the mood” to talk. Things picked up its pace again.

<sup>1)</sup> Dschalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (1207-1273) was a Persian Sufi mystic, scholar and one of the most important Persian-speaking poets of the Middle Ages.

After more than three months, we had collected a huge soundpool. These significant 72 tracks are building the base of the work, an audible conversation of almost an hour:



#### Hong Kong x Munich: The Initial Conversation

#### Global Invitation: Spinning Webs

Not sure how to go on or what to do with this amount of material, we decided to widen the circle and invited artists around the globe to join this experiment. The collection of recorded clips was sent to four international musicians with complete freedom to play with them. The rule was to use only the recordings we made - without other sounds for their production. Four sound collages were created in this way.



**Sound Collage 1** Tracy Tse, Hong Kong

**Sound Collage 2** Ka Yan Luk, Hong Kong

**Sound Collage 3** Masahiko Saji, Japan

**Sound Collage 4** Manuel Bellini, Italy

#### Visual Commentaries: Final Stage?

These four variations were finally sent to artists and friends in other countries. Each of them interpreted the sound collages in their own way. We, the basic group also participated. Written and visual commentaries were created: as a result the conversations can be perceived by different senses now and in this way are tangible from various angles.

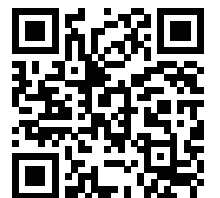
Tracy Tse and April Yi Kam,  
Hong Kong

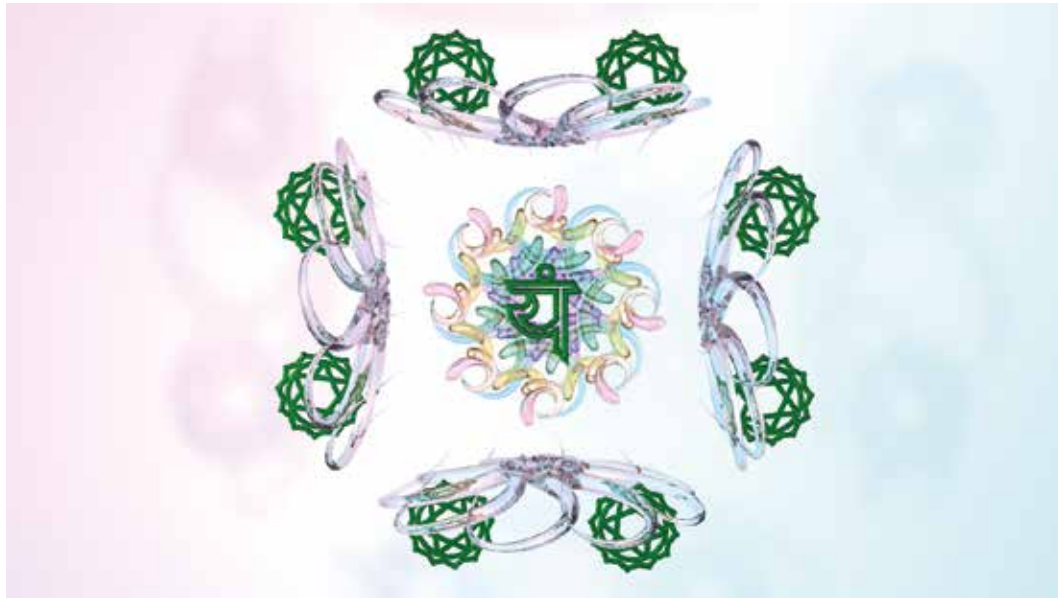


Mira Johanna Sattelberger,  
Germany



Tobias Krug,  
Germany





Ana Sofia Gaitan  
visual artwork

Ana Sofia Gaitan  
visual artwork



## Written comments on the audibles

**Michael Schabert, South Africa**

### A cry for awakening

The uncertainty, the anticipation, for what is to come. Feeling into the depth of what it means to be alive. There is in some way a notion of certainty but at this stage, it is not clear. The human being knows his depth yet, does not, and at the same time, an unsettling feeling of invasion is on the rise. Some said it would be war, others said that could be avoided. No one knew, No one. But it had the texture of war and yet it had not. The human says to herself, “But I am of the forest and the forest lives in me, yet I have traveled far from my roots”

Distractions are pulling and pushing keeping her moving deeper into her own trap. Into his trap and our trap... “It feels unnatural,” she says, “yet I am of the forest and to the forest, I must return”. Yet the collective dreamlike state of ignorance is too strong and the bushfire hath no mercy. All this time we felt it coming yet when it came it came unexpectedly. Silently before we knew it we were in it.

And unfortunately or some might say, fortunately, the collective awoke too late.

To realize we are trapped. The law of nature says confrontation can not be avoided.

And now we want out!

**Arezoo Bayat, Iran**

در حال گوش دادن به این نواها احساس میکردم در اتمسفر خارج از زمین قرار دارم. آزادانه بر فراز سوراخ هایی در اتمسفر که رو به زمین باز میشد. و من از سوراخی به سوراخ دیگه سر کشی میکردم و هر دم از هر منفذ آوایی می شنیدم که مربوط به مناسبات زمین بود. و هر گاه از اون حفره فاصله میگرفتم بلافاصله صدای دیگه ای از اون پایین منو به سوی خودش فرا میخواند. درست مثل بازی و گهگاه بین این حفره ها در آمد و شد سبکیالانه بودم و از بعضی سوراخها چند بار بازدید میکردم و بعضی نواها دوباره دوباره گوش می سپردم و تصاویر مربوط به صدا رو بوضوح میدیدم.

**Masahiko Saji, Japan**

### A walk through confusion

Starting the journey walking through dystopian corners in my mind, when the first unclear information arrived my brain. Through my eyes I see the pictures everybody sees at this time. My ears hear more confusion. Some say don't worry!

Others won't believe it. My feelings are changing all the time. I'm optimistic but later not. And my nose, through all the time I hope that I still smell and taste.

And while we live in such a high-end technological world, it brings us not much.

Users don't know how to use it right. Information is the Key, but there is too much confusion spread around. Spreading way faster than the virus itself.

This leads to more confusion again. Being an individual is so important nowadays.

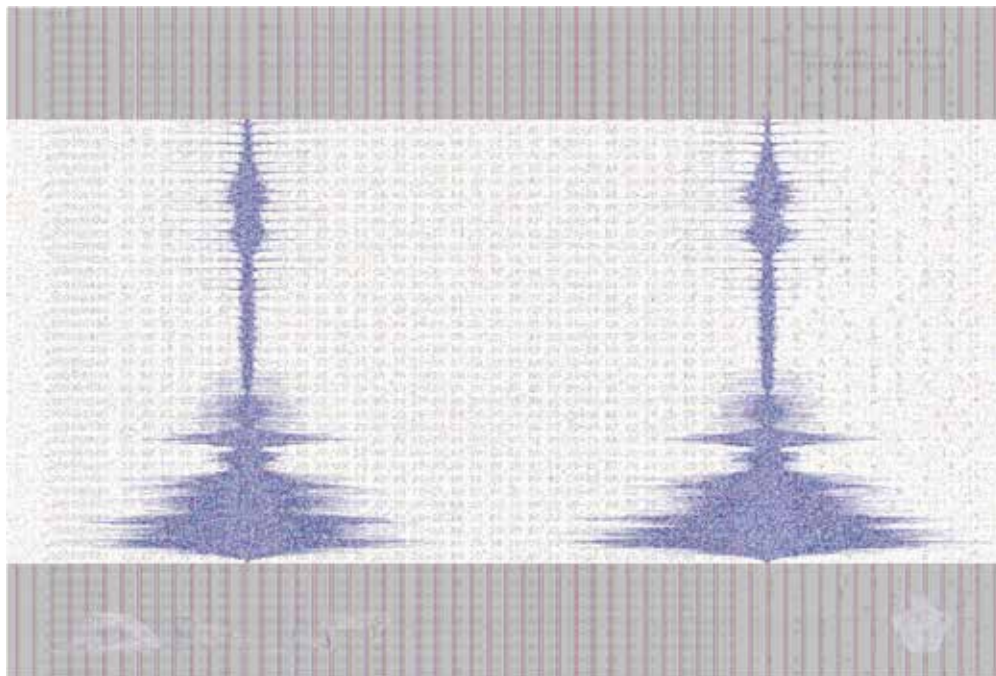
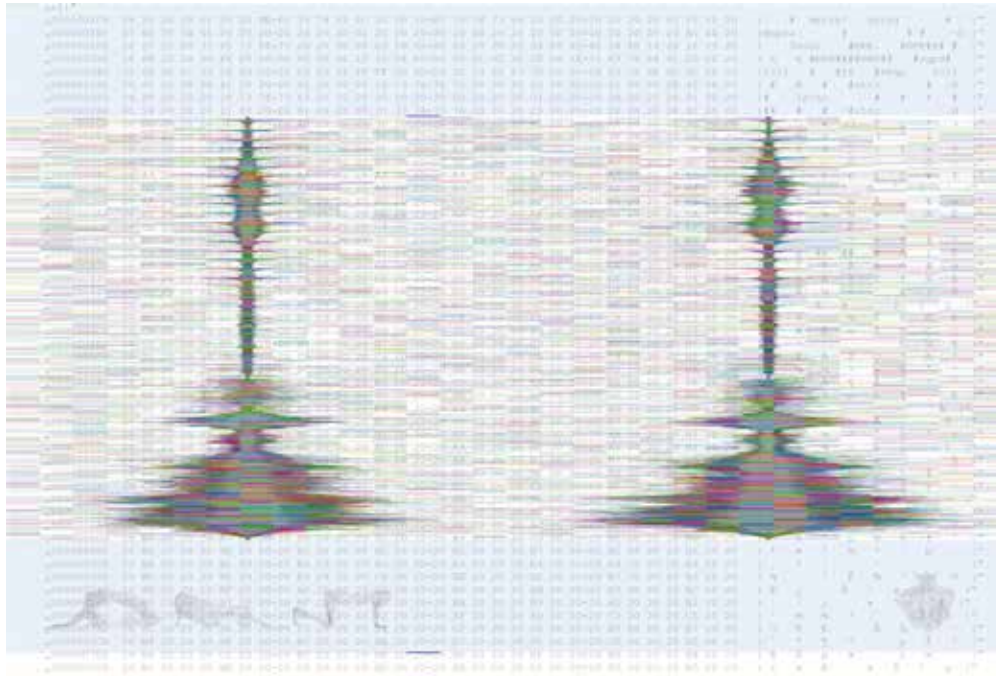
So everyone has his one version to tell. And everyone tries to tell it as loud as

