

ARCHIVAL SITES OF SPECULATION: STORYING THE SILENCE



ARCHIVAL SITES OF SPECULATION: STORYING THE SILENCE

January 12th – February 11, 2024

Opening: January 11th, 6 p.m.

Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs

Austrian Association of Women Artists

Maysedergasse 2/28, 1010 Vienna



Program

With works by Katharina Birkmann,
Maja Bojanić, nathan c'ha, Mark Chehodaiev,
Alessandra Ferrini, Onyeka Igwe,
Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński, Ivana Lazić,
Arina Nekliudova, Carmiña Tarilonte Rodríguez,
Elske Rosenfeld & Olia Sosnovskaya,
SKGAL (Nina Höchtl, Julia Wieger),
Tsai-Ju Wu, Lorenz Zenleser

Curated by Georgia Holz and Stephanie Misa

Within the frame of the research project *Anonymity and Absence – Archival Sites of Speculation*, supported by the Angewandte Programme for Inter- and Transdisciplinary Projects in Art and Research (INTRA), University of Applied Arts Vienna.

Thursday, January 11th, 7 pm
Gadaffi in Rome: The Expanded Script
Lecture-performance by Alessandra Ferrini

Saturday, January 20th, 2–5 pm
Let's build our own acid-free archive!
Workshop with Tsai-Ju Wu

Friday, February 9th, 3–6 pm
Archive of Gestures: Becoming In/visible
Workshop with Elske Rosenfeld & Olia Sosnovskaya

VBKÖ
Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs
Austrian Association of Women Artists
Maysedergasse 2/28, 1010 Vienna

ARCHIVAL SITES OF SPECULATION: STORYING THE SILENCE

“Silences have frequencies. I want us to ask,
‘How can we learn to hear silences
that echo loudly, softly, or in code?’”

Panashe Chugumadzi,
Hearing the Silence

The exhibition **ARCHIVAL SITES OF SPECULATION: STORYING THE SILENCE** seeks to contribute to critical discussions on the archive as a space of artistic research and the experimental methods used in exploring convergent and divergent histories. It creates an experimental space within which methodologies of proximity and engagement *with* archives can be divulged. The participating artists seek to negotiate the constitutive limits of the archive. The artworks envisage what is missing from documentation, testimony or kept historical material. With these methods, historical and archival research is combined with *critical fabulation* to make productive sense of absences within an archive.

The **VBKÖ (Austrian Association of Women Artists)**, founded in 1910, aimed at empowering women artists in what was then an exclusively male arts circuit. Housed within the association is a typical archive composed of the secretarial files, documents of chairpersons, the association’s activities, as well as materials and works of its artists. The archive has documented and survived the National Socialist “Gleichschaltung,” a mandatory alignment with the NS regime. This exhibition is dedicated to a narrative shift and the development of decolonial methodologies that attend to the gaps in the association’s imperial archive because even though the archive is 113 years old, the association’s history is just at the very onset of its own documentation.

Saidiya Hartman’s notion of *critical fabulation* has informed the exhibition as well as the research project to a great extent. Based on archival research and a critical reading of the archive, it is put in practice by speculating about inaccessible, and silenced voices of the past, voices that “tell an impossible story” whilst amplifying the “impossibility of its telling”¹. What Hartman refers to are gaps in the transmission of the archive, the absence of an actual representation of personhood.

¹ Saidiya Hartman, *Venus in Two Acts*, 2008: 11.

Artist **Onyeka Igwe**'s approach of *proximity* suggests a closeness of one's own body to the body of the archive through touch, dance, text, projection and readings, seeking to account for how an archive becomes an *embodied experience*, which she performs in *No Dance, No Palaver* (2017-18). Through this closeness, the cultural production of the colonial imagination is examined to think *through* an embodied *with-ness* in a distinct temporal space.

Both the approaches of *critical fabulation* and *proximity* engender speculations on absence through the equally ephemeral and timely qualities of performative practices. The invited artists enact this embodied practice as a way of working with that combine historical and archival research, critical theory, and fiction to make productive sense of anonymity and ambiguous authorship, as well as the invisibility of what is absent from documentation. Both **Alessanda Ferrini** as well as **Elske Rosenfeld** are interested in revisiting specific historical moments and through different perspectives engender and create new forms of archives. **Ferrini**'s lecture performance uses media and amateur footage, text and archival imagery that takes us through the 2009 meeting of two infamous political leaders creating for it an 'expanded script'. Her embodied assemblage critically examines the continuing (neo)colonial relations between Italy and Libya.

