



#rien



AVOIDING MEMORIES



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Counter-Trauma aftereffects

An art & science exhibition about strategies for dealing with the aftereffects of trauma

ARTISTS

Guadalupe Aldrete * Mila Balzhieva * Paula Flores *
Natalia Gurova * Hubert Hasler * Isidora Krstic *
Gabriel Virgilio Luciani * Mihai Zgondoiu

Curator Denise Parizek

Opening 7.11. 2024 Meta Spatiu Timisoara
Duration 8.11. - 7.12.2024

Căminul Studentesc, Bulevardul Mihai Viteazu 1 Timișoara 300222, Rumänien

AVOIDING MEMORIES

Avoidance is one of the main strategies for dealing with the after-effects of trauma. Avoidance of memories. Avoiding the unintegrated fragments of the past that are triggered again and again. How should we deal with this threat to our mental health, how can we cope with our personal stories in a time of wars, famine, climate crisis, shift to the right, when new problems are constantly being drummed into us?

Based on different approaches and personal experiences, we will try to explore methods of avoidance together; we will question whether avoidance is the only solution and whether there are other scientific or medical tools to solve today's mental health problems.

Marina Abramovic works out her trauma on her own body, she went into the pain again and again until she literally hit the ground. Artists may be able to overcome trauma in this way, but the wounds are still there. Avoidance is one of the main strategies for dealing with the after-effects of trauma. Avoidance of memories. Avoiding the unintegrated fragments of the past that are triggered again and again. The debates about trauma, femicide, violence, climate crises, migration, wars, global political and social tensions are overwhelming. They trigger new triggers. Together we try to explore methods of avoidance based on different approaches and personal experiences, we question whether avoidance is the only solution, whether there are other scientific or medical tools to solve today's mental health problems.

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In „Monumental Cares“ (Manchester University Press 2023), Mechthild Widrich discusses artistic and activist interventions that show that a site- and person-centred engagement with history is important for a functioning, democratic public sphere and that we need to create new, participatory forms of art.

How can we reach a new level of discussion via art, in which the problems of today are presented and thematised in order to save us from fascist patriarchal backlashes and other global problems? In „Story of a counter monument“ Patrizia Viola describes the idea of taking existing places / exhibitions out of context and reinterpreting and redesigning them through joint intervention. How can we give a living meaning to what reminds us of the trauma?

Denise Parizek Curator



GUADALUPE ALDRETE

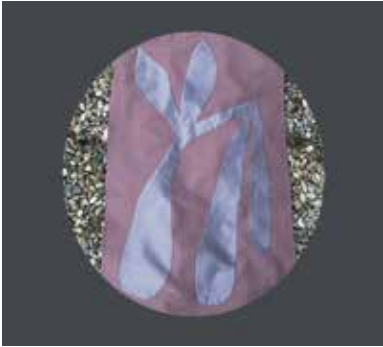
Banderola III

Installation
2024

Fabric, Metall, Ink

Inspired by cave interiors, „Banderola III“ reflects humanity’s first spaces of protection and connection. These were spaces where humans gathered as families, shared stories, and communicated their hopes, fears, and expectations. Caves were also sacred places, where ancient people paid tribute to their deities and explored their inner worlds by navigating the chambers of the earth. Caves symbolise for me the meeting point of my ancestors, who at some moment decided to migrate southwards but returned over generations to honour their shared bodily and cosmic roots. An example of this would be the caves of La Pintada in Mexico. The installation mimics natural cave formations like drapery and flowstones, echoing the slow, continuous flow that shapes them. This mirrors the flow of ancestral memory through generations, still present in our somatic and epigenetic memory. Drawing on psychological/ anthropological/ archaeological research, such as David Lewis-Williams’ work, who suggests a direct connection between journeys into caves and the retrospection that helped shape early human intellectual and spiritual development, the artwork’s colours symbolise the inner landscapes of each person and the intergenerational heritage passed down through family lines.





MILA BALZHIEVA

NEUROPTERIS-2

Textile
Cotton, Taffeta
2024

„Neuropteris-2“ is a part of a textile series that examines the interplay between handcraft and digital aesthetics, focusing on extinct flora. Each piece is hand-sewn, drawing inspiration from long-lost plant species, blending the real with the imagined. In Neuropteris-2, reinterpreted ancient forms merge, creating a new botanical vision that feels both familiar and otherworldly. The work reflects nature’s resilience and transformation, opening a dialogue between the extinct and the speculative. This piece embodies the tension between the organic patience of handcraft and the sleek, abstract influences of digital design, bridging past, present, and imagined futures.





PAULA FLORES

INVISION JAGUARS

Growing Sculpture

2024

fungi, chili and wax

Once again I call upon our tears to open the channels for life infusion. Permeating tears that activate lifes interconnectedness.