they can. The stage has opened for everyone. That divides us more and more. Or not? We start to keep distance and the world gets separated, too. The race has begun. Who comes out first? Who gains out of this? Who are the winners? Who are the losers? Politicians? Companies? Conspiracies? The art? Or the artists? Art and creativity will never die. But artists can die and politicians too. And freedom? Is it still alive? Or dead forever?

We start to get used to it. And the time flies. Home Office for everyone. Jail for everyone. The world is on standby. The vaccine is there, but no one will take it. And for the ones who will, it's not available yet. While we arrive at the stage of mutations. So maybe the vaccine doesn't bring anything. Maybe. We still don't know much. The thing that is left is hope. So I hope and do the best of it. All I can do. Able to enter a jointly created space, spend time there together and gain an insight into the lives and the environment of the participants through the exchanged messages. There was no point we experienced any difficulties because of our cultural differences. Some recordings and individual interpretations could easily be assigned, giving insight into the other life. Others remained enigmatic, cryptic, but always left a sense of curiosity to capture the other more closely. Our developed method acted as a very sensitive tool of approximation. It can be said with certainty that the areas of meta conversation should still be explored in large numbers. The development of unconventional conversation methods serves the exchange of people from different cultures, backgrounds, age groups, mother tongue, ethics and so forth. It can bring various nationalities closer together and give a better understanding of other perspectives. Finally our specific worlds can melt into one another.

## Reflection

Is it necessary to end an experiment at one point? Is there ever a final result of this project? Our experiment, an exchange without words, brought us closer in many ways. We were able to enter a jointly created space, spend time there together and gain an insight into the lives and the environment of the participants through the exchanged messages. There was no point we experienced any difficulties because of our cultural differences. Some recordings and individual interpretations could easily be assigned, giving insight into the other life. Others remained enigmatic, cryptic, but always left a sense of curiosity to capture the other more closely. Our developed method acted as a very sensitive tool of approximation. It can be said with certainty that the areas of meta conversation should still be explored in large numbers. The development of unconventional conversation methods serves the exchange of people from different cultures, backgrounds, age groups, mother tongue, ethics and so forth. It can bring various nationalities closer together and give a better understanding of other perspectives. Finally our specific worlds can melt into one another.



Tobias Krug  
visual artwork



Tobias Krug  
visual artwork

# The artists

## Initial Recordings and Concept



**Kam Yi Lam April**  
Hong Kong/Germany  
professional dreamer, artist



**Mira Johanna Sattelberger**  
Germany  
member of art collectives M8  
& Cosmic Giggle



**Tracy Wong**  
Hong Kong  
administrator for performing arts  
amateur illustrator



**Ka Yan Luk**  
Hong Kong  
art therapist



**Tracy Tse**  
Hong Kong  
media industry, musician,  
filmmaker, writer, artist

## Further



**Masahiko Saji**  
Japan  
musician and artist  
member of art collective M8



**Manuel Bellini**  
Italy  
musician and artist



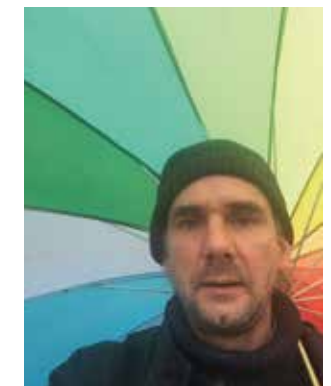
**Ana Sofia Gaitan**  
Colombia  
audiovisual and multimedia artist



**Arezoo Bayat**  
Iran  
english translator & yoga teacher



**Michael Schabort**  
South Africa  
sculpturist and yoga teacher



**Tobias Krug**  
Germany  
artist, componist

## Orient and Occident?

### Shigeyuki Myagawa & Martin Lehmer at achtzehnkommazwei – Raum für Kunst

#### Shigeyuki Myagawa

I remember the feeling and the excited tingle when I received Martin's email asking me if I would like to work with him as a partner in this project.

I had mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was worried whether I would be able to finish the work in time for the planned deadline – a worry that later proved to be unfounded. On the other hand, I felt it was an honour that Martin, who had always presented excellent work during our joint training period, had chosen me as his partner. And finally, the premonition that something interesting would happen.

After Martin explained his concept to me in more detail and I understood the general line of the project, I immediately found it even more interesting. What would happen if you let each other's similarities and differences collide? It made me think of two atomic nuclei colliding with each other to discover a new elementary particle.

What Martin and I have in common is that we both work in a three-dimensional modelling format and mainly use wood as a material. Also, the allure of the human body holds a great fascination for both of us.

As far as cultural differences are concerned, I have often experienced that the less aware we are of them, the more mysterious they become.

At the idea of our joint work being exhibited with other artists' creations in the same room, I feel that excited tingle again. But this time for different reasons.

#### Martin Lehmer

Orient and Occident?

In this project we aimed to work together with a partner from a different cultural area and to define an artistic field for this interaction, based on which one can read off similarities, but also differences in thinking about and producing art.

With whom could I work? Deterred by the thought of a time marked by a pandemic, in which a large part of communication had already shifted to the digital level, it seemed important to me not to exchange ideas over a long distance, but rather to find a partner with whom meetings and cooperation could take place face to face.

I met Shige Myagawa from Japan a few years ago at the vocational training center for sculpting in Munich. I attended the master school, he the vocational school for wood sculptors. This has laid the basis for a common interest in sculpture. Shige was born in Japan and came to Germany with his wife and two children to train as a wood sculptor. In the context of the project, I found it exciting to exchange ideas with Shige about the different and/or similar perspectives we look at our work. The fact that we both have lived in the same city for years and have also received the same training in some areas is by no means a hindrance in relation to the question of the project. On the contrary, it is precisely because of the commonalities, I find looking at difference exciting. Perhaps you can better understand one through the other.

When asked if he would take part in the project with me, Shige accepted after a short hesitation. We met on the steps in front of the Academy of Fine Arts or at the Nymphenburg Canal, showed us photos of the current status of the respective work and reported to each other about everyday life at the studio and at work. Over time, both sides had an idea of how they could jointly take part in the planned exhibition. Above all, it was important to use and expand already existing commonalities and not to look compulsively for a common topic. From these considerations, it has been clear that we both deal extensively with the human figure and the material wood. Further meetings followed, now also in Shige's studio. We examined each other's work. With regard to the project exhibition, we decided to react to each other's sculptures through our individual formal and expressive languages. New sculptures emerged, existing ones complemented each other, were rearranged or juxtaposed with others.

**An approach from the outside:****The art of Martin Lehmer and Shigeyuki Miyagawa.****Dr. Sascha Priester (Classical archaeologist and lecturer in art history)**

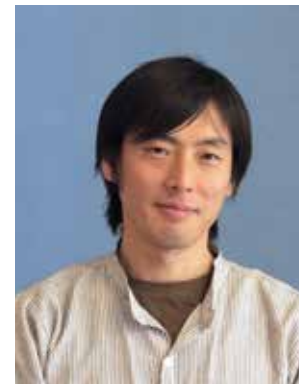
We experience sculpture in very different ways: The form, the motif, the space, the effect on the imaginary or even very real viewer, the material used, the elaboration in detail – all this speaks to us, brings us into a dialogue with the work, the art object.

The wood works by Martin Lehmer and Shigeyuki Miyagawa – both working with the same material – achieve this confrontation in a very special way. Martin Lehmer's literally torn figures play with our idea of form; they allow the inner eye to reassemble the body parts that have been separated from each other. The form dissolves, but the surface remains smooth. Shigeyuki Miyagawa is inspired by this aesthetic, a mutual reaction of the two artists with and to each other takes shape and form. It is not a question of classical copying of the original – quite the opposite: Shigeyuki Miyagawa models his kneeling figure out of sawdust with glue. In his work, the form remains closed, the surface dissolves.