Elske Rosenfeld and **Olia Sosnovskaya** collaboratively research the embodiment of protest and revolution (namely in the GDR 1989 and in Belarus 2020) to develop a new gesture for „Becoming In/visible” as part of Rosenfeld's on-going research platform *Archive of Gestures*. **Nina Höchtl** and **Julia Wieger** of **SKGAL** (Sekretariat für Geister, Archivpolitiken und Lücken) share this interest in resistance and protest, having worked with a breadth of several feminist archives (VBKÖ being one of them), attempting to excavate marginalized hi/herstory/ies through artistic research. **Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński**'s three photographs have been used by the artist for a speculative performative search in her film *Unearthing a Conversation* (2017) addressing Austrian ethnographer Paul Schebesta. Through her disarming manipulation, she offers a protective strategy to resist the colonial gaze.

Participants of the seminar *Working the Archive* (2022/23) especially contribute specific positionalities to the exhibition in relation to working with the VBKÖ and other archives. Hinting at exclusions inherent in archives **Arina Nekliudova** explores an explicitly violent object in the VBKÖ archive, the Members Registry of 1938. It features handwritten notes indicating a member's status as 'Jewish' or 'half Jewish,' with their names crossed out with red pencil. **Nekliudova** translates the register into an installation that turns its aggressiveness onto itself. **Ivana Lazić**'s work, on the other

hand, confronts the archive's anonymous authorship and 'witness-ship' by (re)establishing connections between all known members of the association and granting legibility to those who have been overwritten. **Katharina Birkmann's** installation works with the tension of what is left for us to imagine and gives a nod to the VBKÖ secession of the *Wiener Frauenkunst* and specters of it that inhabit the 1932 exchange exhibition catalog. Whilst the imprinting of documents from the VBKÖ archive into another medium, namely the medium of 8 mm film, enables **Lorenz Zenleser** to mobilize multiple temporalities of documentation.

In a speculative gesture, **nathan c'ha**, reassembles hats portrayed in group photographs of VBKÖ members at the beginning of the 20th century. The hats portrayed, the history of handcraft and of millinery resonate with historical disputes about the role of applied arts within the association. Through Andean textiles called *Khipus* as her objects of interest, **Carmiña Tarilonte Rodríguez** traces the continuation of colonial epistemic violence towards histories that have been erased. Initially functioning as documents and objects of communication *Khipus*, have been silenced through their fragmentation and relocation into Ethnographic collections in the Global North, the artist attempts to give a voice to these objects.

In a virtually unseen endemic of mold invasion, the work of **Maja Bojanić** signals the many levels of complex

inter-relation and interaction that happens on a site, this case being the un-refurbished and 'decaying' space of the VBKÖ since its habitation of it in 1912. It harkens to questions that reference what it means to 'preserve' and in which way. What might be eliminated, or controlled for something else to flourish? **Tsai-Ju Wu** treats the archive as a body and a subject, exploring the materiality of archival storage systems such as acid free cardboard boxes, hinting at the ambivalent character of these containers functioning as tools of preservation whilst segregating objects and literally placing them out of sight. **Mark Chehodaiev's** contribution suggests the VBKÖ's premises as a main witness to the association's past (as well as its present) as a container of time. His tracing of sunlight cast unto walls are hinting at what might be overlooked.

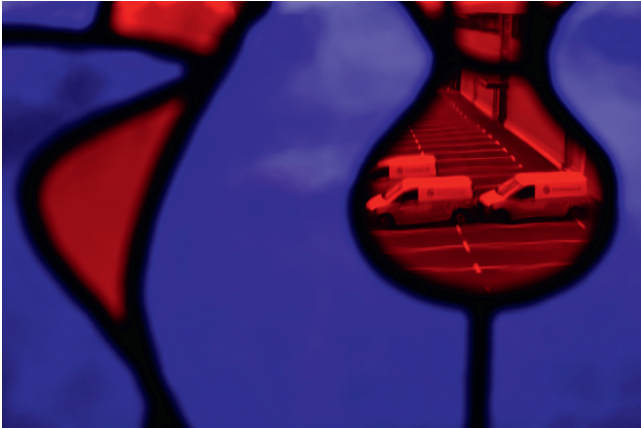
This exhibition is a culmination of the year-long research project *Anonymity and Absence — Archival Sites of Speculation*, supported by the Programme for Inter- and Transdisciplinary Projects in Art and Research (INTRA), at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. The project seeks to contribute to critical discussions on the archive as a space of artistic research, crucially asking how one performs the missing parts of an archive, and how to weave alternative and unwritten histories into what is present within a collection, especially with an archive that is in the making, such as that of the VBKÖ.