For that life giving energy that is not stopped by time or space. It is not with the intention to drain empty tears as cleansing eye water or to invite and praise empty sensitivity. LIFE itself can never be fully soft and easy for the one who lives it and for the lives attached to each other. LIFE can never be by human standards fairly and equally proportionate either in the good or the bad. Somehow we insist on control and predictability. LIFE needs freedom in its own definition.



NATALIA GUROVA

THE HOLLOW SHELL

Sculpture

2024

Glazed ceramics



The first ceramic figure of the series, with its elongated head and distorted body, symbolizes the effects of trauma and avoidance. The pale, hollow form suggests dissociation, while the deep red marks hint at unresolved wounds. The twisted, contorted posture represents the emotional tension of avoidance, with small black shoes grounding the figure in an unsettling reality.

Evoking feelings of fragmentation and alienation, the piece challenges viewers to question whether avoiding painful memories truly protects us or leaves us more disconnected from ourselves.





HUBERT HASLER

BEAUTY NEVER DIES

Sculpture

2024

2 mummified toads on a pedestal

The new work in the „Happy End“ series awaits the fulfillment of love that takes shape through the kiss in fairy tales, but only in fairy tales.

Or do questions arise as to why we endure plastic modifications to our bodies and pay huge sums of money to chase after perfect beauty in this eternal quest for fulfilled and unconditional love, eternal youth and a feeling of lightness?

All just to conform to an AI-generated ideal of beauty?

Or do we allow ourselves to age crankily, wrinkly and with dignity in order to face the finiteness of our own being with the fulfillment of life?





ISIDORA KRSTIC

TO ACHIEVE A WEIGHTLESS STATE

HD Video (05:35) Stereo Sound
2024

Edition 2/8 (2 AP's + 8)

The video installation „To Achieve a Weightless State“ was produced during Isidora Krstic’s stay at the Process-Space Foundation Artist Residency in the town of Balchik on the Bulgarian coast of the Black Sea. The location of the residency in this primarily holiday town highlighted the growing cost of living and fact that holidays, as well as spending idle time in rest and relaxation are increasingly becoming a luxury and even - an impossibility. Untypical for her artistic practice, the artist places herself as the subject of the video piece and captures her attempts at achieving a state of weightlessness in water - a reflection of an everyday struggle to keep things in her life balanced - her work, relationship, friendships, artistic practice, health, doing sports and making a living.

Original sound: “Migraine”, Pieter Gabriel

Camera: Rada Yakova

With support from: ACF Sofia, Process-Space Foundation

Thanks to: Hristina Bobokova, Stella Bobokova

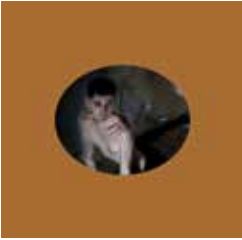


GABRIEL VIRGILIO LUCIANI

BREAKUP

Performative Movie / 5'44

2023



„Breakup“ is a corporal aria birthed on a simmering hot day in the attic of late 19th Century Catalan modernist house. After seeing the Andrzej Żuławski film, Possession (1981), I wanted to approach the topic of a breakup. Feeling uprooted, delirious, alone, forgotten, abandoned, I felt Isabelle Adjani’s gestures came from a place of disjunction. A rupture between wanting to leave a man and yet wanting to save her family; and at the same time wanting to mutate and disappear. The friction between the desires becomes unbearable. Here the convulsions and contortions mimic what the dance the heart does in a complex relationship. After a period of numbness, betrayal, breakup, anger, come anxious pulsations and tricky positions, laced feelings and contradictory movements.

Editing and filming by Vanessa Pey

Additional editing by Clàudia del Barrio

Idea, concept and performance: Gabriel Virgilio Luciani

Special thanks: Sílvia Cabrera





MIHAI ZGONDOIU

#rien

urban art intervention
video 0'28"
Bucharest, 2018

The „#rien“ series represents a profound critique of the limits of contemporary art in a post-consumerist context supported by false icons and clichés of values. Through drawings, objects, installations, urban interventions, and performances, it examines how art, in its pure essence, is often subjected to commercial pressures and market expectations. The minimalism and deliberate use of void in the „#rien“ series become a manifesto against the visual and symbolic overload that dominates today's art. Thus, the concept works of „#rien“ not only challenge viewers to reconsider what artistic value means in the absence of a price tag but also contest the structures that transform art from an act of creation into a commodity. They incite a reconsideration of the artist's role as a mediator between the authenticity of expression and the commercial demands of the art industry.

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<https://pogmahon.com/exhibitions/avoiding-memories/>



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