This dialogue was accompanied by the project led by Ernst Wagner "Globalisation & Transculturality – Approaches and Methods in Art" at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts. Both artists already knew each other from the Munich Master School for Wood Sculpture, appreciated each other – and now had the opportunity to exchange intensively on a concrete task, to take the respective perspective of the other, to find interfaces and common points of contact across cultural borders, to talk about different perceptions and views, to learn from each other and thus at the same time to sharpen the view of their own work. Martin Lehmer and Shigeyuki Miyagawa, Shigeyuki Miyagawa and Martin Lehmer thus left their own artistic comfort zone, saw sometimes with their own eyes, sometimes with the eyes of the other: a change of perspective.

Martin Lehmer has found an ideal partner for this in Shigeyuki Miyagawa. For years, Miyagawa has been enthusiastic about the cultural exchange between Orient and Occident, between Asia and Europe – and especially about a particularly fascinating chapter in art history: the Buddhist "Gandhāra art". Named after an ancient region in what is today the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan, a style emerged here in the wake of Alexander the Great's conquest of the Persian Empire in which Persian, Hellenistic and Indian, Buddhist and Christian formal idioms met, complemented each other, developed together, merged with each other and then separated again or remained recognisable in their individuality. The heyday of this dynamic process was in the first centuries. A Buddha carved in wood by Shigeyuki Miyagawa as a journeyman's piece,

with the folds worked entirely in the style of "Gandhāra art", is now in turn the starting point for both artists to continue the dialogue of their now deepened artistic friendship even after the conclusion of the Academy project. Martin Lehmer is thinking about reacting to Shigeyuki Miyagawa in turn – and designing and deconstructing a garment figure with drapery in his formal language. So they want to continue to look, study and realise together – this is how Martin Lehmer and Shigeyuki Miyagawa started the project "Globalisation. Transculturality – Approaches and Methods in Art": in tradition, in innovation and in their desire to continue this wonderful and fruitful example of lived sculpture in dialogue.



**Shigeyuki Miyagawa** 2021 Training with Nō mask-making master Mr Hideta Kitazawa, Mizumoto Tokyo Japan / Mar. - Jun. 2019 In the Vogel-Holz knecht wood sculpture workshop, Bad Tölz / Jun.-Oct. 2018 Assistant to sculptor Yoshiyuki Miura, Domagkateliers / Since 2017 Freelance sculptor / 2017 Graduation from the Städtische Meisterschule für das Holzbildhauerhandwerk, Munich / 2015 Graduation from the Städtische Berufsfachschule für das Holzbildhauerhandwerk (Municipal Vocational School for Woodcarving), Munich / until 2011 Mechanical engineering of product prototypes / Design and construction of advertising stands / Restoration and reconstruction of buildings and monuments / 1974 Born in Tokyo, Japan



**Martin Lehmer** born 1987 in Benediktbeuern / 2009 - 2012 Training as a wood sculptor at the vocational school for wood sculpting, Munich 2012 Journeyman's examination / 2013 - 2015 Further training as a wood sculptor master, master school for wood sculpting, master craftsman's examination / Since 2015 Study of Sculpture and Art Education at the AdBk Munich / Since 2018 Teaching at the Thomas Wimmer Vocational School Centre, Munich



Shigeyuki Myagawa  
Gandhara Buddha, 2015



Shigeyuki Myagawa  
Ametaphysik, 2020



Martin Lehmer  
o.T. 2019/20

## To Cut to the Chase instead of Tiptoeing Around It

### Lawrence Kyere & Rosa Pfluger at super+CENTERCOURT

Working on an exhibition together with an unfamiliar partner from a foreign country: That was quite a challenge for both of us. During my studies, I did have the possibility to partake in several group exhibitions, but – contrary to my hopes and expectations – it was always more about organizing and curating than really collaborating and discussing creative or esthetic ideas with another artist.

Because of my fascination with crafts and design, I was very interested in working with someone who specializes in the applied arts. With the help of Ernst Wagner and the platform “Exploring Visual Cultures”, I got to know Prof. Osuanyi Essel, who teaches textile design at the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana. Prof. Essel called Lawrence, one of his students, told him about the project in Munich and asked him if he would like to join. Lawrence was happy to work with a student from Germany, thus Prof. Essel introduced us via video call in May 2020. It was a bit clumsy at first, but since then, Lawrence and I have been in continuous contact.

At the beginning, Lawrence and I exchanged common interests. We realized that both of us reference their respective traditions in our work. The first idea was to blend traditional textile patterns like a collage, in order to develop new esthetics, for example traditional Bavarian embroidery applied on top of colourful designs made or collected by Lawrence.

These ideas changed drastically when on May 25th George Floyd was murdered and demonstrations all over the USA – and in Munich as well – took place. Germany and Ghana both view themselves and are regarded as relatively safe countries. Still: The news headlines and the relentless images were impossible to escape from. It also changed Lawrence’ and my view on this project: George Floyd, being a black man like Lawrence, and me being

white. Our collaboration felt even more relevant. Lawrence and I wanted to find a way to make our stand clear and to show our support for the protestors, in a defensive, peaceful way. Thus, the idea emerged to create a protective body suit. My contribution to this multi-part project was going to be the sculptural shape, the “inside” of the body suit; Lawrence planned on designing the pattern for the textile coating.

Because of the difficulties that might occur when sending packages from Ghana to Germany and vice versa, Lawrence decided to send his designs via email and had the printing done in Germany. It was important to both of us to talk about major decisions and ideas and to consider the other’s view even though we work in very different fields.

Even though this plan was fixed, Lawrence and I kept exchanging and discussing current events. Of course, Covid-19 and climate change were also big topics that are deeply affecting us. It felt natural to expand the idea of protection. Lawrence decided to design another pattern to raise awareness of the dangers of the virus and the according safety protocols. His openness to work with topics or images that might seem obvious or bold and to react quickly to current events was new to me and inspired me to approach things more directly, to cut to the chase instead of tiptoeing around it.

The resulting work “Safety Suit” is a mixture between Lawrence’s patterns, colors and designs and my preferred artistic approach to create a series of prototypes from makeshift materials. We don’t feel like this project is just a compromise between two independent strategies; each contribution can hold their own, but in the end, it is also more than what only one of us could have achieved. – Rosa Pfluger





Lawrence Kyere, Rosa Pfluger "Safety Suit", 2021  
usable objects, digital print on water-repellent cloth, foam material,  
non-woven fabric, straps, quick-release catch, velcro

**Prof. Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel (Fashion and Textiles Education unit at the Department of Art Education of the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana)**

The exhibition dubbed 'Back Coupling' has double impacts in the realms of training global citizens through the exploration of visual culture. It is an offshoot of the endearing Exploring Visual Culture project that involves creative exchanges and collaborations of different countries in exploring the educational relevance of images in a way to transmit understanding and coexistence among the participating nations. It also gives an enviable opportunity of engaging in rewarding cultural and artistic exchanges between students of the participating countries involved in the project. This exhibition epitomizes the resultant of the artistic exchanges of students of the partnering countries in the project.

The artists present three distinctive fabric designs deftly fashioned into the wearable bodysuit. The stunning fabric designs and the garments created from it are testaments to the creative dialogue and artistic collaboration of the two young artists from different cultural backgrounds— Germany and Ghana. No doubt the duo said 'We don't feel like this project is just a compromise between two independent strategies.' It is a real symbiotic artistic experience. The designs centre its theme on compelling global issues namely the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, and racism.

Presented in an unambiguous and auto-didactical pattern-based alternating designs, one of the fabrics features Covid-19-inspired motifs which give visual commentary of the disease which was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020. One of the dominant patterns used as background textures depicts four pictorial motifs circumscribed in a rectangular frame and repetitively presented in an alternating colour scheme that adds contrast and variety. This treatment helps to save boredom in viewing the simple but interesting fabric design. The motifs in the circumscribed rectangle are mimetic of the safety protocols announced by the World Health Organization to be observed by all countries in a bid to stop the spread of the pandemic plaguing the lives of many irrespective of racial identity or economic standing. The four background motifs starting from the left position, show a container-like shape from which what appears to be a liquid substance drizzle, a silhouette of a human head wearing a whitish nose and mouth covering (mask), a human-like shape in a shelter, and a hand with varying size of dots. These motifs are codes that make powerful visual statements about the use of hand sanitizer, wearing of face mask, staying home, and frequent washing of hands respectively. These four major safety protocols are highlighted by the artists in their fabric design (Figure 1). Complementing the background texture is an imposing motif that gives a clear visual representation of the Covid-19 virus and juxtaposed it with the inscription, 'Covid-19 is Real'. The skillful use of Covid-related visual symbolic language makes the fabric a sensational praiseworthy spectacle of artistic design that serves as a constructive social commentary on the collective efforts in the fight against the pandemic.