Georgia Holz, Stephanie Misa

I

Katharina Birkmann Bull, KA + Thunderstorm, TH +

2024, installation, wood, stained glass, steel, dimensions variable



In 1932, the 17th annual exhibition of the VBKÖ was held as an exchange exhibition. Participants were invited to offer non-monetary compensation, such as goods or services, for art pieces. Against the backdrop of the Great Depression, this exhibition illustrates the profound influence of economic circumstances on the works and aspirations of the VBKÖ. The titles in the catalog echo a conformist outlook on a marked difference between fine arts and applied arts, a highly debated binary within the association. The internal correspondences reveal the financial necessities and conflicting interests between more conservative and progressive views on the matter resulting in a secession in 1926 of VBKÖ members to form the “Wiener Frauenkunst” who integrated applied arts with fine arts and advocated for more economic independence for women.

The installation refers to two titles by Ka. Ruhm and Th. v. Mor from the 1932 exhibition catalog and their lack of visual documentation: *Junger Stier* (Young Bull) and *Aufziehendes Gewitter* (Looming Thunderclouds). The temporal gap between the young bull (and a mature bull), or the looming clouds of an oncoming thunderstorm creates a speculative and liminal interplay. The legibility of title, material, and technique serve as a narrative device, playing with a displacement in time, yet do not service a specificity as any documentation of the paintings are lost.

Maja Bojanić
for this could all be but an empty promise

2024, sound installation, 15:06 min., pipes in the VBKÖ
Narrated by Kennedy and Dallin Bradford. Sound design by Iutz Bolgárka

Disclaimer:

This is (not) a work of fiction.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events, and incidents in this recording are (n)either the product of the author's imagination (n)or used in a fictitious manner.

Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is (not) purely coincidental.

“The whispers are spreading, and the implications are striking. The recent removal of the mold settlement from the archival material at the VBKÖ in Vienna can neither be confirmed nor denied. However, rumors leaked from a conversation between scientists at the previously-mentioned institution reveal a potential disappearance of a remarkable species.

Last November, the VBKÖ invited the Office for Research, Monitoring, and Analysis of Alternaria Spores, also called The Institute for Mold Preservation, to further inspect a unique species of Black Mold supposedly detected in the Archive. After gaining worldwide recognition in Ljubljana, with their local mold-area proclaimed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2022, the Austrian Ministry of Culture issued a significant research fund supporting the maintenance of any novel occurrence of the species. Sources close to the VBKÖ report that these alarming claims resonated through the piping system of the space. Considering the significant torrential downpour affecting cultural sites in Vienna in the year 2023, all this magnificent damage must not have gone to waste after all. Again, there is no confirmation that the information was leaked by The Institute for Mold Preservation itself.”

— Unidentified Author, The disappearance of mold in the VBKÖ in Vienna (2024). *Der Standard* [Unpublished manuscript; marked as rejected by the editor; found material].

3

nathan c'ha

19XX

2024, folder with drawings, writing, and research; series of small-scale hats in traditional techniques and various materials (such as wool, linen, horsehair fabric)



As a classically trained milliner, my research interest was sparked upon encountering the women_ in the VBKÖ group photographs (dated to 1916 and ca. 1930, respectively) and their hats.

The millinery trade today has nearly gone extinct; a once blossoming branch of manufacturing formerly employing thousands of people – mostly women in fact – fading out of existence, with ever-changing ideas and ideals of what the headdress represents.

A breath of conservatism, aristocracy and imperialism stirs the dust; begging for us to rewrite this handcraft, reimagine it for modern times.

This project lends itself more to *history bounding*, than historical reconstruction.

