

Luiza Margan

Selection of projects in public and gallery
spaces, graphic, video works & installations
2009- 2024



Luiza Margan is a visual and conceptual artist born in Rijeka, Croatia, and based in Vienna, Austria. She studied painting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, before pursuing Performative Arts and Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where she obtained her MA in 2013.

Through sculpture, installation, film, and public interventions, Margan explores the complexities between official and overlooked histories, power structures, and ideological systems embedded in public spaces and collective memory. Her work is grounded in extensive field research, historical materials sourced from archives, and the collection and reinterpretation of found objects—constructing reimagined narratives, environments, and ways of seeing.

Margan has exhibited in numerous international museums and galleries and has staged critically acclaimed artistic interventions in public spaces. Her works are held in prestigious public and private collections, including the Generali Collection in Salzburg, the Museum of Contemporary Art Belvedere 21 in Vienna, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, and the Tobacco Museum in Ljubljana.

Among her many accolades, she was awarded a fellowship at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York (2008/09) and the 2019 Fellowship for Visual Artists at Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany.

Her recent solo exhibitions include *Cache* at the Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen, Germany (2023), and *Red Lines* at Plus 359 Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria (2023). Recent group exhibitions include *Unknown Familiars* at the Leopold Museum, Vienna (2024); *24/7: Work Between Meaning and Imbalance* at Kunsthaus Graz, Austria (2024–25); *Räume öffnen! Die Sammlungen* at the Museum der Moderne Salzburg (2024); and *Die Zeit zerfällt oder das Maß an Unordnung* at Kunsthaus Mürz (2023–24), among others.

Square One



Margan explores the public square and public space as a base of democratic society and a place of gathering for all citizens, regardless of heritage or religion. In Istanbul, Turkey, there has been a continuous violation of the place of the “square as public good”, by the side of the government and private interests, the latest being the further disturbance of the secularity of the main square by a new religious structure. This coincides with the growing number of state violations of human rights and rights of speech in many sectors. The series shows a young woman holding a piece of the Taksim Square (stone) in front of her face, looking at the camera, while behind her the new Mosque is being built.

Cache: There is Always Someone Looking Through The Window From This Tower



Neon light installation on the inside window of the Zeppelin Museum Gallery, facing the harbour / promenade and the ferry boat connection to Switzerland, 2023

The observation tower, attached to the Zeppelin Museum, was built during the NS period in Friedrichshafen, a city leading in military weapon production. It was part of the train station construction, and was used by the NS regime as an observation point, besides others, for catching smugglers and refugees to Switzerland. Today, it is hosting an artist - in - residence program by one of the largest companies in Friedrichshafen, the ZF Friedrichshafen, also known as ZF Group (originally Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen), a technology manufacturing company that supplies systems for passenger cars, commercial vehicles and industrial technology, as well as defense industry.

Cache



Mixed media installation at Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen

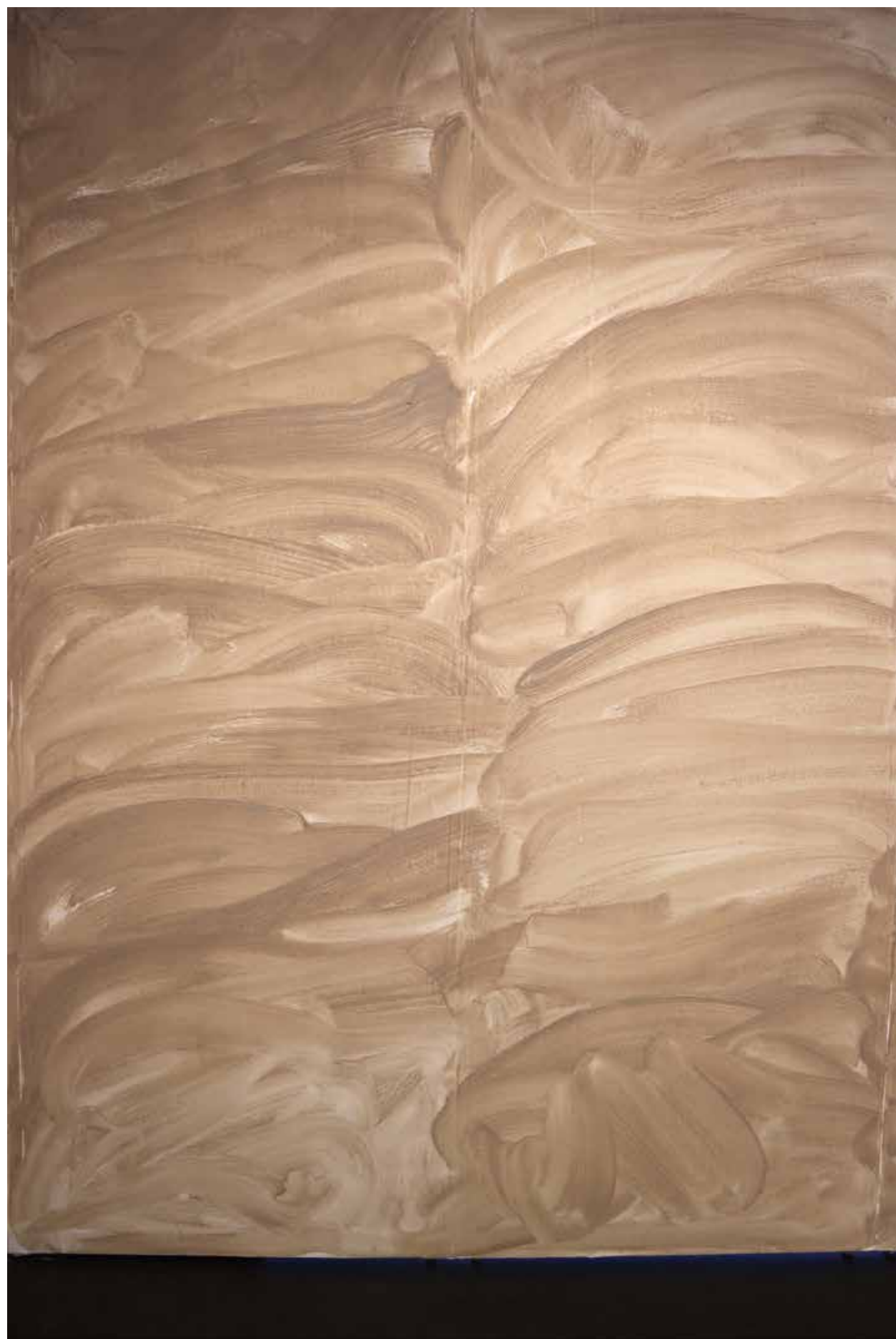
Materials: neon sign on the window facing the promenade of the Museum, found and reconstructed industrial metal (workers) lockers, books about the resistance fighters against NS at the south of Germany, sound proof foam, bicycle tires.

The wall painting is done with the mud collected from the forced labour sub-camp of Dachau, in Friedrichshafen and a test site for the Nazi military weapon production in Friedrichshafen- today an unmarked ruin in the city, culturally, economically and historically linked to the Zeppelin Organisation and to it dedicated museum.

Cache



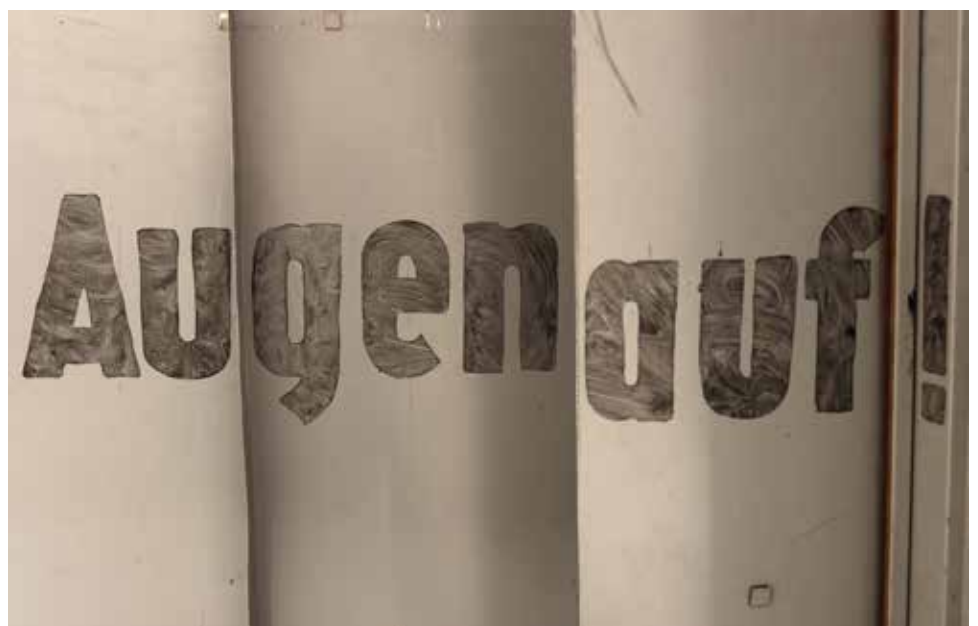
Cache
installation at Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen, 2023



Cache



Cache



Cache
installation details at Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen, DE

Ecology of Memory



Photo-montages, inkjet print on fine art paper, showing two Soviet-era, abandoned sculpture pedestals in the city centre of Sofia, Bulgaria - an ex-Soviet satellite state which has still not agreed on an official national / historic narrative of the Soviet occupation vs. liberation 42x29,7, 1/3+2AP, 2023

Hotel Emigranti



Wood, concrete, metal, ca 130 x 100 cm, photomontage, 70 x50 cm, inkjet print, framed, 2023
Co-produced by ROTOR for the exhibition "Die Zeit zerfällt oder das Maß an Unordnung" in Kusthaus Muerz