A sensitive subject matter the artists tackled in their fabric design in a bid to register their abhorrence for discrimination and stigmatization on the basis of colour, is racism. To carry their message across in this light, they used a conjoined heart-shaped object with intertwined hands occupying its centre as one motif and used it as textures in a repetitive half-drop motif arrangement. An imposing raised clenched fist placed in a circular shape with the inscription 'STOP RACISM' has also been arranged in half-drop format, acting as the central motif. This clenched fist has been represented in two varying sizes in a way that attracts intense attention. The artists' use of the tints and shades of brown gives a hint of skin colour disparity which often serves as overt precursors in racism issues. Codifying skin colour disparity in a monochromatic schema and the metonymical choice of heart and hand to suggest love for one another irrespective of social class, skin colour, hair textures or place of origin reveals the artists' deeper understanding of the iconographic realization of visual ideology in a way that carries universal and overt interpretation. The use of thick outlines and the rough textured handling of the raised fist engineers an irresistible and sensational visual effect that sparks curiosity about this fabric design (Figure 2). This special treatment also acts as a silent dramatic action that emphasizes the message 'STOP RACISM'. Historically, the raised clenched fist has been used by Europe's anti-fascist movement, White supremacists, the feminist movement and African-Americans in different contexts. Europe's fascist movement used it as a symbol of opposition to fascism while the White supremacists have used it to symbolize evil and showing of no remorse for wrongdoing. The feminist movement used it in its fight against gender inequality. In the context of African-Americans, the raised clenched fist features as a symbol of resistance, defiance and unity, demonstrative repulsion against any form of oppression, a symbol of activism, and as a symbol of protesting racism and injustice. The text accompanying this fist simplifies the intended meaning of protesting racism in connection with the massive activism of the Black Life Matter movement that organized demonstrations around many parts of the world after the gruesome murder of George Floyd.

Another fabric design of interest is the one that addresses the issue of climate change. This fabric design (Figure 3) uses a globe-like motif, also arranged in half-drop format. The simple motif arrangement and the alternating colour treatment create a sense of horizontal linearity. The inscription 'Climate Change' which appears in the fabric receives emphasis due to the use of white rectangular space around it.

The creative and collaborative efforts of the young artists (Rosa and Lawrence) in response to topical global issues through these fabric designs converted into bodysuits are a product of binational engagement that borrowed global cultural ideas in configuring its intended message. Wearing this fabric design or the constructed garments from the fabric design serves as a reminder of these topical global issues – Covid-19 pandemic, racism and climate change. The

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issues raised by the designs is a rehash of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) three, thirteen and sixteen. SDG goal three touches on good health and wellbeing. In relation to health, the artists preach about the safety protocols (to be observed) of the Covid-19 pandemic while the design on climate change is in synch with the SDG goal thirteen that deals with climate action. Goal sixteen harmens on peace, justice and strong institutions. All people of the world belong to one race, that is the human race. It is when people of the world come to terms with this, that the racism would stop. The stopping of racism would also contribute to world peace. It is these unifying messages that the artists put across in this exhibition. The works presented are, indeed, statement pieces that require deeper reflections and visual engagement. Have a pleasant viewing experience!

#### **Nina Alverdes, art pedagogy student at AdBK, Munich**

My first reaction towards the “Safety Suit” by Lawrence and Rosa: shock. A designer life vest made of African cloth – how cynical! At the second look I realize that there are words printed on the cloth: “Covid-19 is real”, “stop racism” and “climate change”. The print becomes a political banner, a newspaper. The three problems addressed might be the most insolvable in human history. These designs don’t seem to be made for everyday wear, maybe rather for more festive attire? You wouldn’t wear these irritating motifs without a reason. Traditional textiles with a disruptive element... something’s just not quite right. Safety clothing is made for protecting human beings, possibly meant as a symbol for hope, hope for a solution of the problems addressed? There is only little hope for those three problems, though. We act far too hesitant to slow down climate change – it’s already too late to undo it completely. To “stop racism” is quite a tricky problem, because it has all to do with power struggles. The problem of Covid-19 though seems to be connected to all of this: to the aggravatedly unequal class system and to the careless exploitation of our environment, on the hunt for growth and profit. These are the topics discussed by this work: refugee movements, rescue, protection, human rights, racism, pandemics and climate. All of them are connected in complex ways. Surely, they are impossible to be resolved by this work. Still, “Safety Suit” starts off – down-right demands – a critical train of thought. On the first look it might seem cynical or provocative, but it also articulates a need for protection and safeguarding, for questioning traditions and thought patterns. Maybe a call for salvation? “Safety Suit” is also the eager, handmade, almost childishly playful but still earnest and resolute attempt to face these problems. The results are unique “patches” of protection that can be applied wherever global politics have failed.



**Lawrence Kyere**, born in 1995 in Akim Oda, Eastern Ghana, completed basic school in 2015, where he attended visual arts with textile design. After graduating, he enrolled at the University of Education Winneba, studying fashion design and textile education. He is interested in textile design and fabric design using CAD (computer aided design). In his colorful patterns he uses symbols and pictures (sometimes found footage, sometimes drawn by himself) and uses these as patterns and motifs to design prints and clothes. Lawrence’ main aim is to be the best textile or fabric designer. He recently launched his own clothing brand called “B3rma”.



**Rosa Pfluger**, born 1997 in Ebersberg, lives and works in a village near Munich. In her surroundings, which seem to be shaped by agriculture, animals, religiosity and tradition, she happens upon objects which she observes, documents, conserves, rebuilds or develops further. Her attempt to uncover traps in order to enable a new, sometimes unconventional or ironic view, is crucial to her work. Bricolage, improvisation, DIY-mentality and research are her favoured methods. The results are prototypes, observations, tools.



CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE

COVID-19 IS REAL

## We serve you

# Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain & Maria Anna Obermeier at super+CENTERCOURT

### To get in touch

The 6th of May 2020 I reached out to Clara asking for teamwork. We knew each other before, Clara came to Munich in 2019 for an Erasmus semester. We met at the academy of fine arts and quickly recognised commonalities and began to get friends. Before developing ideas for the collaboration we had to explore each other's work and working type. It was difficult to describe our artworks to each other in the beginning. The education systems in Spain and in Germany are different, what we learn, how we learn and where the focus lays. It gives us a different approach to the production and understanding of art, but there are similarities, we share knowledge, definitions and things.



### To (not) share

It started to get summer and at the end of May we had a period when we didn't hear much from each other. The reason was distance, none of us was in Munich. To stay in contact we had to use words and these were our interface. We began to exchange ideas about art, culture and the objects that surround us.

The dialogue and the description of art works is something essentially important when it comes to art or art education. It contains the translation from objects to language and from the mother tongue to an international one and back to an artwork. The basis for our communication was and is language. Clara said to me it could be cool to do something about how we express and communicate ideas in other languages. We share language. The shared languages give us the opportunity to discuss shared subjects and objects. In the partly real and partly fictional dialogue that follows, the conversation leads again and again to eating situations, which in turn are the models for the paintings and show how often we looked for meeting each other.

## Dialogue

The creation of art or of an image lays not in the hands of one person. Different aspects affect the end product.

In the end of the dialog there will be an image – a painting – an artwork.

- [13:33, 7.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I like sculpture in particular  
 [11:30, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Maybe I can translate them  
 [14:22, 20.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I asked myself if you like writing because I write really much  
 [14:33, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Why??  
 [14:33, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I like to write!! Did you read my text?? I don't know how well the translation is  
 [14:33, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Because I wrote it in Spanish  
 [14:34, 20.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: because of the time  
 [14:52, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Is it interesting??  
 [14:34, 20.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: oh I really didn't recognize that! it was really nice to read it, although I haven't read the text  
 [14:51, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: read it and feel me how well is in English  
 [15:45, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I didn't want to say feel I wanted to say tell  
 [15:46, 20.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: is it more about how we work together??  
 [19:01, 20.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I think it's nice to kind of influence each other  
 [09:16, 28.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Clara are you there?  
 [10:16, 28.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: How are you by the way?????  
 [11:05, 28.5.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: What can the image be a carrier for? Paintings are shared spaces. They care for you like shells carry their pearls.  
 [16:00, 28.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Is it difficult to write poetry????  
 [16:10, 28.5.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Yes, I think I get you  
 [13:45, 4.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: you were on a dream I had the other day  
 [14:39, 4.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Nice dream  
 [08:54, 9.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: And did you start to write poetry?  
 [14:41, 4.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: But it was in the dream  
 [14:42, 4.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: How are you?? I saw you are enjoying exquisite food  
 [09:46, 9.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: How are your paintings going on  
 [09:57, 9.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I don't know them  
 [19:03, 9.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Yes!! You do! I really like it  
 [19:27, 9.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Yes, maybe we can explore something that's connected to it  
 [12:21, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: To bring to the public space the private experience  
 [12:22, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: But I guess I would not be able to do it here in Germany  
 [12:22, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Because I don't speak German and I want people to hear our conversations  
 [13:33, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Do you want to meet for lunch??? Or for a drink I don't care  
 [13:33, 12.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: both  
 [13:34, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Italian heritage  
 [13:34, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Okay do you know some place?????  
 [13:38, 12.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: You know that I speak Italian right????  
 [13:39, 12.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I forgot so much  
 [15:23, 18.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: You can come for dinner?  
 [13:26, 13.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: do you still want to paint it??  
 [13:26, 13.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: yes!  
 [15:11, 18.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Maria, where do you want to meet???  
 [17:14, 26.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: something about how we express and communicate ideas in other languages  
 [17:14, 26.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Something about language  
 [17:42, 26.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: yes, I would love to try out the languages  
 [07:03, 3.7.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Did you have fun last night????  
 [19:02, 30.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I started with a sketch to know where to put things and then I have to paint the background  
 [11:22, 22.7.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: We decided that everybody brings food and drinks that we can make a picnic  
 [11:03, 22.8.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: How finished do you want to leave it???  
 [15:07, 27.8.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I have to paint the faces and the hands that's important