A folder of findings, of approximations and a series of hats, crafted in traditional ways.

The endeavor is to find some emotional truths in-between the fragments of knowledge.

It is choosing to ignore what one seeks not to reinforce – to critically fabulate upon the spaces exuding possibilities.

4

Mark Chehodaiev **As the days pass**

2024, durational performance, wall drawing, dimensions variable

VBKÖ was founded in 1910 and moved into its historical premises shortly thereafter, on Maysedergasse in Vienna's first district, where it can still be found today. Over more than 100 years, VBKÖ, along with its archive, has lived through and changed with history — from the latter days of imperialism to the fall of the Habsburg Empire and WWI, Austro-Fascism, the Nazi Era, and through the progressive movements in the arts in Austria, all the way to the current expansion of the European Union.

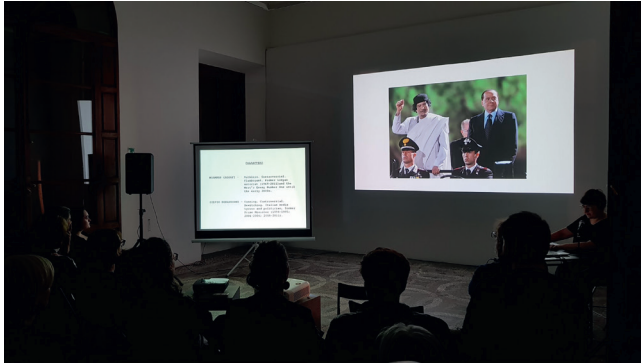
Echoes of these historical events can be traced in a variety of archival materials the association holds. Many of them nevertheless appear only as ghosts overshadowed by other histories. As tension between narratives continue to brew, the space of the Association itself feels timeless. It was reorganized multiple times but the location and its essentials have always stayed the same. The space, as it turns out, is a solid container with ever-changing content, much like a box for papers and old films.

The sunlight permeates the windows, casting a band of light on the wall. These walls have been constant witnesses to the past, and they keep performing this role today. My work offers an attempt to capture the transition between what has gone and what is happening now inside a distinct space.

5

Alessandra Ferrini **Gaddafi in Rome: the Expanded Script**

Lecture performance, January 11th, 7 pm



Alessandra Ferrini, *Gaddafi in Rome: the Expanded Script*, 2018, Villa Romana, Florence; photo: Davood Madadpoor.

In June 2009 Muammar Gaddafi and Silvio Berlusconi met in Rome to celebrate the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between Italy and Libya. The treaty included a series of deals on fuel trade, colonial reparations and the Bilateral Agreements on migration, which have led to severe human rights violations. As the event sparked several protests, it caused a media frenzy in Italy that brought to the fore the controversial relations between the two countries, as well as Italy's troubled relation with its colonial past. Attempting to turn an archive of live news updates produced during the meeting into a script, this performative lecture dissects the memory of this event and the way it was reported. Through the layering and interplay of text, archival imagery, media footage, and amateur documentation of the meeting available on YouTube, this 'expanded script' investigates how the news is produced and consumed today, while exposing the continuing (neo)colonial relations between Italy and Libya. Focusing on its main protagonists – Berlusconi and Gaddafi – it reflects on the way international politics are performed and how they are embodied in what Ruth Ben Ghiat defines as the tradition of 'strongmen' inaugurated by Italian fascist leader Benito Mussolini.

6

Onyeka Igwe

No Dance, No Palaver

2017–18, 3-channel video installation, HD, color, sound, 6 min



Video still from *Her Name in My Mouth*, 2017, courtesy the artist.

No Dance, No Palaver is a series of three works; *Her Name in My Mouth* (2017), *Sitting on a Man* (2018) and *Specialised Technique* (2018), which cover research into the Aba Women's War of 1929. All of the films use the first major anti-colonial uprising in Nigeria as an entry point to experiment with colonial moving images relating to West Africa during the first half of the 20th century. *No Dance, No Palaver* serves as an attempt to use critical proximity, being close to, with or amongst, the visual trauma of the colonial archive to transform the way in which we know the people it contains.

Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński Schebestas Schatten

2017/2021, three c-prints on paper, 9 x 13 cm, framed
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Wonnerth Dejaco

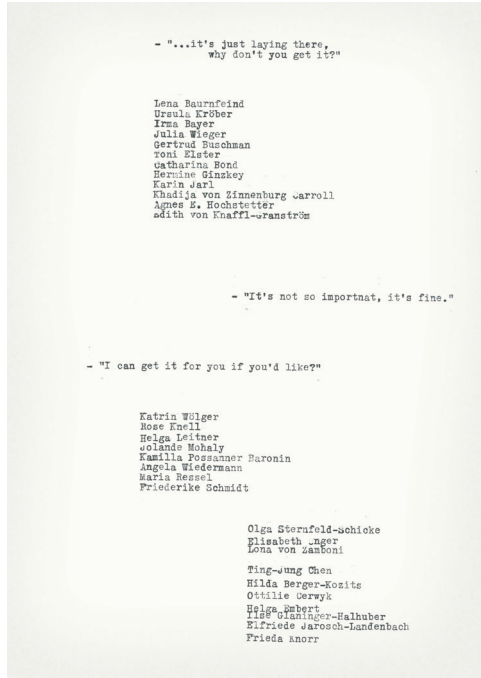


Exhibition view: Coalmine, Wintherthur, 2023; © Guadalupe Ruiz (detail)

The three black-and-white photographs in postcard format are each partially covered with a blue, yellow, or red color field. What remains visible from the original photographs, in the uncovered parts, are some shadows cast on the surface of the photographed people's bodies and clothes, delineating the blurry contour of two hats piled on top of one another. The shadow seems to be the unintentional signature of the photos' author, Paul Schebesta (1887–1967). The archive of the Austrian National Library holds hundreds of photographs attributed to the Austro-Czech missionary, author, educator, and ethnographer, probably brought back from his travels to what is today known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The majority of them depict people he encountered, observed, and arranged in staged scenes, thereby presenting them as embodiments of Otherness and ultimately feeding the Western racist colonial narrative. Following these objectives, the pictures feature the photographer himself only rarely. Schebesta was likely conscious of the advantage of being absent, allowing him to act as a sort of invisible creator. But some photographs do feature him – or his shadow, at least. And these are the ones Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński chose to include in her work. In deciding to focus on a tiny but foundational detail – the shadows cast by the hat(s) and the body of the colonial photographer – the artist changes invisibility to visibility in both directions: the invisible author becomes visible, and the hypervisibilized and subjugated models receive protection through a temporary invisibility.

Ivana Lazić The Register (The Third Woman)

2023, installation, approx. 30 A4 sheets, hand typed;
sound installation, 10 min, looped

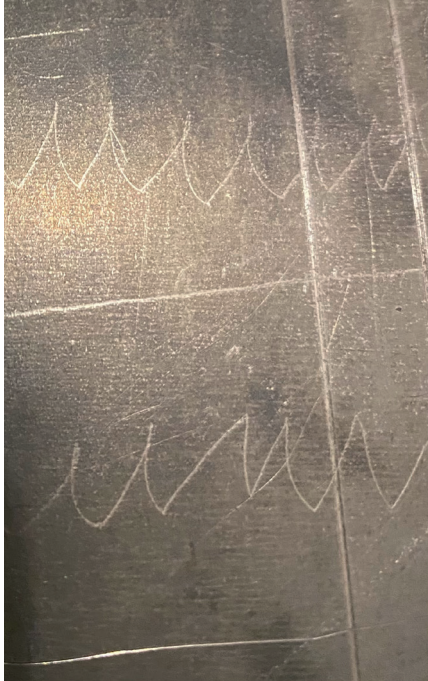


The Register (The Third Woman) is a process-based work consisting of two parts – a register in which (all known) VBKÖ members are listed from the very beginning of the organization till today containing fictional conversations between the members together with the legend of (un)used symbols, and a sound piece as a composition based on recordings of the process. Taking the role of a ‘secretary’ (also a “person entrusted with a secret”) the artist spent time in the space of VBKÖ on a regular basis to (re-)establish a relationship between the members through the various constructed systems of listing applied to the register. Using the typewriter as a tool of engagement, with tactile and repetitive motions in the act of typing, the names are (re)embodied and establish new special connections. The surface of the Din A4 paper is treated as a space of engagement, while the sound piece acts as a connective temporal thread. *The Third Woman* appears in the context of the unknown, lost, hidden, and impossible tracing of facts. Being confronted with the registers from the archive, which carry fragments of history but also retractions within them, lists appear incomplete or outdated, and the urge to solve a riddle (of what is missing) becomes immanent. *The Register* is in this sense a handmade document which allows itself to be used in unconventional, disjunctive ways.