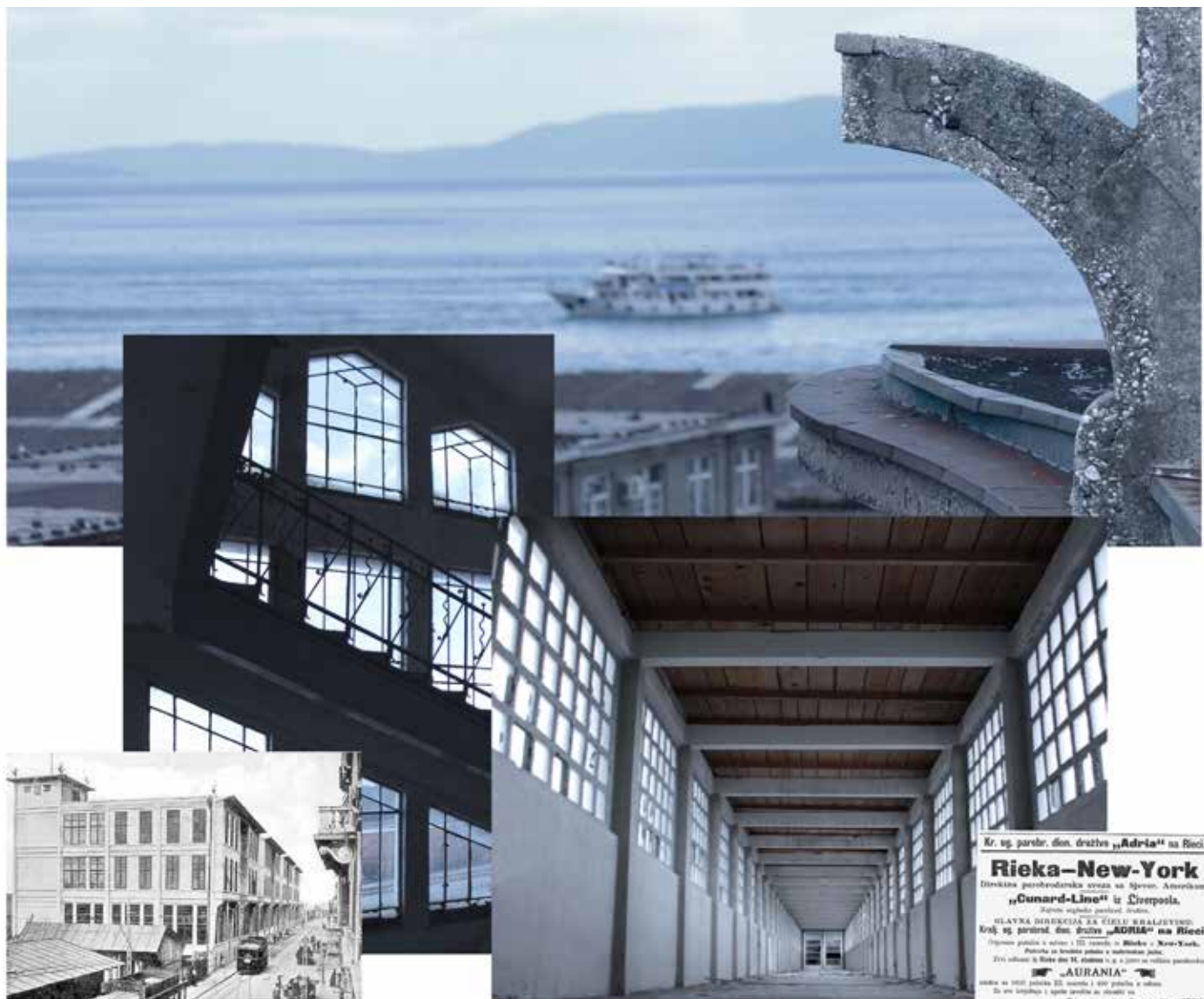
The concrete sculpture is a reconstruction of the concrete roof decor, part of the jugendstil Hotel Emigranti, built in Rijeka, during the Austro-Hungarian rule, by a hungarian architect Szilárd Zielinski as a temporary home for trans-atlantic economic immigrants in 1906. Today it is an abandoned building and an industrial storage at the Rijeka harbour.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the development of the passenger port and the intensification of transatlantic routes to America, Rijeka became a centre of economic immigrants from the empowered east and central-european citizens.

Margan's reconstruction of one of the decorative rooftop elements, resembles a stylized seside eagle with its wings open, before flying away.



Hotel Emigranti



Hotel Emigranti



Hotel Emigranti is a sculptural intervention on top of an old yugoslavian border patrol house (police observation structure), situated on a hill at the italian-slovenian border. The locals and visitors could enter the patrol house, in which there were collages and text.



Peace Staging



Inkjet prints on fine art paper, 80 x 55 cm, 1/3+2 2AP, 2024

The photographs show the entrance area of the Tito Museum on the island of Brioni and the objects presented there. They simultaneously reveal and conceal aspects of this historical staging. The depiction of the symbolic “release” of a white dove after the signing of the Brioni Declaration by Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jawaharlal Nehru and Josip Broz Tito is particularly highlighted. This conference was a key moment on the way to the Non-Aligned Movement. The historical depiction in the museum seems paradoxical today: a stuffed white dove hovers above the photograph of the “real” dove from back then, pointing to the irony of failed political visions.

Restaging Monument



Series of 9 photomontages, prints on photo-rag paper,
edition 1/3+2 AP, framed, 42 x 29,7 cm

Juxtaposing the archive photographs of the artist Vinko Matkovic working on the large scale clay and bronze figures for the Monument of Liberation (1955) , in his studio in Rijeka with photos of Luiza Margan's body in physical action in her studio.

Restaging Monument



Series of 9 photomontages, prints on photo-rag paper,
edition 1/3+2 AP, framed, 42 x 29,7 cm

Restaging Monument



Eye to Eye With Freedom



Eye to Eye with Freedom, action in public space in Rijeka, Croatia, 17.-18. 05. 2014

The 2 day action in public space offered the citizens of Rijeka to be elevated to the level of the eyes of the heighest monument in the city - the "Monument of Liberation" (21m)erected in 1955 by sculptor Vinko Matkovic (marking 10 years of liberation of the city of Rijeka from faschism). The monument is a bronze sculptural group representing 3 partizans placed on a top of heigh "T"-shaped pedestal, 2 male partizans with weapons and the female partizan in the middle, representing the "allegory of freedom".



Eye to Eye with Freedom, action in public space and a series of 7 photos, inkjet print on archival photo paper, framed, 1/3+2AP, 2014

Eye to Eye With Freedom



Photoseries after a performace in public space, inkjet print on fine art paper, various sizes, 1/3 + 2AP, 2014–15

Public Tales

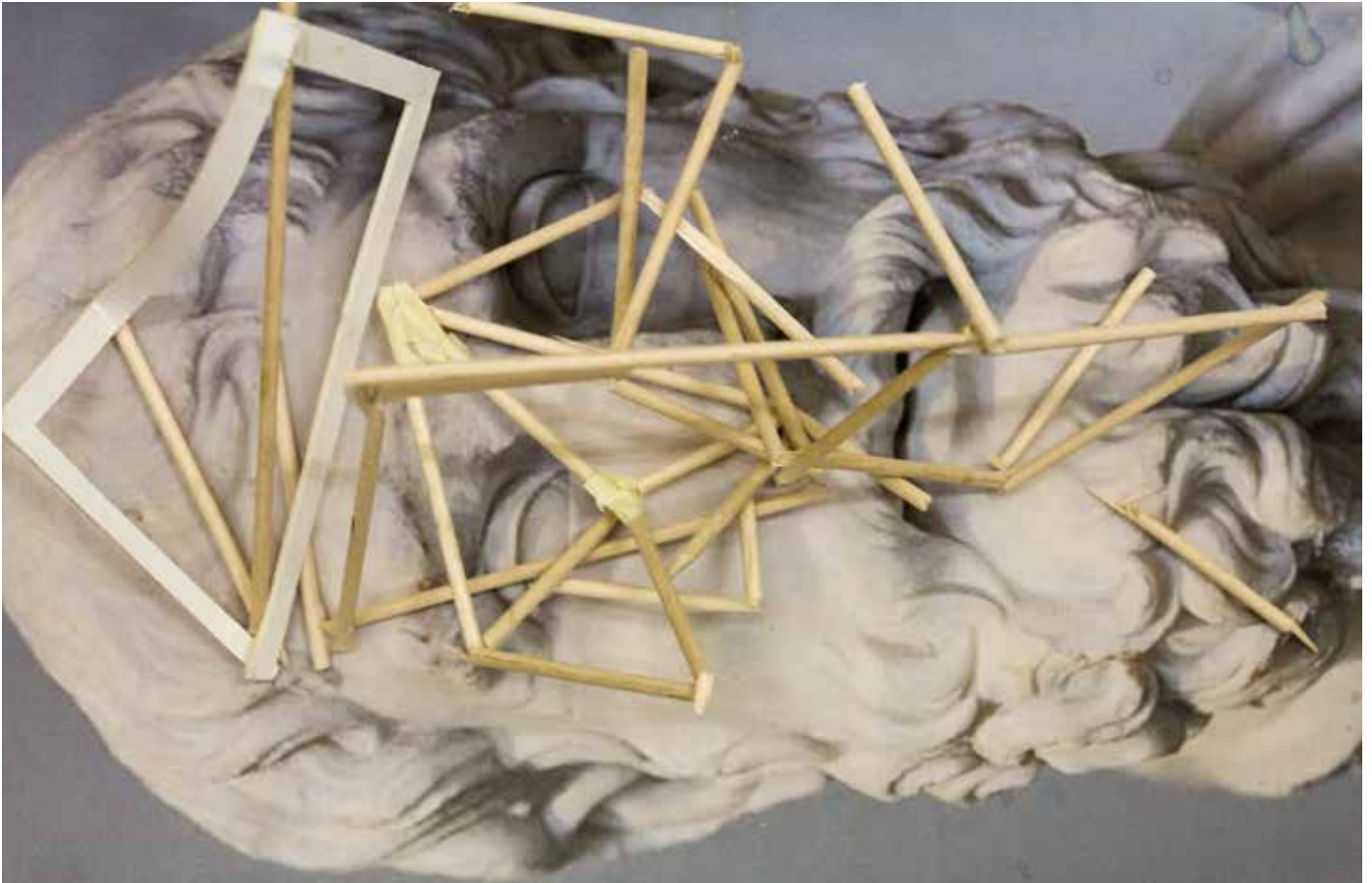


Public Tales, 102x72cm, silkscreen print, 2013

The work is part of an ongoing research about shaping memory and representing voices within the public space. It is based on a series of walks that the artist conducted in the city of Vienna, during which photographs of the viennese equestrian statues were created. Through a process of photomontage, Margan separates the horse tails from the original photos and montages them into new shapes, a series of “moustaches”.