[15:07, 27.8.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: and maybe a similar picture with some of your objects?  
 [21:43, 23.9.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Like how you talk at a dinner table or a party or things like this???  
 [12:27, 27.10.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I'm making lunch now  
 [16:38, 28.10.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Cigarettes, Glasses, Fanny pack, Phone, Wallet, Lipstick, Keys, Purse  
 [16:43, 28.10.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I think I'm going to leave  
 [08:47, 2.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Clara cara if nothing comes in between I have the whole Tuesday afternoon free to paint? do you have time?  
 [13:29, 3.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Maria do you want to meet today then?  
 [15:07, 3.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Maria are you still there???  
 [15:08, 3.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Yes, yes  
 [15:09, 3.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Can I come inside??  
 [18:01, 3.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I thought there was something wrong with my body presence.  
 [23:15, 3.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: How is your painting evolving!??  
 [23:16, 3.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Going on and on, but better  
 [11:04, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: do you know the word Berührungsgesten that means in English something like touching gestures  
 [11:04, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I like that word, because to touch is kind of intimate  
 [11:05, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: And it's nice to show an intimate moment with an object in the painting  
 [11:06, 4.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Yes, it's really interesting, so should we change the sketch for something more intimate  
 [11:07, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: no not really I would let the object be how they are, but maybe we could add some hand at the edges of the painting, that are softly touching something or want to hold something  
 [11:10, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I think it's totally interesting what relation people have to objects, because when you have like a favourite lipstick or something, the object is getting such a big importance for oneself, and it's possible to get familiar with objects, and being responsible for objects  
 [11:25, 4.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: We have the same or similar relationship with sculptures than with objects, but objects have a use and sculptures are useless  
 [12:34, 4.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: right  
 [08:47, 5.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Buongiorno Clara, ho fatto una versione breve del nostro dialogo, cosa ne pensi?  
 [09:38, 5.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: Really nice 🥰 cute to remember our conversations!!!!  
 [09:39, 5.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I would make it part of the artwork?  
 Because we are really much talking about dinner  
 [06:57, 11.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: Hey lovely, I went home because I was super tired, I'm in the academy today, too!  
 [13:43, 11.11.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I'm eating, ich komme später.  
 [19:22, 21.12.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: would you like to talk via Videocall? Are you at home?  
 [09:54, 10.2.2021] Maria Anna Obermeier: Buongiorno Clara, fammi und Cappuccino quindi possiamo telefonare.  
 [18:40, 14.2.2021] Maria Anna Obermeier: Sad that we haven't seen each other.  
 [16:31, 23.2.2021] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: I'm having a pizza in the street.  
 [10:55, 6.11.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: I'm starting now

The dialogue shows that although the places where art is viewed are museums, galleries and universities, the discussion about art happens at the opening or during conversations or a meal afterwards. Accompanying these moments is a sense of conviviality and comfort. There is food and drink, as well as seating and smoking balconies. Conviviality or togetherness is created through shared places or objects. A visit to a restaurant follows a repetitive pattern: enter, sit, choose, wait, eat, talk, drink, pay, leave. A visit to a museum likewise: enter, pay, look, buy a postcard, leave. In addition to the common process, the common objects appear. The seating set, jackets, place settings, bags, purses, mobile phones, cigarettes, keys, make-up utensils, etc. The knowledge of objects often transcends cultures and countries and can be used as a link.



### To meet

In June we both managed to get back and meet for lunch, for dinner, for a picnic, a drink, a coffee, a walk, a snack in the sun at the stairs in front of the academy in Munich. First we went to watch each other's artworks and then searched for comfortable places to talk about it. The goal wasn't just producing, but to use our meta-level and talk about art and how artists work together.

### To produce

There is no long description about us producing art and working together, because there was always output when we talked or texted or video-called. From the moment we have started to exchange, to share or to effect there is production. The process is a kind of product, but the final product is a painting.

### To present

In the large painting, four people are sitting on a white plastic set around two small tables; on the table are glasses of wine and oysters with lemon. On the one hand, the depicted persons act within the pictorial space, but due to their flatness, similar to cardboard displays and their direction of acting, they turn out of the picture and towards the viewer. The persons in the painting handle objects in a caring or a not caring way and they tell their stories through the presentation of the object, their acting and their face expression. The painting also shows how they deal with the social relation to each other; is there friendship or a professional relation or both. In the background of the large picture, an illuminated sign with the words SERVICE shines out strongly from the picture. In the painting, drink and food are served, the protagonists serve the viewer hints about the applicability of the objects depicted. The artist serves the painting to the viewer. The viewer is allowed to consume art, just like in a museum, just like in a restaurant. The painting Clara created at the beginning of November is exactly the size of the tables depicted in the painting. It shows a table situation from her perspective. The fingers on the edges of the painting or table indicate an extension of the picture, as if people were gathering around the table.

**We are eating – we will come later****Alexander Scharf**

It all starts with a laid table. Clara and Maria meet on a balmy summer evening in a comfort zone. The food, the surroundings and the situation of culinary confrontation open up a fantastic space of thought in which "service" becomes a self-evident gesture.

In their exhibition, the two artists Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain and Maria Anna Obermeier embark on a common path of exchange. The two meet in the cosmos of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and are both influenced by the traditional discourse of their countries of origin. Clara comes from Madrid and Maria from Lower Bavaria. It is the game of friendship that leads them into a spiral of intercultural art discourse. The beginning of their ongoing conversation is a lunch together. This is followed by dinner, a picnic, a walk, a coffee date and numerous shorter meetings in which not only the open discourse is central but also the culinary habitus is celebrated. The food and the objects on the dinner table become the universal language of the situation and accompany the events as irreplaceable extras. Cigarettes, handbags, mobile phones, take their place next to pasta, snacks, drinks and

other delicacies. The table becomes the symbol of a space in which every conversation finds its place. The potential of this thought space is infinite as long as the table is set and all the extras take their place. In the large painting, four people are seen sitting on a white plastic set. The arrangement consists of two tables and four chairs; on the table are two glasses filled with wine and a plate with oysters and lemons. On the one hand, the people depicted act within the pictorial space, but because of the way they are presented, they detach themselves from the background of the picture and involve the viewer. The woman in the summer dress (Maria) turns to the recipient with direct eye contact and offers the bowl of the already eaten mussel organism and the waiter in the left part of the picture generously spills the red wine. In the background, "SERVICE" is emblazoned in black letters on a bright orange background. Service refers to a custom that transcends cultures and countries and functions as a link between two unknown parties. The action seems frozen but still full of conversation and words.

In this miraculous way, the sentences begin to fly across the table and the game of conversation takes its course. Like a tennis match, sharp statements are combined with fine gestures of touch and brought to the point with sporting determination. Clara and Maria practise this game and equate the process of eating

with the process of art discourse. For the artists, a friendship is not only a meal served to each other, but also the accompanying conversation about their artistic position. It is the language that connects both positions and it is the cosmos of the table that makes this discourse possible at all.

*"It always needs an invitation." – Maria Anna Obermeier*

The two protagonists, Clara and Maria, develop a dialogue that is partly based on facts and real conversation processes and partly represents a phantasm. Time is shortened and space is stretched. A conventional chat turns into a romanticised form of invitation. The interplay between art discourse and conversations about food begins.

*[15:23, 18.6.2020] Maria Anna Obermeier: You can come for dinner?*

*[13:26, 13.6.2020] Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain: do you still want to paint it??*

Misunderstandings lead to a poetic narrative in which previously hidden doubts are named and understanding and encouragement lead to a shared perception. The two synchronise their worlds and cultivated hospitality remains the constant companion of rapprochement. The end of the conversation remains open but the story of a friendship won settles like a gentle veil over the lunch table, enchanting every smile into a gesture of touch.

*"Gooble Gobble, one of us, Gooble Gobble, one of us ..." – "Freaks" (1932)*

The dialogue is still ongoing.

**Clara Ricarda Lizasoain Ciriquiain** / I have been studying Fine Arts since 2017. I began my studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Complutense University of Madrid. After an Erasmus at the Academy of Fine Arts of Munich in 2019, I decided to extend my staying for another year. My artistic interests are focused on sculpture where I'm interested in playing with the space and the environment, giving a lot importance to the scale in relation to the surrounding space. Apart from my interests in practical and processual forms of art, I'm willing to research in the fields of art theory and art history.