*Read the names with your fingertips,
and tickle time in front of you.*

Arina Nekliudova
Pigeon repellent

2024. installation, nine steel plates (DIN A4), nails, glue



The work explores the power of table structures, utilizing parallel lines, squares, and empty spaces to organize processes, order information, visualize consequences, clarify perspectives and establish inclusion or exclusion. The effects of borders, emptiness, content, and additional signs within this governing instrument lies in the focus of the work.

The project's starting point was a VBKÖ Members Registry (ARCH 65). Within this document, several pages feature the names of Jewish artists crossed out with a red pencil. The shapes of dashes represent a frighteningly exclusionary gesture, which appear in the empty spaces between the table grid, enabling the act of violence. Throughout different decades and registers (i.e. ARCH 64, ARCH 73) structures were inviting different manners of hand movements. These silent decisions manifesting as dashes, waves, lines and colors transform into scratched traces on the metallic surface and nails emerging from intersectional densities, and pointing towards the captivating anxiety.

Carmiña Tarilonte Rodríguez Cop(y)ing, mediated by Khipu Sartasiñani

2024. installation, wood, yarn, paper prints, dimensions variable



Khipu Sartasiñani, MUSEF (Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore) Collection, FUNDACION CULTURAL DEL B.C.B. La Paz, Bolivia. Inv. Nr. 31064, Place of Origin: Oruro, Bolivia; photo: Carmiña Tarilonte Rodríguez, 2020

As Denise Y. Arnold suggests, while in Europe paper has been the typical material support for documents, in the Andes, textiles (both woven and non-woven) have played this role. *Khipus* are one of these fiber-based materials used to record not only quantitative and qualitative information.

Khipu (Quechua) / *Chinu* (Aymara) / *Quipu* (Spanish): made of knotted, colored strings, are mostly known by their use in the Inca empire, although they can be dated back to pre-Incaic times, and in some regions are (in attenuated forms) used till today.

Even though textiles are a key part of the cultural heritage in the Andes, *Khipus*, among many other aspects of the local knowledge, were ignored by my Bolivian Eurocentric education. This structural alienation began centuries ago, with colonial processes of massive destruction (from 1583 by the Spanish inquisition) and displacement (in the 19th century by European expeditions).

With this work, a conscious re-appropriation of a denied legacy, I endeavor a deeper connection with the knowledge that survived in the structure and forms of the *Khipu* itself, and in the oral and productive practices that surround it. An exercise of my *ch'ixi** way of existence, in counter-position to a still segregated reality. In this work, the *Khipu Sartasiñani* is my catalyst.

* *Ch'ixi* captures the Aymara idea of non-duality of something that is and is not at the same time. See: Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Un mundo ch'ixi es posible: Ensayos desde un presente en crisis*, 2018.

II

Elske Rosenfeld & Olya Sosnovskaya **Archive of Gestures: Becoming In/visible**

Workshop, February 9th, 3–6 pm

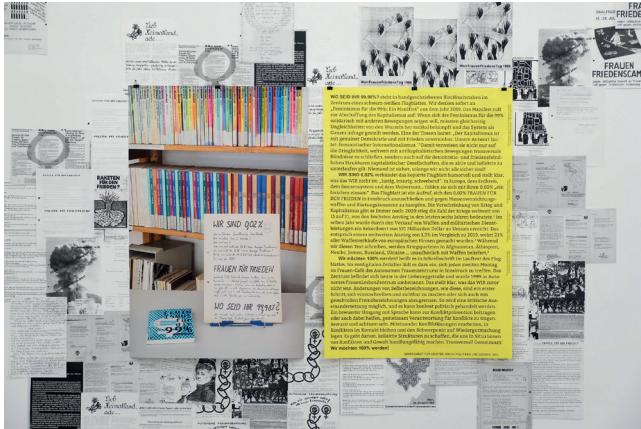


ARCHIVE OF GESTURES is a research platform and archive in progress about the embodiment of revolt and revolution initiated by Elske Rosenfeld with District*School without Center (Berlin). In the project, movements and practices found in documents of supposedly completed or failed revolutions from 1989/90 to today are processed into a series of poetic-conceptual GESTURES, each consisting of a video work, corresponding web collage, and activations archived online at www.archiveofgestures.net.