The end work is a 2-color silkscreen print that shows 10 examples of “city moustaches”, comprised by the horse tails of the equestrian statues, numbered and named in an encyclopedic fashion, with names of the horse riders, namely: Ludwig, Otto, Josef etc.

Off With Their!



Installation with 3 unburned clay sculptures
60x40 and ca 30x50 cm
Installation view in the Gallery Michaela Stock, exhibition Reality Behind Fantasy: Masculine Idols, 2016



Installation wuth 3 unburned clay sculptures
60x40 and ca 30x50 cm

Installation view in the Gallery Michaela Stock, exhibition Reality Behind Phan-
tasy: Masculine Idols, 2016

Monument in the Making: Rosa Luxemburg



Performative action in public space, object, series of photographs and photocollages, conversations, Europaplatz, Bienalle für Freiburg, 2021

Freiburg's Stadtgarten holds a multitude of monuments, none however to commemorate Rosa Luxemburg's pacifist speech delivered here in 1914. A petition to that effect was refused by the municipality. In 2017 the municipality reconstructed the victory memorial at the nearby Europaplatz, commemorating a period of armed conflict between nation states that was overcome with the establishment of Franco-German friendship and the European Union.

This anachronism and inconsistency in public remembrance led artist Luiza Margan to consider the notion of representation, especially of women, in public space in Freiburg. Inspired by the photograph "The Fallen Goddess" by Willy Prager from 1962 that shows the victory memorial's goddess figure in one of the stages of relocation, Margan invites visitors to participate in a communal act of remembrance: the creation of a larger-than-life laurel wreath, using laurel leaves handpicked and imported from her hometown Rijeka in Croatia.

Monument in The Making: Rosa Luxemburg aims to break with the symbolical passivity of the laurel wreath as a ceremonial object and instead fosters community and exchange, encouraging participants to discuss issues of public remembrance and representation in public space as well as the politics of monumentality in the city of Freiburg. The made wreath was afterwards laid on the spot where Rosa Luxemburg gave her speech on March 7, 1914.

Monument in the Making: Rosa Luxemburg

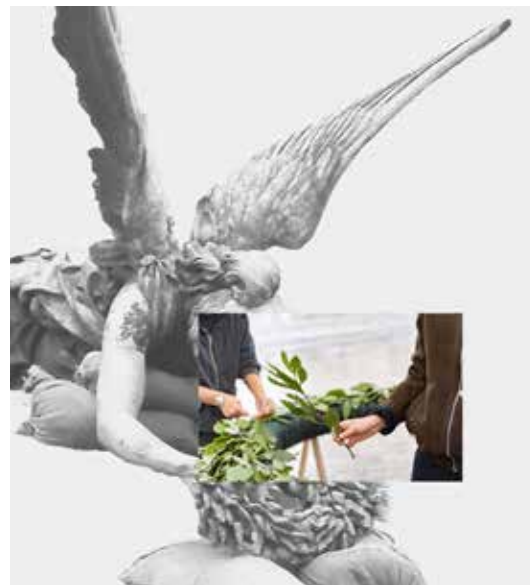


Monument in The Making: Rosa Luxemburg, performative action in public space



The wreath was collectively carried and laid on the spot where Rosa Luxemburg gave her speech on March 7, 1914., 2021

Victoria



Series of 6 photos, photo-montage, 1/3+2AP,
inkjet print on fine art paper, 70x90 cm, framed, 2021-2023



Photo-montage, 1/3+2AP, inkjet print on fine art paper
2 x 70x90 cm, framed, 2021-2023

Sisterhood in the Street With No Trees: Betti, Rosa and Edith



Permanent sculpture in the yard of the SCOPE Artists in Residence Space in Moabit, Berlin, commemorating the lives of the sisters Betti, Rosa and Edith Steinheimer that lived in the house until deported to Auschwitz and Theresienstadt where their lives ended in 1943. The form is a positive cast of the oldest tree in the yard, the last witness to the horrible crimes that happened in the house, but which itself has to be cut, as it threatens the safety of the building itself. Concrete, 185 cm high

Leica Fabrik Studio



Leica Fabrik: Studio

2 series of inkjet prints on fine art paper, displayed next to each other
29,7x42cm, 2018

In this photo-series, two different narratives and histories of public space and work are juxtaposed. Assembled by four couples of color photographs, the work explores 2 different but corresponding architectural details of buildings in Vienna, which, each in its own way, relate to labor and representation of work. Windows are used as 'screens' through which these narratives unfold.

In the first series we see the façade of a building emblazoned by socialist reliefs, glorifying the worker's bodies and their contribution to society through manual labor. The open windows of the façade, on the other hand, enable glimpses into the private sphere of the people living inside, exposing other aspects of work – that of domestic labor, rest and personal care (in details like the towel drying on the window frame, pillows airing on the window-shelf, a bouquet of flowers and clothes-drying rack in the room inside).

The second series focuses on another nearby building in an old workers neighbourhood – the old Leica manufacture factory which today houses artist's studios. In these photos, we see large industrial windows from inside the building, where the artist, Luiza Margan, performs a series of movements standing on the window-shelves of the 4 floors of the building. Her body is juxtaposed with the architecture inside and outside the building, using the windows as 'props'. The actions resemble the representations of workers on the reliefs, although softened in their shadow-theatre aesthetic, in a visual poem about the invisible aspects of artistic labour and the precarity of culture work.



Top Lage



At her exhibition in Scope Gallery in Berlin (2021), Margan shows an installation Top Lage; several sculptural works and interventions. The title Top Lage (eng. Perfect Location) is inspired by the artist's research into the language of real-estate agencies (Immobilien Agentur, specifically in Germany) and the way they instrumentalise language in order to create additional value in the business of selling not only property, but a promise of a life-style as well.

As the SCOPE BLN art residency and exhibition space is itself part of a property development business that plays a significant role in the gentrification of the Moabit area of Berlin-Mitte, the artist takes this socio-spatial condition, so endemic to the city, as a groundwork for creating her spatial intervention.

Margan uses historical materials gathered on the grounds of the gallery building - from before the recent renovation – as a basis for her installation. Other elements are inspired by the spreading aesthetic within Berlin city branding; on one hand, the guerilla, alternative and playful, opposed by the neotraditionalist currents in architecture. By implementing her own role as an artist on this stage, she questions the (im-) possibility of subversive voices from within it.

Top Lage

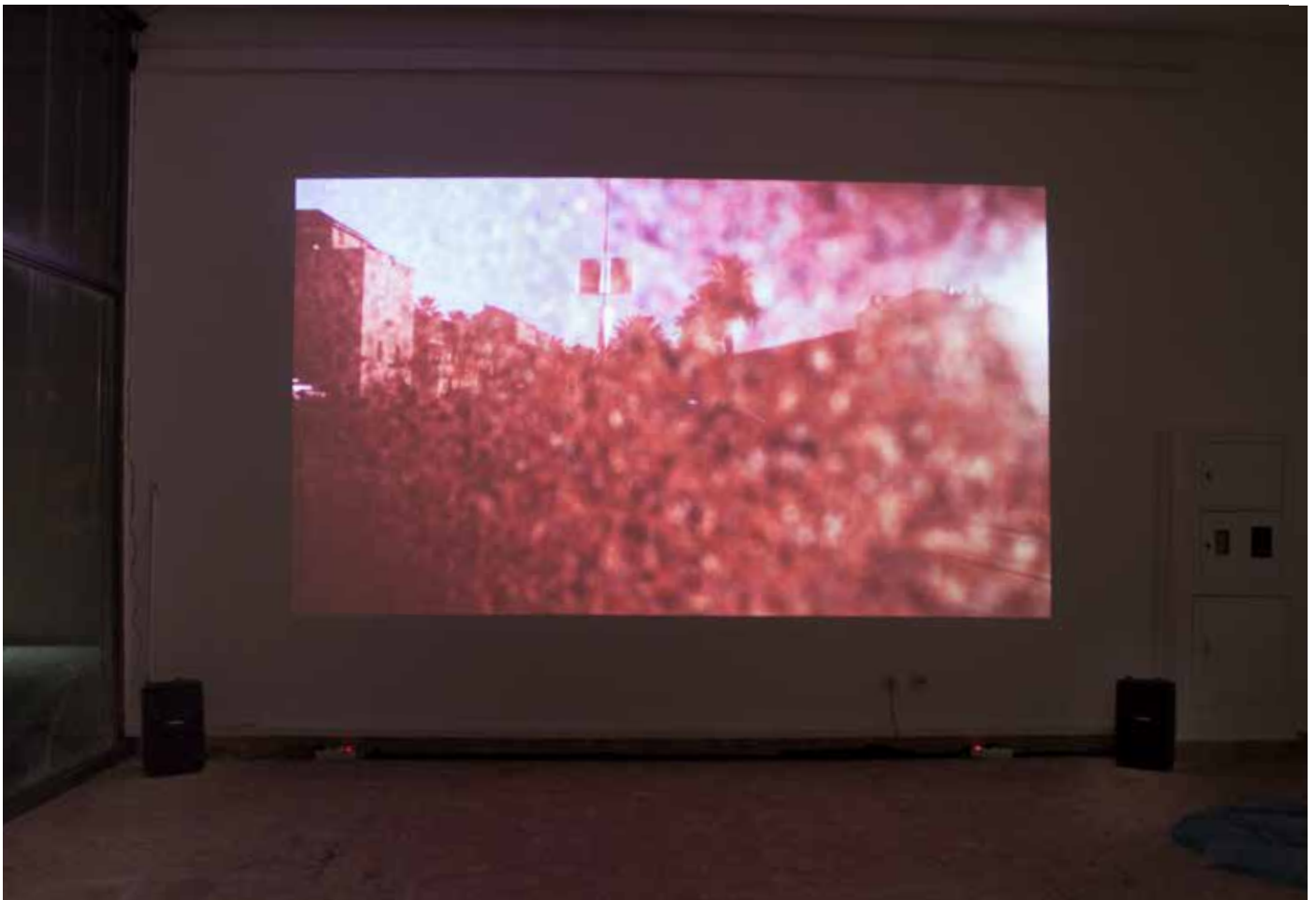


Top Lage, exhibition view at SCOPE Bln, various materials, 2021



Top Lage: Ihr Neues Refugium, digital print on mash, 150 x80 cm, 2021

Monument Refflecting the City



The video- and sound- installation *Monument Refflecting the City* (2016) was shown alongside the sculptural installation *Split Dioptré; Shades*, in a conceptual and aesthetic dialogue about the city.