**Maria Anna Obermeier** / I have been studying art and art education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich since 2016. My artistic, social, societal and political processes mostly take place in collectives. My art works revolve around the moments of coming into contact with art. What kind of exchange takes place during viewing and how does one interact with art? When one decides to look at art, one is prepared for a portion of culture, current art and artsy feeling. You see yourself in the role of the consumer. The work has eyes and a voice, it has words and it occupies space that the viewer can no longer claim for himself. It is not about coexistence, but about changing the state of the viewer by making him/her aware of his/her presence and visibility.





## Setting the stage / Artistic production through narrative exchange

### Octavia Roodt & Stela Vula at Digital Art Space

Octavia Roodt and I became acquainted on the 12th of July 2020, when we exchanged our first email. I was a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich at the time, while Octavia was finishing her master's studies at the University of Pretoria. Over the course of several months, we worked on the "transculturality" project, a part of the field of art didactics led by Professor Dr. Ernst Wagner in Munich. Octavia and I began our exchange with a spirit of experimentation and fluidity. Led by our unique set of differences and commonalities, we discussed many possible areas of artistic collaboration. We shared personal stories and were able to identify domains of common interest. Beyond personal formation and family history, we were also interested in gender issues, national identity, language, education, religion, political systems and the evidence of these abstract social structures in our daily life. I moved to Germany from Greece and have been living in Munich for the last 8 years. I finished my studies in the field of sculpture and then in the field of art education. For the last few years, I have been producing hybrid artworks. These works consist of both physical and digital materials. In my practice, I use space mapping techniques, light, colour and user interactivity (the latter triggered by custom software). My work often explores and deconstructs well-established, symbolically connoted aesthetical manifestations of my everyday life. This is accomplished through the use of symbols, iconography, tradition, rituals, emblems, institutions and so on.

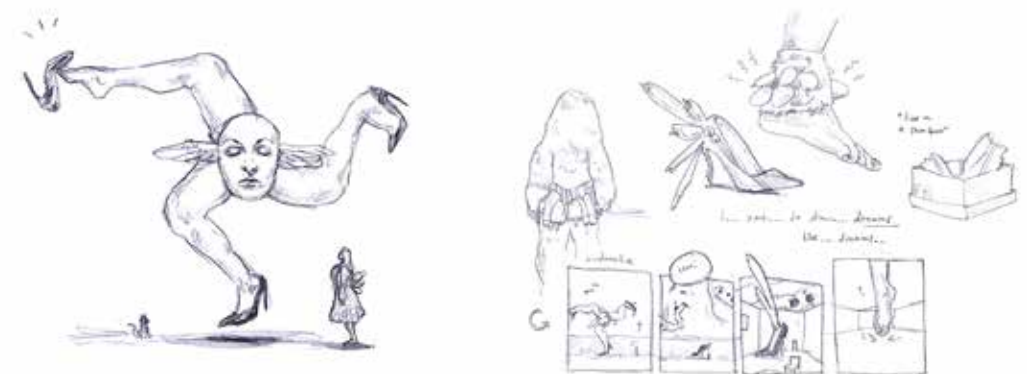
Octavia is a South African artist. She has been studying at the University of Pretoria for the last 7 years, completing studies in graphic design before shifting to fine art in her postgraduate studies. She creates narratives by drawing characters in interaction with personal and global symbols. This means that she draws archetypal symbols that interrupt, expand on or enrich her autobiographical stories. Her approach merges academic sketching, narrative strategies and poetry. She works on paper and often completes her drawings digitally. Octavia and I employ two genuinely different artistic languages, which generate a variety of materials, strategies and realization techniques when working together. Our field of interest kept expanding exponentially. The excitement of attempting to combine our different approaches to storytelling in a single work, underpinned by a desire to maintain our individuality, led us to holding regular meetings. These meetings served to update and freshen the conversation, as well as providing a space to reflect on our practical work. To begin, we decided to work with narrative structures. We would exchange personal stories and attempt to translate the other's story into artistic expression. Our translation became a way to explore

our sense of identity and larger societal structures. We wanted to see how representative or authentic our stories could be. What kind of patterns can they produce, and how? Speaking generally, what are the specific roles that define our own perception?

Octavia and I officially began to work with narratives and our personal structures upon exchanging our first story. We set specific criteria for the stories. The stories should be relatively short and should be inspired by our everyday life and real experiences. The stories should also trigger identity processes that may be explored when experiencing the artwork. Our intention was to create a work which would combine and integrate our two artistic languages in a dialogue. We decided that this dialogue should take place during the different phases of the artistic process; from the beginning of an idea, through to the means of construction and materials being used and ending in the exhibition space and public communication.

The experimental nature of this exchange, as a "test driven development" process, has its own challenges. It demanded a lengthy phase of exploring and designing, a careful consideration of results and investigation of the actual visible and tangible artwork. After commencing with the telling of stories, it took us approximately 6 months of "back and forth" to see which direction should be followed.

Octavia sent me her story on the 17th of July and started working with drawings on my story in the next few days.



Reading my story provided Octavia with an opportunity to explore a new set of symbols. Other material brings a fresh perspective, without losing the intimacy that personal stories are capable of. My story formed as a dream world in Octavia's mind.

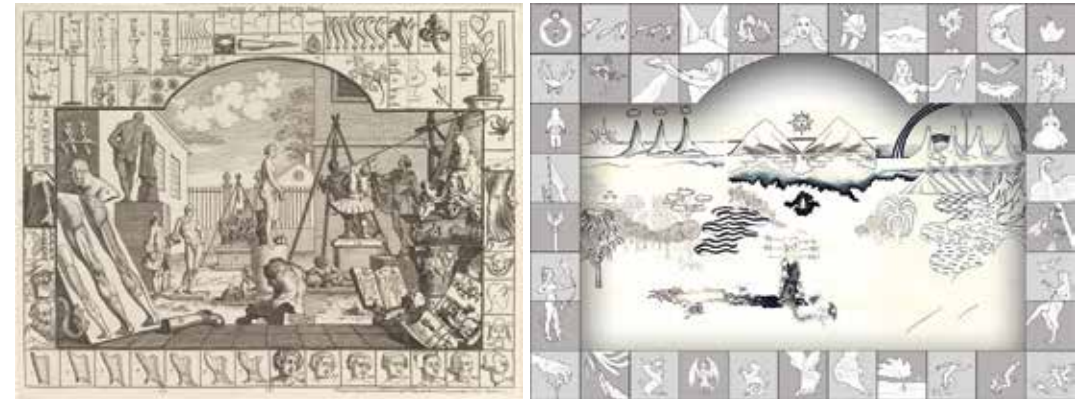
For Octavia's story, I used a projection surface; a combination of glass (Height: 4 meter, Length: 4 meter) and solid building material (Height: 3 meter, Length: 4 meter). The projections included animated symbols and repetitions. I converted Octavia's text into a video installation that suggest the characters, patterns and musings, as well as its heroic-mythical dimensions.



The first two iterations highlighted the differences between us, as well as our particular creative strategies. Art was being produced in completely different ways. We decided that the two strategies retained too much of their singularity and subjectivity. At this point, we retained two vastly different perspectives, where the transcitive process had not yet taken place. Furthermore, the final experience of such an approach in a real exhibition space seemed overly complicated.



Octavia and I began to reflect on these issues during the next few meetings. Three months later, on the 18th of October 2020, I came up with the idea of using a 18th century lithographic print as a structural template and the basis of our future steps. The print, from William Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty, 1753, had come up in conversation about Octavia's Master's work. We decided to borrow some elements of the form and the composition of the template and "build" our narratives in three-dimensional space. Furthermore, we decided to add another criterion; to work in the same material (drawings on paper, in black and white).



William Hogarth, Analysis of Beauty, Plate 1, 1753



We both found the narrative potential of the template exciting. It promised to bind our visual approaches together into one work and to contain the stories' intermedial nature. In other words, it could cater to both stills and moving images. The template's reference to art historical canon also became significant, in terms of exploring tradition and patterns.

According to our new template, we decided that Octavia would create her work for the outer part of the model, and I for the inner part. I started with "The garden of delights" as a kind of blueprint or architecture for Octavia's story, or the inner space of the work. I also designed and built a structure that could integrate the printed or projected border that Octavia made drawings for. By recreating the nature of the original painting, with icons of our social abstractions, I was creating a new cartography for Octavia's story, a new horizon and a new land.



Although the result of this trial combines our two genuinely different artistic expressions, it excludes important elements and especially those that make the artists' languages as different and unique. On the other hand, the analogue nature of the work had already begun to demand its own space and became engaging to the public. When images are projected, the viewer's presence is pronounced as the light, shadows and the various spatial layers lures the public into the role of spectator. It resembles and acts like a theatre!



We aimed to take advantage of this newly evolved perspective and even play up the elements that associated our work with a theatre and theatrical scenes. We wanted to actively engage the public and have them create, delete or modify the scenes individually. In this manner, they would be able to control story fragments by creating new versions or translations of our original stories and intentions. Through simple 'Drag & Drop' functionality, as a method of exploring graphical interfaces, the public would have the possibility to recompose, replace and reconfigure the whole picture and its meaning.