The workshop invites participants to join Elske Rosenfeld and Olya Sosnovskaya in their collaborative development of the gesture „Becoming In/visible”. Departing from our own experience of collective political mobilization (in the GDR in 1989 and in Belarus from 2020), we look at the role strategies of invisibility played in these events, but also throughout the history of the dissident cultures and protest movements in Eastern Europe and beyond. While going over some of the materials and mini-choreographies developed in our collaboration, the workshop invites participants to reflect on their own experiences of protest practices playing with in/visibility and attempts to address, repeat or process protest forms in the field of art. Can art become a space for accessing dissident or resistant knowledge at a time when the repression and censorship of protest itself once again takes more aggressive forms? And are subtle or ambiguous gestures enough in times of ecological collapse and war?

Sekretariat für Geister, Archivpolitiken und Lücken (SKGAL), Nina Höchtl, Julia Wieger **WO SEID IHR 99,98%? [WHERE ARE YOU 99,98%?]**

2024, digital print on paper, 160 x 240 cm



In cooperation with STICHWORT, Archives of the Women's and Lesbians' Movement in Vienna; photography: Julia Gaisbacher; installation view: Jakob Dietrich.

Through their work, SKGAL grapples with history, history writing and archival materials in the context of art and culture. At VBKÖ they present *WO SEID IHR 99,98%?* one of five pieces that was originally shown as part of their project *ENTRÜSTET EUCH!* in 2022 in the exhibition *Aggressive Peace* at Memphis, in Linz.

For the five-part installation commissioned in 2021, SKGAL worked with flyers from STICHWORT, the Archives of the Women's and Lesbians' Movement in Vienna, that were produced for feminist peace demonstrations, documenting an array of actions and strategies demanding global peace. STICHWORT was founded in 1983, at a time when peace movements in Europe mobilized anew. These flyers dating from 1979 to 1992 emphasize the importance of STICHWORT: only if archives engage with documents pertaining social movements and make them fully accessible, are we able to thoroughly interact with the hi/herstory/ies of resistance and protest.

In the work at VBKÖ, SKGAL re-asks the question "Where are you 99.98%?", initially posed on a flyer by the Women for Peace in Innsbruck to the 2019 manifesto *Feminism for the 99%* by C. Arruzza, T. Bhattacharya and N. Fraser, drawing attention to the intersections between war and capitalism. Ways of gaining public attention have changed over the decades, but in the face of violent conflicts, of which war is the most destructive form, the question of how to achieve peace for everyone becomes more relevant than ever before.

Tsai-Ju Wu

Grey outside, white inside

2024, acid-free archive boxes, 90 x 110 cm each

Let's build our own acid-free archive!

Workshop, January 20th, 2-5 pm



Well-sorted, numbered and preserved; the archival material has been officially categorized.

Under which conditions are they stored, and how are those units built?

This project presents a small collection of archive boxes used in the archives of a few Viennese art institutions, i.e. VBKÖ, MAK – Museum of Applied Arts Vienna and more, the boxes in this exhibition have been rebuilt by the artist with a unified acid-free material and shown in an open, deconstructed *dieline** format.

Archival materials are kept dense and compressed in these boxes. A collection of haptic objects of papers and items have been restored. Their data container has been set-free from their actual function of decelerating the aging process of its property, and from the role of being the holder of a specific space-time.

The works will be further used as templates in the frame of the workshop *Let's build our own acid-free archive!* for creating archive boxes for private use, a space for sharing stories and experiences of storing one's own memories.