The video was filmed in Split, a mediterranean city in the south of Croatia largely affected by mass tourism and gentrification in the last 3 decades. It is showing a busy traffic point in the city center, merging the beginning of the seaside promenade, the bus terminal and the ferry port, all filmed as reflections on the surface of a red granite cube which is part of a national monument, also placed in this spot. The video was shot in the time span of one summer day, from dawn till dusk, each full hour for 30 seconds, always filming the 4 different angles of the granite cube.

The red prism becomes part of the discourse signifying the branding of national identity in relation to the practice of expansion of mass tourism, while the local population is emigrating because of economic crisis. The enormous number of tourists in high season, along with the emigrating local population are two realities of the city Split, which can be seen as the ghosts announcing the galloping gentrification which already took its toll on the Old Town center. Although Margan does not give away the "identity" of the monument whose part she uses for her view of the city Split, the aforementioned red granite block is part of a monument erected in 2013 representing Croatia's first President, a problematic figure of Franjo Tuđman.

Monument Refflecting the City



Split Dioptre



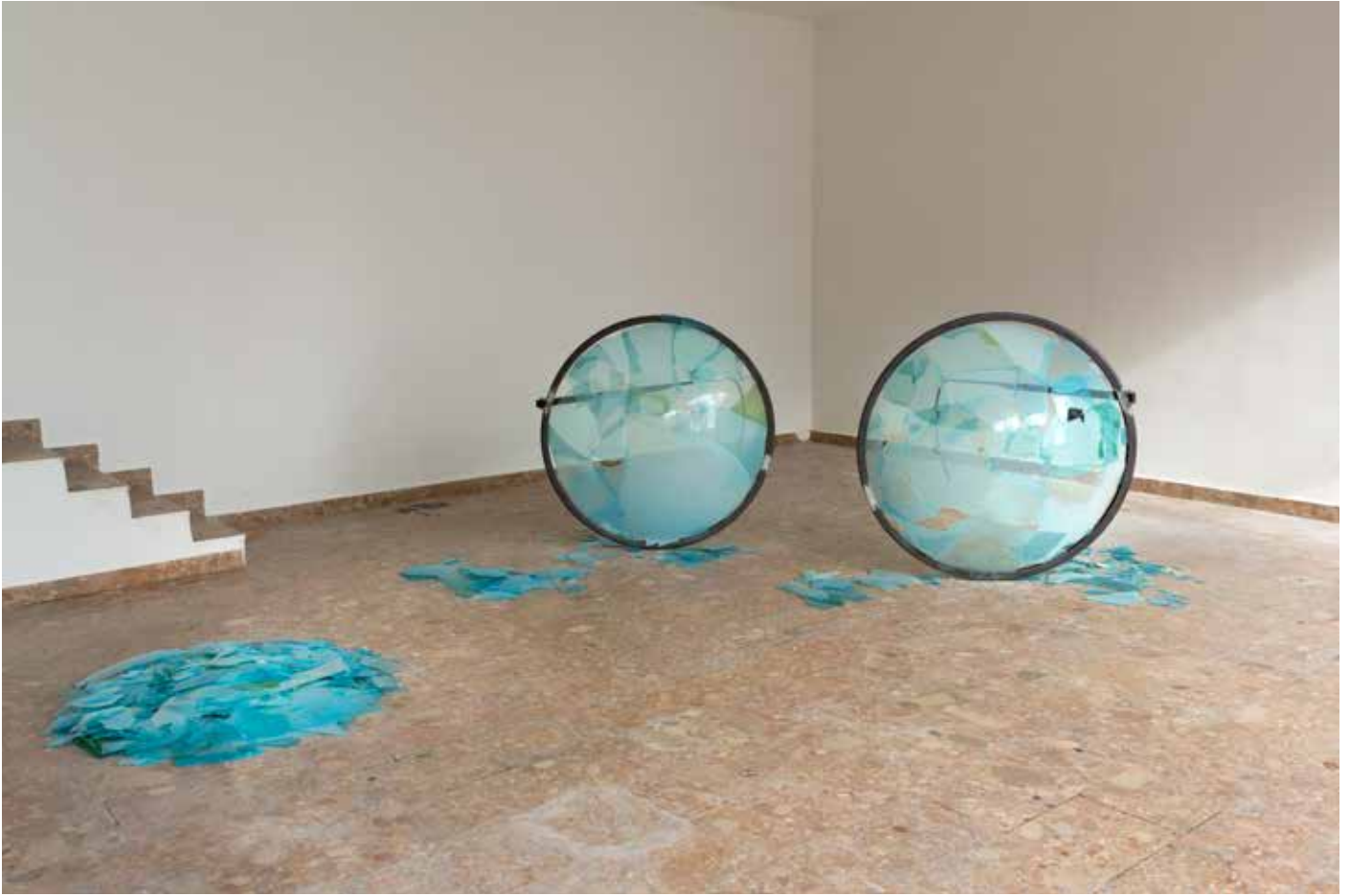
The material for the sculptural installation are the found remains of light cupolas of the late-modernist, "Koteks" building, that Margan dugged out of the surrounding around the building, after doing an extensive research of the area. Built in 1981, "Koteks" was the first socialist shopping center and sports hall of its kind in Eastern Europe and a relevant example of late modernist architecture. Like a dystopian archeologist, Margan collects the plastic pieces of the building which once had the status of the social and cultural symbol of the city of Split, and with these artefacts creates a new form.

Split Dioptre



For her sculptural installation, Margan appropriates the form of the most common fashion gear in the south Dalmatia, the sunglasses. The oversized form is created from a metal construction onto which broken architectural pieces of the colorful (turquoise) light cupolas, originating in the late 60ies, are attached. The work offers a relatable but also critical view on the neglect of cultural heritage on the account of mass tourism and gentrification alongside the Adriatic coast.

Split Dioptre



Metal, plastic - found materials,
exhibition view at gallery Skola, Split,
2016



Metal, plastic - found materials,
exhibition view at gallery Skola, Split,
2016

Split Dioptre: Collectors



Split Dioptre: Collectors (1, 2, 3)
Series of 3 photomontages, inkjet prints, mounted on aluminum (unique)
Each 95 x 65 cm, 2017



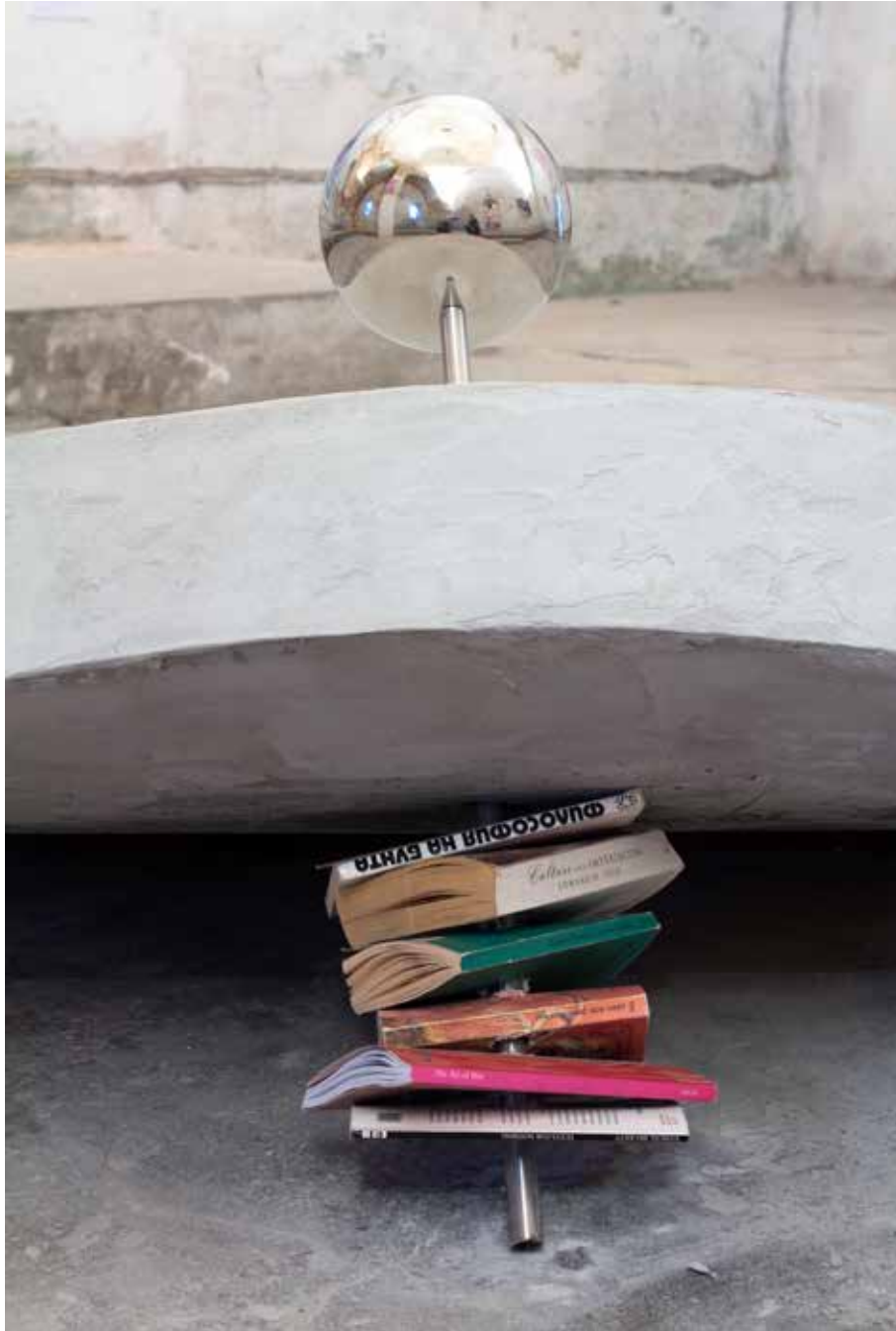
Series of 3 photomontages, injet prints mounted on aluminum,
each 95x65, 2017

Hairless Tongue



Concrete, nirost metal, books,
ca.250x120x90cm, 2015

Hairless Tongue



The work was commissioned for the exhibition *Mature and Angry* in Plovdiv Contemporary Art Centre, in Bulgaria, in September 2015, curated by Boris Kostadinov.