To have our work be this "open", to let others see in our world and construct it again according to their own intentions and ideas, became a mutual fascination. While one person could create a very loud and intensive version of our work, someone else could choose to leave the scene blank, without landscape or protagonists. Letting go of the total control and possession of the appearance of the artwork blunts the precision of your intentions and plans. Along with that, it disengages you from responsibility and consequence. Conversely, the artwork may also create new dynamics that could enable you to get a look into the spectator's world, their tendencies and their habits. We could provide our eyes and our words as a platform, for them to see and tell their own stories. If this were the case, Octavia and I could explore the socio-visual habits of those engaging with the theatre, while simultaneously providing the public with a 'safe' scene. Upon second thought, however, this would not be safe at all. A theatre is characterized by abstraction and deception. Nevertheless, our lies are sometimes the only truth that we have.



### Storytelling as a methodology:

#### Reactions to collaborative work by Stela Vula and Octavia Roodt

After engaging with the body of work that has been produced over the span of the project (albeit in two dimensions), Dr Avitha Sooful and Prof Lize Kriel congratulate the artists Stela Vula and Octavia Roodt on collaborating across continents and cultural boundaries. The exchange appears to have been fruitful and rife with opportunities for seeing anew.

Dr Sooful argues that narration can be seen as the methodology of the work. The artists' decisions seem to be made from a shared belief that narratives are able to enrich and guide individuals. In both the relationship between the artists, as well as the eventual toy theatre, a respect for stories and storytelling structure the liminal space between Vula and Roodt's artistic practices. In line with the focus on narrative, time seems to be wielded as an artistic element. The stories themselves lack a sense of time, and become images instead. It is as if time is collapsed in the artists' narratives and the greater art historical context.

The use of the theatre, in concept and construction, can be regarded as a lens through which the artists interpret their symbols. Furthermore, the theatre may also stand as the meeting of two mediums; the physical and the digital. This is especially poignant, given how the artists produced meaning in both the physical and digital space. The theatre, Sooful states, is not as entertaining as the name might suggest, but a place for layered narratives and collective meaning.

Dr Sooful warns that the artist's shared identity as women, and the specific definition of transculturality needs to be addressed in any formal texts around the work. Furthermore, the body of work might be more valuable to the viewer if given a series of titles when exhibited. These titles could describe some of the images on the inside of the theatre, providing another entry point for the viewer. In this vein, the border around the theatre serves to contain and bind together the surprising array of symbols found in the drawings, animations and paintings that populate the theatre.

Finally, Dr Sooful urges that the subjective and historical reasons for the choice of lithographic print be addressed. In answer, Dr Lize Kriel has provided a view of the lithograph, William Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty, Plate 2, 1753, as an attempt to combine image, text and narrative. She positions Hogarth as an intermedial figure in the art historical canon, citing Icons – Texts – Iconotexts: Essays on Ekphrasis and Intermediality, 1996, edited by Peter Wagner. In the effort to accommodate the physical and digital dimensions of the two separate artistic practices, she suggests that Hogarth's work became an intuitive template to combine artistic mediums. This argument underpins the relationship between transculturality and intermediality; Vula and Roodt had to adopt an intermedial approach to produce work transculturally (over emails, zoom calls and messages).

In conclusion, Dr Sooful and Prof Kriel extend their consent, commendations and best wishes toward Vula and Roodt, as well as the transculturality project as a whole.



**Octavia Roodt** is a South African artist/Born in Johannesburg in 1995/2017, Graduated from BA Information Design at the University of Pretoria, with a distinction for Honours Research/2018-2020, Lectured first and second year students at the University of Pretoria/2021, Graduated from MA Fine Arts, cum laude/2021, Three month long artist's residency at the Maison des Auteurs in Angoulême/2020-2021, Graphic designer for the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria/Selected Exhibitions/2019-2020, Talent Unlocked Program at the Turbine Art Fair/2019, 50ty/50ty prints at the Investec Art Fair.



**Stela Vula** a Germany-based Artist living in Munich /originally from Greece, acquired a Diploma in Informatics and Computer Science Engineering 2000-2005 / 2015, graduates Painting Academy of Fine Arts in Athens / 2018, graduates Sculpture and 2020 graduates Art Education with professor Stephan Huber and Tanja Widmann respectively, Academy of Fine Arts in Munich / 2021, teaching art at secondary level state schools / since 2009, consultancy in Software Development and IT Infrastructure/selected Exhibitions: 2020, Dia-Gallery, Munich / 2020, Munich Jewellery Week / 2019, Pasinger Fabrik, Munich / 2018, Diploma Exhibition - Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich / 2017, Performance Art Oslo Festival, Oslo – Norway

## Shelter

«It looks like you are in an embargoed country.»

### Hosein Ghafouri & Georg Schatz at Digital Art Space

#### Georg

When it turned out, that our first plan, a cooperation with the Wuhan Art Academy in China, could not be realized because of the Corona Virus, we had to find new partners. I remembered that lately the Iranian artist Hosein Ghafouri had sent me a request if he could post one of my works on his Instagram account. I have to mention, that my work is hardly present in the internet but he had found me.

May 26th 2020 I contacted Hosein Ghafouri, being aware that I didn't know anything about him except having a superficial impression of his work. But I knew that I was looking for a partner from "another culture" and for a certain degree of unfamiliarity. At that time I also considered to work together with a Danish artist. I knew, that we would have been on the same wavelength, but I decided for the contrast and to accept the challenge. Hosein returned immediately: "Yes, please give me more information, I would like to work in the international art movement as well."

We had set up a project space on Slack in order to document the progress and communication within all teams transparently. On May 29th 2020 Hosein sent me a screenshot with a sad emoji in form of the slack logo saying, "It looks like you're in an embargoed country." So, due to the international embargo of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hosein and I couldn't work together on this platform. Communication via email occurred to be not viable as well – our entire communication had to run via WhatsApp.

On June 20th 2020 we were able to set up our first video meeting. It was Tadh, Hosein's studio mate who called. Hosein was sitting in the back and did hardly speak a word. I was taken in confidence, that there was a language problem. Hosein can write messages, but has difficulties to speak English. But, for our project he started to take English lessons. The quality of transmission was bad, still I got an impression of the shared studio with a dusty garden and chirping crickets in a hot Teheran night. I could see, that it was a place of ambitious art production. Conversely, Hosein got to see my family, my apartment and a panning shot out of the window on shiny cars in a Munich street. The contrast was there – cooperation could start.

At the very beginning Hosein and I came across an inherent problem – in which scope would we generally want to cooperate with one another? It became apparent that one piece of art, in which the individual contribution was not visible any more, was neither practical nor desired by both of us. We found that we both more or less represent the idea of the artist as a lone wolf with a primarily subjective position.

In June 2020 our joint work started. Hosein proposed the term "shelter" to be our subject. At the beginning I was not so much convinced and wanted to develop our theme more jointly. Later I realized that shelter is a recurring motive in Hosein's work since years, as a reference to his upcoming in the antique city of Yazd and its architecture (UNESCO World Heritage). Hosein immediately started to work and sent me a video with promising results. He had built several small size shelters out of wire and paper. These objects were light and flexible, so that, as shown on the video, he could step on them and kick them and still be able to bring them back into their former shape.

But I still had a problem to get involved with the subject. It became apparent, that it would come to the form of two separate positions in respect to our common subject "shelter". I was still trying to find a relevant artistic reply. During this phase it must have been frustrating to work with me. I decelerated and we lost time – "I guess this is a cancellation...", Hosein texted on September 18th 2020.

On September 19th Hosein sent several drawings in order to restart the process. He tried to push our cooperation but things didn't come together for both of us. We still needed time to get a feeling and find our positions within this project. Two days later I formulated three general approaches how we could combine our parts. Things became a bit clearer but we hadn't found a specific form yet.

November 3rd 2020: Hosein wrote, that he had changed his concept, planning to create a video-performance in the catacombs of the antique city of Yazd. That was the turning point. It gave me inspiration and I have found my starting point. I decided to build another shelter, that was totally different to the honeycomb like shelters in Yazd. My shelter should be mobile and temporary, protecting from cold and snow instead from heat and sun – a tent made from discarded fur coats.

In the following month we worked together productively. Our communication became amicable and spontaneous. We exchanged ideas and thoughts and also discussed political issues. At some point we also reached limits in our conversation. At the end it was possible to produce an artwork together without meeting physically.

Then I had to find a way to transfer the shipping costs. Due to the embargo I had to hand over cash to an Iranian friend in Munich so that he could organize a money transfer inside Iran through his family. Finally, on January 20th 2021 a parcel from Teheran arrived containing Hosein's artworks.

February 18th 2020 Hosein sent me his video data via a download link.

March 20th, our cooperation has not come to an end yet. There are still a lot of things to do. I have to finalize my tent. We have to organize the exhibitions and produce the catalogue. I am looking forward to install our work in the gallery and hope see Hosein in June in Munich. Our experience shows that it is possible to overcome boundaries, but it is necessary to use

creativity to engage with the difficulties. At the end it is simply about realizing. It is always the same point in art, to act and react on what is happening, overcome problems and finally just doing it?