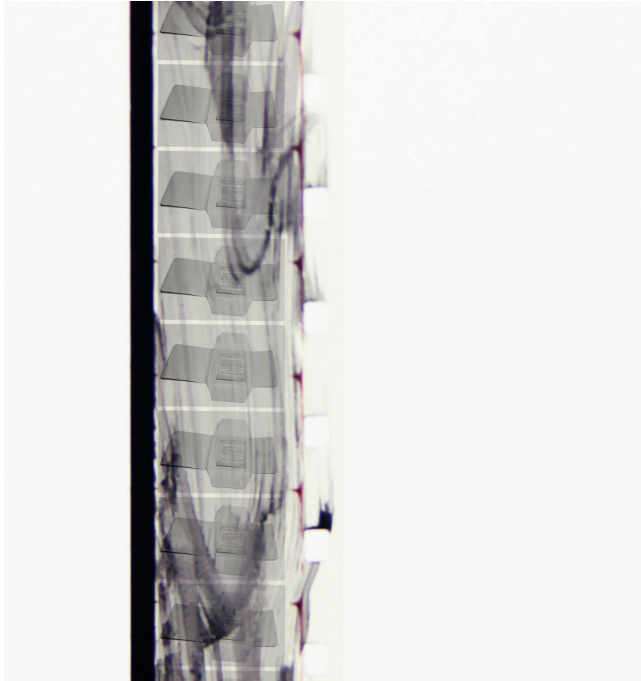
* *dieline* is a specific layout template used in graphic design to construct envelopes or three-dimensional packagings, which contains cutting and folding marks for the finishing process.

I4

Lorenz Zenleser

Obscuring

2023, 8 mm film, b&w, 2 min, looped



Black and white images flicker on the wall. They show a folder from the VBKÖ Archive, then the contents are shown to us: there are documents from the Künstler*innenheim (recreation center) in Ollersbach, a place where artists could rest from the consuming city life. The house was advertised with a flyer. There are several versions of this flyer in the box. The first one is titled: *Künstlerinnenheim*. The second one has the ‚innen‘, crossed out. The third flyer is free of marks and declares the house as *Künstlerheim*. Can this preserved exchange of versions of a flyer give us a hint to fundamental disagreements in the VBKÖ? Who changed the gendered, female name to the more conventional “male” version? Why the need to change it? Who was against this gendered version of the flyer and who wanted to be progressive?

During the run of the exhibition, the analog projection will be changed, modified, erased every week. The film will be blackened with a marker. The images will lose more and more information that the gelatin layer holds. The story of this adaption will be lost, like the voices that could have told us what really happened.

Archival material from VBKÖ, presented as postcards:

ARCH 65: VBKÖ register until March 1938, booklet with handwritten entries and identification of the excluded Jewish members.

ARCH 71: Typewritten members list with addresses, handwritten entries and proof of contributions, three pages, presumably before 1938.

ARCH 75: Two types of historical members cards.

ARCH 81: Leaflet about the „Künstlerinnenheim Ollersbach“ in Lower Austria, an association funded and run by VBKÖ until the end of the 1930ies.

ARCH 128: Only existing group picture of VBKÖ members in the archive, original print, photographer: J. Marek, Vienna, presumably 1930, on the occasion of VBKÖ's 20th anniversary exhibition *Zwei Jahrhunderte Kunst der Frau in Österreich: Jubiläumsausstellung der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs*, May 26th – June 9th 1930, Hagenbund, Vienna.

DRUCK 1: *Die Kunst der Frau. 1. Ausstellung der Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs*; Nov. – Dec. 1910, catalog published by VBKÖ, on the occasion of its first exhibition at the Secession, 166 pages, illustrations.

DRUCK 14: *XVII. Jahresausstellung Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs*, Oct. 1932, Hagenbund, Vienna; catalog, 23 pages, no illustrations.

Colophon

VBKÖ Vereinigung Bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs

Austrian Association of Women Artists

Maysedergasse 2/28, 1010 Vienna

Board 2023 –

Brishty Alam, Susana Ojeda, Denise Palmieri,
Mika Maruyama, Mzamo Nondlwana

Exhibition

Archival Sites of Speculation: Storying the Silence

January 12th – February 11, 2024

With works by Katharina Birkmann, Maja Bojanić,
nathan c'ha, Mark Chehodaiev, Alessandra Ferrini,
Onyeka Igwe, Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński,
Ivana Lazić, Arina Nekliudova, Carmiña Tarilonte Rodríguez,
Elske Rosenfeld & Olia Sosnovskaya, SKGAL (Nina Höchtl,
Julia Wieger), Tsai-Ju Wu, Lorenz Zenleser
Curated by Georgia Holz and Stephanie Misa

Within the frame of the research project *Anonymity and
Absence – Archival Sites of Speculation*, supported by the
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