The sculpture was imagined as a prototype-display, a platform which is in direct formal and conceptual relation with the exhibition space, an old Turkish bath. The title, *Hairless Tongue* comes from the Croatian saying "Biti bez dlake na jeziku" that one can translate as "to be with no hair on one's tongue", meaning that one is outspoken, speaks her mind or speaks directly. This platform like, tongue-shaped object uses materials like concrete and metal to relate to the architecture of the space, and the visitors' bodies that inhabit it. On one hand it refers to the body and its' ability to shape voice, on the other it serves as a stage for multiplicity of actions that one can perform, and by this, gain voice. The tongue's piercing, symbolising the 'rebellious' or fashionable body-changing-act (as fashion, teenage rebellion or as well as a ritualistic body marking in some cultures), becomes a powerful tool that, in its shiny surface captures and reflects the surrounding space, serving as a tool of empowerment. The books that are part of the 'piercing' are: *The Philosophy of Rebellion*, *Communities*, *Culture and Imperialism*, *Wonderful New World*, *The Art of War*, *Texts for Nothing*.

Elementary Particles



Materials found on the streets of Sofia city, curated and collected by Margan on the basis of their repetitive appearance in the urban city centre, gallery structure, size variable (assemblage is 6,50 m x 1m), 2021. Exhibition view Structura Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria

The work is an assemblage of objects found on the streets of Sofia. The objects are selected due to their specific typology, local ways of their use and repetitive appearance in the city center. They are recognized as markers of spatial and social relations and the specific economy of the place. Positioned on the elevated niches of the gallery – on the edges of walls, they activate it into a stage; as a performative troupe “looking down” onto the white cube. The assemblage comments on the relation between the “high and low culture”, the economy of everyday life and its relation to cultural production.

Elementary Particles



Elementary Particles
found materials, gallery structure, size variable (assemblage ca 6,50 m x 1m), 2021
exhibition view Structura Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria

WAHN / Delusion



Performative intervention in public and gallery space together with Eduard Freudmann, exhibition One monument in Time, Forum Stadpark, curated by zweintopf, 2021

The 6 m high monument in the shape of a phallus was erected in the Graz city park in 1902. On November 12, 2021, a cherry tree was planted in front of the monument, which will over time grow over his head. In winter you will still be able to see the lettering behind the defoliated branches: WAHN. The German word Wahn means "Delusion". The work is an intervention by Margan and Freudmann, calling to attention the existence of antisemitic public monument in Austria.

WAHN / Delusion



Performative intervention Wahn in public and a video work, together with Eduard Freudmann and historian Heimo Halbreiner, as part of the exhibition One Monumet in Time, curated by zweintopf, 2021

WAHN / Delusion



Wahn, installation view as part of the exhibition One monument in Time, curated by zweintopf, Forum Stadtpark, 2021

Direct Action



Red Lines: Direct Action wood, paint, motive taken from one of the activist actions coloring over the text on the Soviet Army Monument in Sofia, paint, 150 cm wide

Direct Action



Red Lines, Direct Action, 2023

wood, paint, motive taken from one of the activist actions coloring over the text on the Soviet Army Monument in Sofia, paint, 150 cm wide

Exhibition project examining the heritage of the Soviet occupation/liberation narrative of Bulgaria and the controversies around the monuments in the cities that are glorifying the Soviet Army.

In the shadow of the Russian occupation of Ukraine, Bulgaria had political reservations in supporting their neighbour and condemning the war, due to the historically charged pro-Russian sentiments. The monument in the centre of Sofia became a stage of political polemics between conservative, pro-Russian forces and the voices demanding democratic representation of values.

The exhibition project shows objects that are re-construction of the direct civil action on the monuments themselves, as researched in media and documentary photographs: spray painted or acrylic-painted civil society's gestures of condemnation and "erasure" of the bronze text on the monument itself (which is today considered a historical untruth) become sculptures suspended in the rooms of the +359 Gallery in Sofia.

A year later, the monument in the city-centre was dismantled.

With Open Arms: Tired History



Tired History, (Finger einer Bronzestatue aus Carnuntum, 1.–4. Jh. n. Chr., ruht sich auf dem Zigarettenautomaten am Kunstraum Weikendorf aus), photomontage, 2022

The exhibition “With Open Arms” consists of 4 sculptural works created for the space of the Kunstraum Weikendorf. The Kunstraum is part of the Public Space project in Niederösterreich, and as a gallery, functions as a big display window, to be looked at from the outside.

Intrigued by the recent scandal (2019) in the small town of Weikendorf in Austria, where the conservative major, as well as the citizens, signed a petition forbidding a muslim family from Palestine to buy a house in the area, the exhibition tried so tackle the issues of xenophobia, closed identity and fear embeded in the community. The intention of this installation, as well as public talks around it, was to address these issues and shine a critical view towards the need for “protecting” ones culture, by means of exclusion.

The questions were, what is that, that needs to be protected, and from whom? What builds the identity of an area, that has lost its “community” through processes of capitalisation and individualisation of everyday life?

One's Ear Open



Performative work *One's Ears Open* was an action with 15 performers at the central square in Zagreb, Ban Jelacic Square (08.07., 19.00-20.30, 2015), curated by the curatorial collective WHW. The action was a public reading of texts by Miroslav Krleža, one of the most accomplished Croatian writers of the 20th century and Danilo Kiš, a Serbian writer living in Paris. What they had in common were views on nationalism and resistance to fascism with their cultural work and engagement.

The square was "occupied" by 15 performers who, each in their specific spot, did a loud reading from different chapters of these 2 books. The accidental passers-by, people sitting on benches and all those interested could "tune in" into a different chapter of each book and listen.

The performance was made within the framework of the project "Written-off", on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the military Operation Storm (military action that liberated Croatia after the Serbo-Croatian war, but in which many innocent citizens died). The "Written-off" was organised as a protest against such military celebrations and in solidarity with a big cultural genocide that happened on both Serbian and Croatian side, like destruction and burning of books.

One's Ear Open



notwithstanding: Rerouting



Rerouting, video, HD, sound, loop, 2016

The video work by Luiza Margan was developed together with Maya Santiago (MEX) and plays with ways of reinterpreting and appropriating public space, facing failed utopias of modernity and threats of historical amnesia in the rapidly developing city. These issues are addressed -hands on- in the video, showing the body's physical effort (Maya Santiago) climbing the sculptures on various traffic islands in the city. The female body overcoming the obstacles of this monumental historic project is juxtaposed with footage of another 'moving' body in the video, that of one of the giant concrete sculptures, fragile and exposed- in the act of relocation from its original location to a new one.

notwithstanding



notwithstanding, exhibition view, reproduction of the poster for La Ruta de La Amistad (1968, Mexico City), Musa Gallery, Vienna, 2016

The project deals with the La Ruta de la Amistad (eng. The Route of Friendship), a public space project developed along 17km of Mexico City's southern highway with 22 large scale sculptures made by 22 artists invited from all around the world. The concrete sculptures were completed in 1968 as part of a cultural project in conjunction with the Olympic Games. In the aftermath of the student's protests of 68 in Mexico City and the student massacre around the time of the Olympics, this project was veiled in silence and eventually swallowed by the expanding urban development, rendering these works almost invisible. Building a second level to the highway meant that many of the sculptures were threatened with destruction until the Patronato Ruta de la Amistad didn't start the complex process of trying to rescue the sculptures by relocating them and restoring the project. The exhibition presents an installation consisting of a video work, photographs and objects addressing the complex issues of use and shaping of memory in public space, opening up discussion about similar projects today where local realities and global, universal values are collapsing into each other.

notwithstanding



notwithstanding: Urban Furniture, metal, plastic, ropes, concrete, 2016

The sculptural installation in the exhibition space of the Musa gallery includes prototypes of Margans' series Urban Furniture, based on the exploration of civil organisation of public space by using self-built structures and ways of occupation and appropriation of space. The metal paravan is appropriated and recreated from one of the Mexico City's street newspaper sellers. This ongoing series of objects is exploring the many layers of spatial occupation and appropriation between order and chaos, agreement and struggle, history and the imagining of possible futures. The paravan choreographs the space and establishes the dynamic of viewing other works in the exhibition.