Social, political, religious circumstances as well as language and culture have impact on art in many ways. Even regionally prevailing lightning conditions may influence the use of color. We must not forget the artists' personalities.

In his work Hosein Ghafouri is referring directly to the place he was born, taking the motive shelter. This kind of „initial inspiration“ is an emotional and visual source. It would be a loss if it gradually disappeared in a globalized art world. On the other hand there is always an expectation that comes along with the knowledge of the origin. Testing myself – would I bring Hosein's work in context with Iran, without having background information?

Concerning the fundamental question “What are the differences in the perception and production of contemporary art?” I note, that it is not possible to find an answer – it is only possible to experience individually.

For this project, I had reached out for Hosein Ghafouri from Iran, but actually he was connected with global art. I think he has been seeing our cooperation as a chance. Social media and the possibilities within the worldwide web have an important role therein. Without it, many artists would not have the chance to connect. On my decent questioning about differences in the perception and production of contemporary art I had the feeling, that Hosein almost reacted annoyed.

### Narges Ahrabi

#### Master of Arts Research

در آثار حسین غفوری از طراحی گرفته تا چیدمان، با جهانی ذهنی مواجهیم. جهانی که عناصر آن اگر چه انتزاعی و ناآشنا، اما به دنبال ایجاد ارتباطی با یکدیگر برای ساختن جهانی دیگر هستند. این جهان نظامی صنعتی دارد. دنیایی از مصنوعات که کارکردهای آشنای خود را از دست دادهاند و به کارخانه‌های مبهم و ذهنی تبدیل شده‌اند. کارخانه‌ای که در آن ارتباط عناصر با یکدیگر خیالی و غیر منطقی است و فرایند کار و تولیداتش مجهول است. حسین گاهی ابزار می‌سازد. ابزاری فنی که کاربردهای فنی ندارند و با طنزی ظریف از کارکرد اولیه‌شان خارج شده‌اند. او به درگیری با متریال علاقه نشان می‌دهد. متریالی چون گل، سیمان، آتش و حتی زیاله که ساخته دست بشر است. او از این مواد برای بازسازی جهانش بهره می‌برد.

در این چیدمان\_ ویدئو نیز با جهانی سوپرکتیو مواجهیم. دنیایی که ذهن هنرمند آن را آفریده است. اگر چه عناصر انتزاعی‌اش در دنیای خارج موجود نیستند اما گویی قصد تجسم یک شهر را دارد. شهری بیشتر تاریک و کمتر روشن. محصور در فضایی بسته و تاریک؛ گمشده در کوچه‌هایی پیچ در پیچ و بی‌انتهای. انگار اهالی این شهر در کابوسی چند بعدی گرفتار شده و در این هزارتوی تاریکی مطلقا چیزی درباره نور نمی‌دانند. شهر تحت تسلط و اراده نیرویی ویرانگر است. نیروهای تاریکی اگر اراده کنند به راحتی شهر را به سوی نابودی سوق می‌دهند. در اینجا زندگی همواره زیر سایه‌ای از هراس طی می‌شود. هراس از ناامنی. و در انتظار بختی که روزی بیاید و مرگی دسته‌جمعی را با خود بیاورد و یک نقطه پایان آخرالزمانی بر حیات این شهر بگذارد.

In Hossein Ghafouri's works, from drawing to installation, we encounter a mental world. A world whose elements, though abstract and unfamiliar, seek to connect with each other to create another world. This world has an industrial order.

A world of artifacts that have lost their familiar functions and become a vague and subjective factory, a factory in which the connection of elements with the imaginary is irrational and the process of work and production is unknown.

Hossein sometimes makes tools. Technical tools that have no technical applications and have been out of their original function with subtle humor. He is interested in dealing with material. Materials such as mud, cement, fire and garbage are man-made. He uses these materials to rebuild his world.

In this video-installation, we also encounter a subjective world. The world created by the artist's mind. Although its abstract elements do not exist in the outside world, it is as if it intends to embody a city. A city, more dark than bright. Enclosed in a pokey and dark space; lost in the winding alleys and endless. It is as if the people of this city are caught in a multidimensional nightmare and in this dark labyrinth they know absolutely nothing about light. The city is under the control and will of a destructive force. The forces of darkness, if they will, can easily lead the city to destruction. Here, life always goes under the shadow of fear. Fear of insecurity. And waiting for the fate that will one day bring a mass death and put an end to the apocalyptic life of this city.

### Hosein

How the idea for this project first came to my mind, I can only say that it started from a strong sense of need. Safety and health was a need that I felt in my heart at that time, and it still is, and this project, along with the sense of security, gave me, enabled me to express it. Maybe this power of artistic expression made me feel safe.

This statement was made by building shelters that made security a relative matter, assuming that no place or object could guarantee all aspects of security.

At the time of the Corona outbreak, the house was the safest place, but at the same time, there were whispers of war in Iran, and this made me feel threatened because the house is not resistant to bombs and bullets, so the house, which I had considered as a safe environment, could be my grave.

Safety has nothing to do with geography, which means that wherever you are, you should know that you are never completely safe, and this is what happens in my shelters. Some are fire resistant but can break, some are water and shock resistant and even revivable but can catch fire easily.

This project shows exactly how confused I was at that particular time.

### Georg

With his work, Hosein is telling me a story. His story was almost told, when I found the right words to respond. It took its time but we started communicating in the language of art and another story was told. My shelter is made out of worn-out fur coats which had been used as status symbols. Now nobody wants them anymore – it is not political correct to wear them and they are not a good investment anymore. I can afford to use them to build a shelter for the cold German winter. I bought them cheaper than canvas. A tent is not built for evermore, it can be blown away but it is flexible and it is still a shelter.

My shelter refers to nature and deals with relationship between man and animal. I can sleep in my tent in a forest, because tents and furs are built for the wilderness. Things change.



**Hossein Ghafouri** born in 1998 in Yazd, Iran / lives and works in Tehran  
**Fine Art Studies** Since 2015 Soore university **Selected Exhibitions** 2015, Gold FIAP Medals. KHYYAM international exhibition of photography / 2018, Collaboration in the Cry for Peace project, Iranian Red Crescent / 2019, Water and Color and Clay / 2019, The Iranian Red Crescent for the benefit of the flood-stricken people of Iran / 2020, DASTAN biennial 2020



**Georg Schatz** born in 1973 in Erding, Germany / lives and works in Munich  
**Fine Art Studies** 1995-1999 Communication and design, FH München / 2007-2013 Painting and graphik art, class of Sean Scully and Jean-Marc Bustamante, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, München (2012 master class student of Jean-Marc Bustamante) / Since 2018 Art education classes Dille-muth, Grünauer/Hofstetter, Rogg, Akademie der Bildenden Künste, München  
**Selected Exhibitions** / 2020, Boxenstop II, Pinakothek der Moderne, Staatliche Grafische Sammlung, München / 2020 ligne brute, Dia Artspace, München / 2020 Off the Cuff, Kunst 66, München / 2019 Schanzentisch, Atelierhaus XXXVIII, München / 2018 Oktopus Garten, Sardenhaus München / 2017 ACHERONTA MOVEBO – Røm, Kopenhagen / 2017 Finir en Beauté, Galerie der Künste, BBK, München



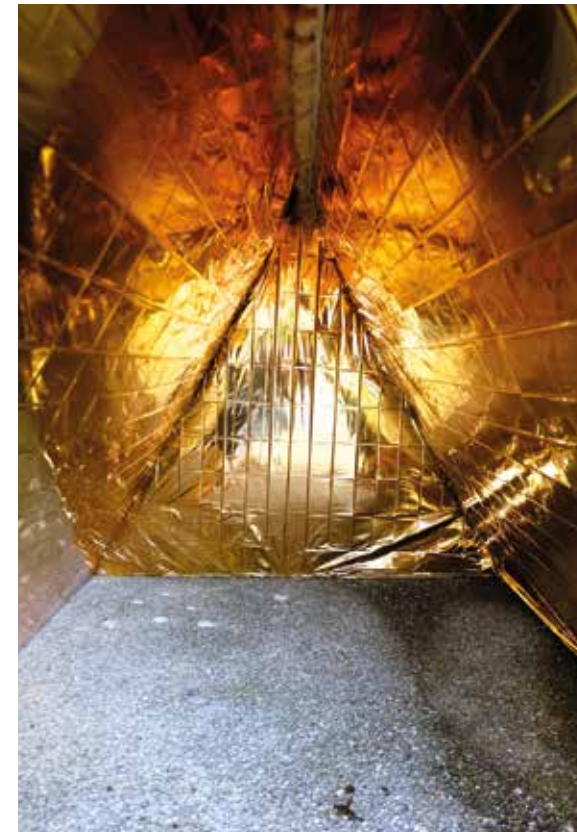


Hosein Ghafouri  
Shelter  
Filmstills, Performance  
Yazd, 2020



>>>





Georg Schatz  
Warm Shelter  
Installation, 2021