Within the Giant's Belly



The project *Within the Giant's Belly* (2013) is a continuation of Margan's projects dealing with the shifting social values in transition from socialism to capitalism in Croatia, the condition of work and the commodification of labor within this process. The project analyzes the example of the recently privatized Shipyard 3rd of May in Rijeka

Within the Giant's Belly



Installation details, series of photographs, lambda prints, wooden case with a glass top with a 3 rusty screw nut partly covered with 24 karat gold, 2013

Abstract Muscle



Abstract Muscle (Quer the Square), plexiglas, feathers, metal, ca 250 x 150 cm, 2019

Abstract Muscle



Abstract Muscle

Installation with objects and assemblages, viennacontemporary, ZONE 1
curated by Fiona Liewher, Structura Gallery, 2019

By combining a documentary approach with poetic imagery, Luiza Margan's practice investigates the socioeconomic aspects of everyday life, and their manifestations in public space and in art production. Behind the delicate elegance of her work lies engaged observation and analysis of the historical and political context of spaces and the labour conditions embedded in them. In this new body of work, *Abstract Muscle*, Margan continues her quest and interest into the various forms of labour representation, the wider legacy of labour movements and their historical implications, and the way in which all of this is rationalized into contemporary art. (text Maria Vasilleva, gallerist. The installation is a continuation of Margan's research in the project "Within the Giant's Belly" (2013), this time focusing on the migration of labour force from the bankrupt shipyard industry of the south into other countries and industries (most often into the manual labour in construction industry).

Abstract Muscle is an installation that includes several objects created from extruded polyurethane used in building construction, leather (found leather gloves object in the shipyard in Croatia), concrete, fetahers etc.

Abstract Muscle: Map



Abstract Muscle (Map), leather, deconstructed workers' gloves,
ca 250 x 150 cm, 2019



Abstract Muscle



Abstract Muscle, assemblages, plexiglas, feathers, leather, wood, 2019

Under the Skin



Under the Skin

leather, objects collected in the shipyard "3rd of May" in Rijeka, Croatia, 5 out of 9 in total size variable ca 15 x 30 cm each, 2013-2021

The installation consists of a series of transformed leather gloves that previously belonged to the workers of the Shipyard 3rd of May in Rijeka, Croatia. The shipyard held a reputation of one of the most advanced industries in Yugoslavia, marking the identity of the city and the generations of families who worked there. It has since been bankrupt and privatized, following the destiny of many such industries in Eastern Europe. The found objects are homage to the worker: dissected and turned around, they appear as vulnerable creatures born from their exposes insides, the sweat and the strength of labour.



Under the Skin

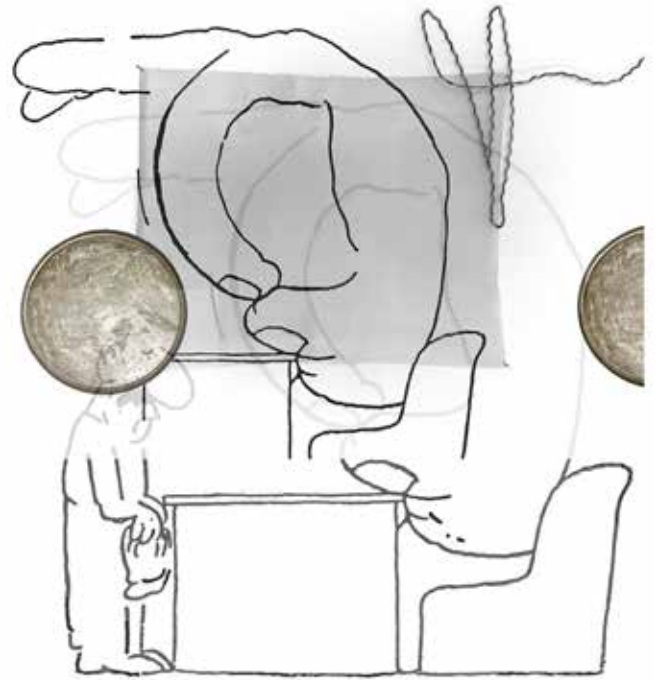
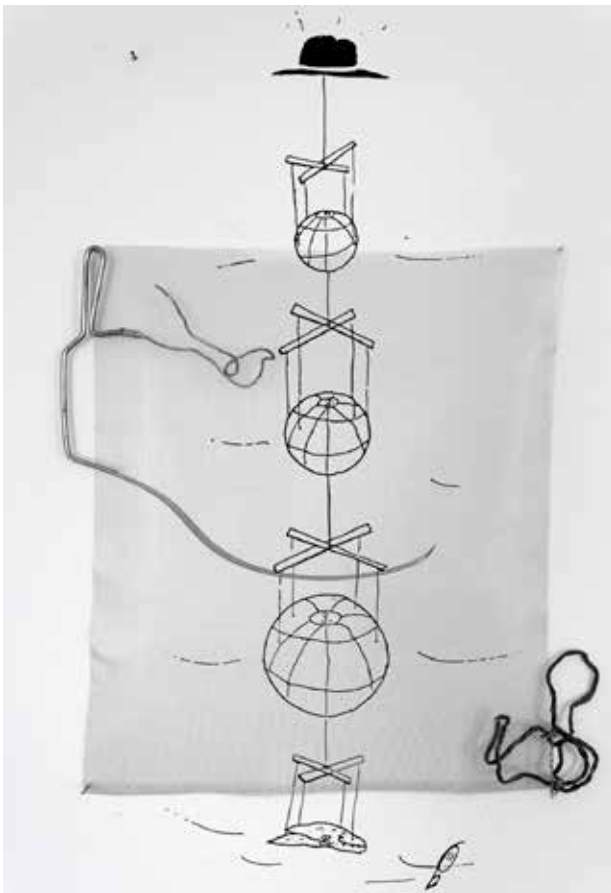
leather (used and inverted worker's gloves), collected in the shipyard
"3rd of May" in Rijeka, Croatia, size variable, 2013-2021

Monumento Al Obrero



Spatial collage, overlapping images of a tired worker (statue "Monument to the Worker" in Mexico City), syrophoam, print on transparent fabric
2017-2022

First Generation



Series of photomontages, 2019-ongoing made with historical illustrations gathered in the Domid Archive in Köln, from different publication on migration in Germany in the 60ies and 70ies about Gastarbeiter and their lives.

Siesta



Siesta, sculpture, found materials (ropes), wood, ca. 250cm x 100cm, 2017

Exhibition view: Chaux, Martin Janda Gallery, 2017

The work is an outcome of Margan's research into the paths of illegal street vendors and sellers who are an integral part of the street life in Mexico City and its subway system. The vendors most often work in fear of police prosecution, in highly precarious conditions and often move from one part of the city to another.

Margan conducts a field research within which she collects leftover materials that the sellers leave behind; small pieces of ropes and strings used to pack merchandise into packages.

She connects them together into long strings, weaving these into a hammock. Full of hand made knots and accidental clusters, the hammock represents the so much needed siesta, the time to dream, and to be the master of one's time.

Siesta



Restaging Monument: From Within



Archive photograph acquired from the family archive of family Matkovic in Rijeka, Croatia, showing the sculptor Vinko Matkovic next to the core structure for the sculptural group "Monument for Liberation" (1955). The photo served as a basis for Luiza Margan's sculptural sound work "Restaging Monument: From Within" in 2015



an interactive sound sculpture for public space developed with the sound artist Phillip Leitner, 2014 / Material: metal pipes, speakers, feedback bass system, computer, installed at the artists space Golo Brdo, Rovinjsko Selo, Istria, Croatia

At Studio Golo Brdo Luiza Margan shows a continuation of her work on the role of public monuments, reconsidering the relationship between history and power embodied in them and their effect on everyday social interaction and language. Monuments are perceived to contain performative and discursive material that can be re-interpreted. The environment of Golo Brdo served as a platform for collaboration with the sound artist Philip Leitner (AT) with whom Margan engaged in a process of performative and sculptural rethinking of the idea of a monument.



Together with Leitner, Margan re-interprets one of the archive photographs showing the essential “bone” structure of the Monument of Liberation done by V.Matkovic, as a sculptural intervention at Studio Golo Brdo. The main sculptural elements are construction pipes. The sound element of the installation is created using a feedback bass system and a computer, and microphones within the pipes recording vibrations that are created when visitors touch the sculpture or wind goes through them and transmitted back to the pipes through the bass speakers. One can listen to this sound by leaning the ear on the metal rods.

Utterly Useless Personal Pleasure



Utterly Useless Personal Pleasure, installation, metal, found wood, 2014
The exhibition space is occupied by a construction scaffolding. The scaffolding, which is typically associated with exteriors and sites of labor and architecture, is used here as a place for having a break, for finding an 'utterly useless personal pleasure', as the title of the work suggests. The scaffolding is facing the gallery's large window, and was used by the visitors to sit and 'take a break' while overlooking the hectic parade of everyday life that takes place outside of the windows, on the city of Rijeka main promenade. Through this, the visitor himself becomes a part of the installation.
The entire space, from the inside and outside point of view, acts as an object of observation and "performativeness". Viewed through the relationship of the double coding, the boundaries between looking and being looked at, doing useful and useless work, between production and consumption (of art), seem porous.



Beloved Monster



The project Beloved Monster grew from my interest in the disparity between the desire for preservation of cultural heritage and the social values inscribed in it, and its devastation underlined by the neoliberal state desire of creating profit-oriented cityscapes. In this project I am referring to the recently destroyed brutalist building on the Kepler square near the main train station, built in 1974 by the architect Werner Wirsing (*1919- † 2017) .

This concrete and metal building with colorful blue and red facade was a social project and has served as a student residence for generations of young people from different countries. The building has been demolished in January 2020, in spite of the protests from the local professional community and citizens, fighting for protection of this cultural heritage site. The demolition marks the beginning of the redevelopment of the Kepler square and the surrounding area.

Beloved Monster



The exhibition space consists of three large sculptural “stations”, each consisting of a lifted wooden platform holding a five meter long metal sculpture created from what was once the balcony fence of the building (acquired from the Wirsigturnm after its devastation). These playful shapes celebrate the idea of the balcony as a space of interaction, shared experience, community and having a voice.

The Ghosly and the Golden



Installation view, Celje City Gallery, Slovenia, 2015

The Ghosly and the Golden



The Ghostly and The Golden, photo series, variable sizes, inkjet print on fine art archive paper, framed, 2015



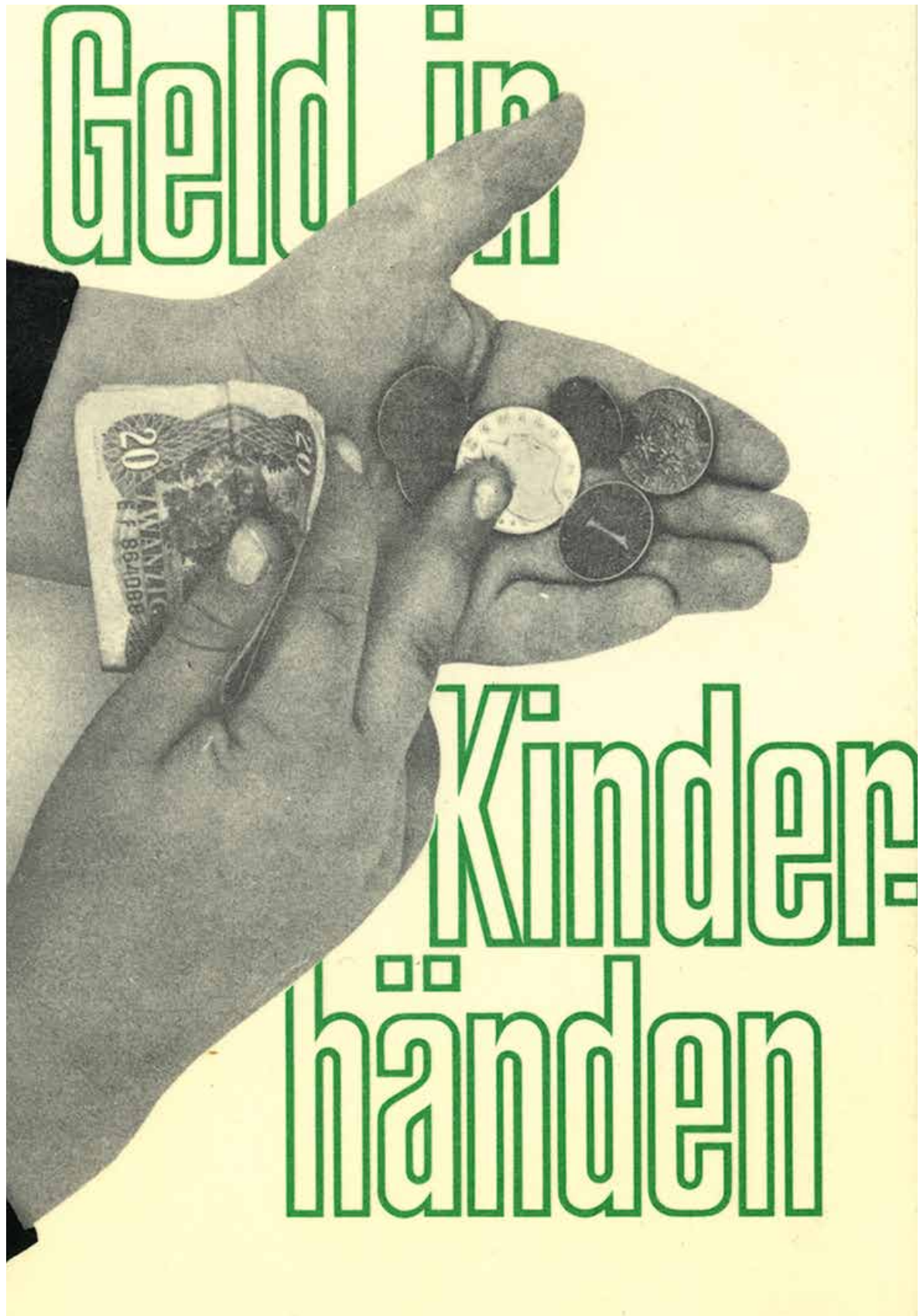
The Ghostly and The Golden
Video, 7'45", HD, color, sound, 2015
shown at The Enigma of the New
and the Modern at Mumok Kino,
Vienna, curated by Christian Kravagna

The Ghosly and the Golden



The Ghostly and The Golden, dyptich
2015-2022

original italian black marble used in rebuilding of the "Golden Quarter" in Vienna, steal,
photographs (inkjet print on photo paper, one photo taped on the front and another at the
back of the marble plate), tape, foam
measures: 85 x 61 x 32 cm & 100 x 72 x 29 cm



Money in the Hands of Children, poster for the solo show
Funny Business,
in Mali Salon, Museum of Contemporary Art in Croatia, 2014



Money in the Hands of Children, poster for the public space, exhibition Borrowed Time at Fluc Wien, curated by Walter Seidl and Gülsen Bal , 2020

Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree



Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree, 4 channel sound installation for public space, 2012, 8'41"

The sound installation is an outcome of a research conducted around the purposely bankrupted Kamensko textile factory in Zagreb, the workers protest and the planned privatisation of the property and the land surrounding the factory. The plan of repurposing the land plot of the factory and the neighboring park into a business and shopping area marks the onset of gentrification in that part of the city, without transparent decision making about public space with the citizens.

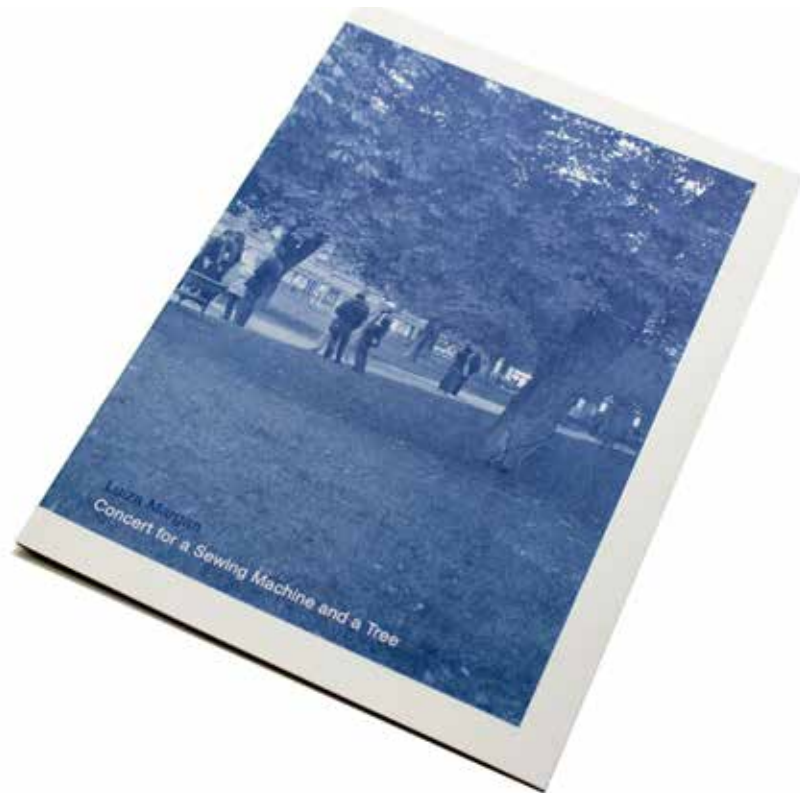
Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree is a composition of sounds from manual and machine textile work (recorded in another, still existing factory in Zagreb). It is edited in the manner of an abstract musical score, with interchange of irregular rhythms and sounds from real time and space (factory machines as well as manual labour). The sound installation is played through speakers mounted into four tree-crowns in the park in front of the factory, creating a spatial sound installation. The composition was played 3 times in the day, to mark the 3 work shifts of the workers. Further on, the installation was also recreated for a gallery space in Ljubljana, for the occasion of which a publication was made.

Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree



Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree, 4 channel sound sculpture in public space, Franjo Tudman Square, Zagreb, 2012

Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree



Concert for a Sewing Machine and a Tree, 2012
Presentation of the 4 channel sound installation in a gallery space
and publication

Anatomy of the Bow



Installation with a series of 12 photographs, flat screen, projection, microphone / Changdong National Art Studios Gallery, Seoul 2012

For the series of photographs *Anatomy of the Bow*, the artist approaches passers biers in the urban space in Seoul, with a proposal to engage in a short performative action which she photographs. She explains to the couples that the action's objective is to assess the traditional roles of women and men and show their interrelation. Women, despite their initial indecisiveness—but also often despite the protective or dismissive reactions of their partners—agree to participate.

The photo narrative uses a specific body language (the gesture of the bow) within public space in order to question the traditional roles and ways power is distributed and perceived within society. It critically approaches to the position of women and its ambiguity: it on one hand it emphasizes the equality and strength of women, but in the same time speaks about their submissiveness and undervalued position. *Anatomy of the Bow* uses the public space for dissecting traditional relationships, thereby instantly provoking existing hierarchies.

Anatomy of the Bow



Anatomy of the Bow



Anatomy of the Bow, series of 12 black and white digital photo prints, 42 x29,7 cm, 2012

Anatomy of the Bow: Speakers

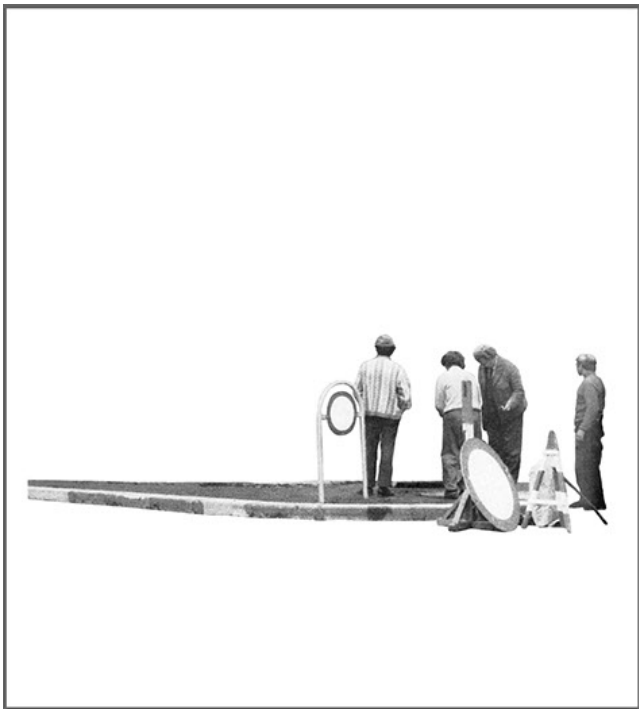


The video work is part of the project done in the time of the residency period in South Korea, dealing with the oppressed social bodies, the position of working women in Korean society and their activism towards emancipation and fight for equality. The video, made of archive photographs, kindly borrowed by the KWWA- Korean Women Worker Association, an organisation dealing with work rights of women, giving them education and legal support. The assemblage of archival images creates a moving picture of a fragmented, fragile social body : we can see the women speak, but their voices remain silent. The voice-over recites a writing by Theresa Hak Chyung Cha, a text that almost anatomically describes the ability and struggles of speech as a bodily experience.

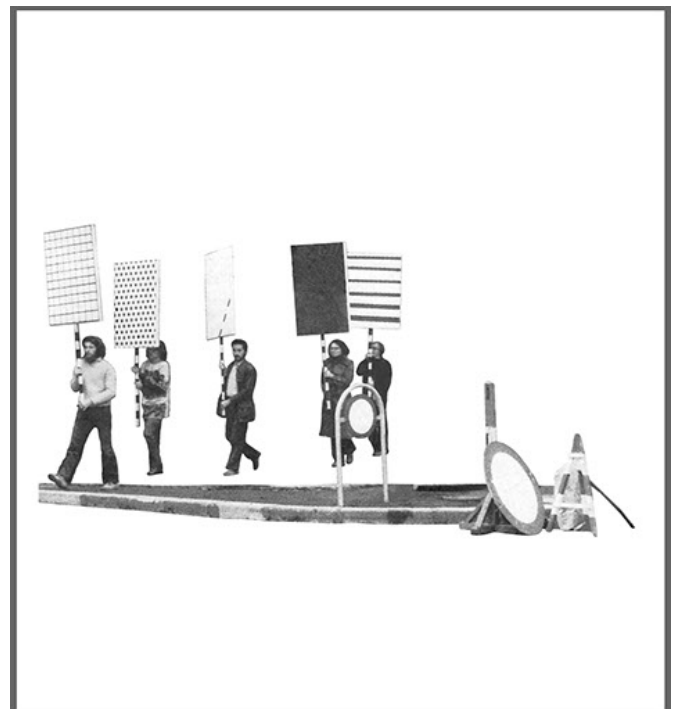


Anatomy of the Bow: Speakers, video stills, b&w, sound, 05:10 min, 2012

Outside the Role



Outside the Role, installation, 2012
Exploring one of the most vibrant periods of the Gallery SC in Zagreb(1960-70), Margan uses some of the archive material of the gallery as basis for her work. A discovered photo from 1972 becomes one of the key threads of the project .The image, treated as a facsimile on one hand and an enlarged photo-collage on the other, shows a public action of the art group TOK, which was active in Zagreb during the 1970s.



The group organized a public protest march as part of the Kunst Markt culture event in Graz, 29-30 September 1972, where the members of the group carried signs that, contrary to expectation, were not emblazoned with political slogans but rather abstract geometrical patterns, under the motto “art is for everyone”. In the image, the artists who are walking with their signs through the streets of Graz are photographed in an accidental moment - while juxtaposed with a group of workers who seem to be occupied with the revitalization of a traffic island. Margan separates the individual groups, the workers and the artists, into two frames / photomontages, and by re-framing them, generates a new relationship.

Outside the Role



Installation view at SC gallery, Zagreb - wooden panels, metal chairs, wooden sticks, textile curtains, framed photographs, sound piece on earphones and 2 HD video projections, 2012

In the exhibition project *Outside the Role*, Margan researches within the archives of the cultural centre SC in Zagreb and its important role in the cultural production in Zagreb, especially in the avantgarde and progressive artistic practices, as well as its transformation and economic disintegration within the recent years. The artist examines the conditions and value of creative work/ immaterial labor in the process of artistic creation, modes of re-presentation of labor within art as well as the specific relationship of the art work and audience. The exhibition space serves as a stage for reviewing different roles in which artistic work and its various modes of production can be articulated and communicated. A system of display panels designed for the gallery space create a specific choreography for the visitors to view the exhibition and move through the space.



Outside the Role: Rehearsal



The video-installation *Rehearsal* shows a scene of 2 workers renovating a stage floor in a theatre hall of the cultural centre SC in Zagreb, Croatia. The video has 2 separate sound track, on one hand, we listen to the sound of work in the theatre, and on the second sound layer we hear an audio piece- a staged dialogue between the 2 workers and the film director. The voice of the director energetically commands the activities of the workers/ actors demonstrating the way how they should perform their manual work movements. The relation between reality and fiction, real (concrete) work and the acted 'performance of work' is blurred.

Whistle While Your Work



Sculptural intervention in the gallery space, self made furniture, metal, light, construction site, street, 2011

This intervention uses the direct interaction between the gallery space and the street construction in front of the gallery glass wall as a point of departure, potentialising both' spaces theatrical and performative dynamic.

The artist built a massive wooden frame around the wall-size windows looking directly to the street, onto a construction site covered in red protection fabric. The massive frame was painted into a shiny black color, accentuating

the cinematic and theatrical potential of the space. The black 'frame' around the window potentialised the red reflections of the street much as well as the relationship between the random passers-biers and the viewers in the gallery space.

Whistle While Your Work



Ground Work



Ground Work, 2009, installation detail at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb
Ground Work is a project dealing with the artists' family heritage as well as the social changes of the Bulgarian society and specifically, the transformation of the symbolic and economic values of the farming lands in Bulgaria in the period after the 1989.

In the communist times the lands have been taken from owners and nationalized. In the decades after the fall of communism, the lands have been gradually returned to the families, although the new economical and social structures (transition towards capitalist economic models) forced most of the land owners to sell their property to new developing businesses.

The research process led Margan into extensive field trips to the lands, documenting not only the state of lands as they are, but also marking the material and value changes happening to them in the transition period, diagnosing how do these illustrate a picture of a social change in general.

Margan involves a humorous private note into her research, as a small part of the money of sale of her family lands has helped her finance her academic art studies. The project examines the fragile thread between private positions and state economy politics. The work consists of drawings, photographs and texts as well as sculptural interventions and objects, a table with objects and a video projection.

Ground Work





Ground Work, framed boxes containing plant branches, assemblaged with thin graphite

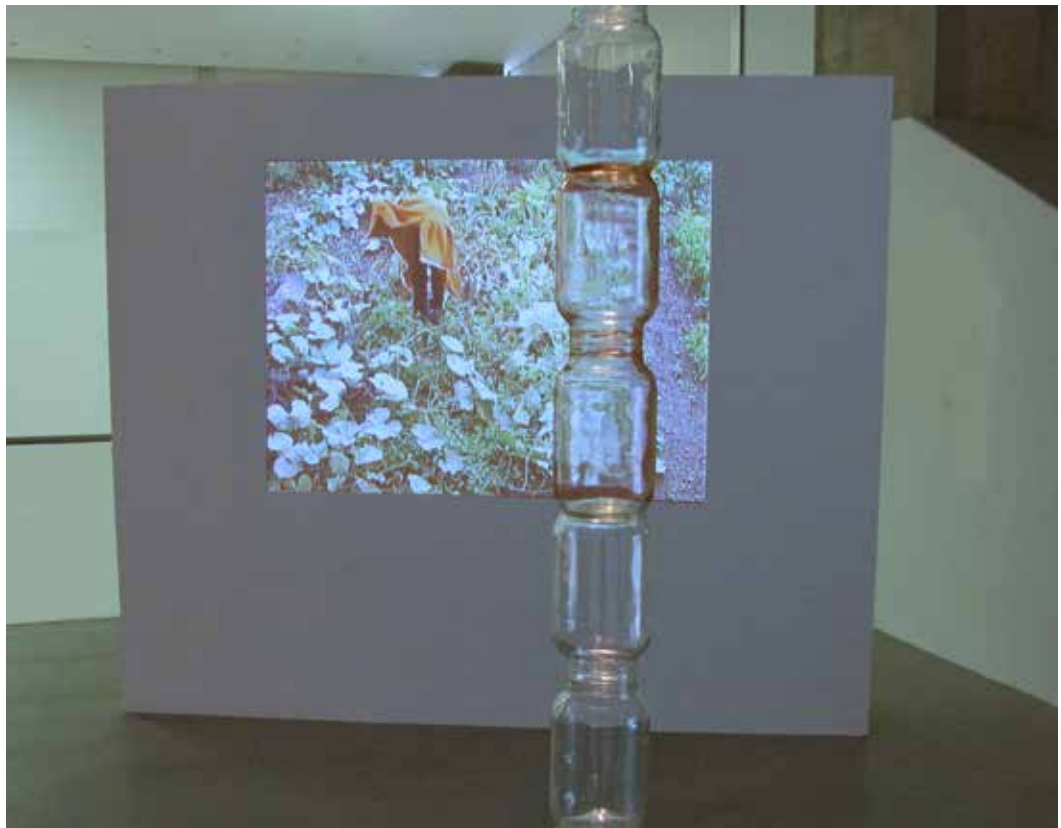
Ground Work



Ground Work: Lost Movements, Waiting Spaces is a photographic and drawing series of 5 pairs of photos and drawings, 2009

The drawing series Lost Movements traces the forms of work in farming that is not often in practice any more. The drawings present these work actions (for example in the food production and land work) as some kind of sculptural moments or lost choreographies of work. The photography series Waiting Spaces, shows the state of the hereditary lands that were previously farming fields, sold in the process of privatization of Bulgaria and are now having a completely new usage, many of them staying unused, waiting for future investments that are in the moment questionable because of the economical crisis clashing with the country's transitional efforts.

Ground Work



Ground Work: Pumpkin and the sculpture Mouth to Mouth, 2009

The video shows an almost static scene of a huge pumpkin in the garden. One can hear birds singing and other sounds of nature. After some minutes, the 'pumpkin' stands up and leaves the scene. The sculpture Mouth on Mouth is a pillar made out of empty glass jars, used for home made pickled food. The pillar raised from the floor to the ceiling of the space.

