

# BUNDESKUNSTHALLE



## STATE OF THE ARTS Video Installation Performance 16 June to 16 August 2020

Media Conference: Tuesday, 16 June 2020, 11 a.m.

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## General Information

Exhibition	16 June to 16 August 2020
Managing Director	Patrick Schmeing
Curators	Miriam Barhoum Johanna Adam
Press Officer	Sven Bergmann
Catalogue / Press Copy	Available on <a href="http://www.stateofthearts.de/en">www.stateofthearts.de/en</a> for free
Opening Hours	Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Public Holidays: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Closed on Mondays
Admission standard / reduced	€ 10 / € 6.50
Free admission	for all under 19s and for refugees
Happy Hour-Ticket	€ 7 Tuesday and Wednesday: 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday: 5 to 7 p.m. (For individuals only)
Guided Group Tours information and registration	T +49 228 9171-243 F +49 228 9171-244 <a href="mailto:kunstvermittlung@bundeskunsthalle.de">kunstvermittlung@bundeskunsthalle.de</a>
Public Transport	Underground lines 16, 63, 66 and bus lines 610, 611 and 630 to Heussallee / Museumsmeile Deutsche Bahn / UN-Campus: Lines RE 5, RB 26, RB 30 and RB 48
Parking	There is a car and coach park on Emil- Nolde-Straße behind the Bundeskunsthalle. Navigation: Emil-Nolde-Straße 11, 53113 Bonn



Press Information (German / English) [www.bundeskunsthalle.de](http://www.bundeskunsthalle.de)  
For press files follow 'press'.

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## **Media Information**

The exhibition presents one of the most intriguing artistic phenomena of our time: the fusion of the visual and the performing arts. Today, more often than not, a visit to an exhibition does not merely offer new visual impressions. Instead, it is a more comprehensive experience that involves all the senses. Artists combine video, performance, dance, language and music, creating intermedial works. In some cases, this results in giving the visitors the opportunity to give up the distanced position of the viewer and become part of the work.

The fusion of the arts that causes the boundaries between the disciplines to disappear is a phenomenon of contemporary art that emerged in the 1960s. The term intermedia was used to celebrate the diversity of artistic possibilities, and experiments combining music, theatre, visual art and literature were launched. The Fluxus movement with its happenings and use of new media was especially influential in shaping this broader concept of art. Today in 2020, the extension of artistic media into all conceivable fields has long since become widely accepted. The exhibition brings together works that playfully move between different artistic disciplines – performative sculptures, sound works and installation art as well as performances.



## Work Descriptions

**Dries Verhoeven**

*Songs for Thomas Piketty, 2016*

*Song #12 Rele, 2020*

Aluminium, boombox

the artist

Dries Verhoeven works at the intersection between performance and installation, seeking to complicate the relationship between viewers, performers, real-life situations and art. He often collaborates with members of marginalized groups and 'outcasts'. Instead of conveying unambiguous statements about the lives of these people, he seeks to evoke feelings of unbalance and doubt in those who engage with his interventions. In *Songs for Thomas Piketty*, we hear the singing and begging voice of a homeless Albanian man, whom Verhoeven met in front of a Supermarket in the Quantiusstraße, Bonn. . The man is not visible. His voice, played in an endless loop, comes from a tape recorder positioned at the entrance of the museum. The work refers to oral requests for money which are nowadays forbidden in many cities, including Bonn, where only silent forms of panhandling are allowed. Verhoeven examines the visibility of poverty in public space, and scrutinizes the feelings of discomfort we might have when confronted with those who are, or pretend to be, poor.

In Western Europe, where prosperity is still predominant, poverty is on the rise. The stronger EU economies have been invited to respond to requests for help and solidarity from the weaker economies of other member states. Homeless people, less fortunate people from the Balkans and former refugees populate cities in Western Europe. The economist Thomas Piketty has shown that the gulf between rich and poor will widen even more in the coming years. Yet, at the same time, it seems as though measures are being taken to counteract this reality with the expanding development of spotlessly neat and tidy city centres. Subtle ways to drive the homeless and the poor out of city centers are being introduced. Public benches are designed in a way that lying down on them is not possible. Alcoves that used to provide shelter from the wind are being sealed off or fitted with metal pins. Actively asking for money in public spaces is being increasingly considered aggressive behavior ("agressives betteln") and therefore been forbidden by city authorities. According to Verhoeven, such measures undermine the representational function of public space, those who install feelings of discomfort are been silenced.

The sound work *Songs for Thomas Piketty* seeks to make us reconsider, at least for a moment, the feeling of unease that comes over us when a person asks us for money on the streets. Verhoeven considers this act of begging for money a performance. After all, it is the beggar's voice and their language - or their music and singing - that will determine whether the passer-by feels touched or whether they decline to give money, turning their back on them. Why do we let ourselves be manipulated by corporations when they sell us their products, but we get suspicious when a man on the street wants to sell us his drama? Could we also



honor that man for his performance, regardless of the credibility of his demand for help?

(Miriam Barhoum)

Dries Verhoeven often stages his works as happenings in museums, at festivals and in public spaces where the audience can experience them directly. He lives and works in Amsterdam and Berlin.

**Isabel Lewis**

***Gazebo SoS (School of Swans) 2020***

Open Space

the artists

*Gazebo SoS 2020* invites you to entrust yourself to the architecture, to get involved, but above all to experience the space intuitively. Isabel Lewis wants to seduce her audience even when she is not there. She is a master at sharpening and refining sensory perception, transferring the visual experience in art to all the senses. She sees herself in the role of the host, who conveys relaxation and well-being through the spaces she creates and opens up new perspectives. Multimedia technologies are an integral part of her performative way of working as well as maintaining long-standing collaborations with Norwegian smell researcher Sissel Tolaas, Berlin-based musical entity LABOUR, and American classicist Brooke Holmes for example. On this occasion Lewis collaborates with visual artist Dirk Bell in transforming the exhibition space into a “gazebo” or viewing pavilion referring to a form of garden architecture. By cutting open the walls of the octagonal space the work offers views onto the surrounding exhibition as well as seating surfaces that invite visitors to rest, sense their bodies, and reflect. *Gazebo SoS 2020* is a place for open vistas and encounters both intimate and collective. Dirk Bell’s work often delivers cultural critique in the form of poetic visual language. This approach meets Lewis’s interest in responding to and being in conversation with the site. Bell both continues the architectural language of Gustav Peichl, Architect of the Bundeskunsthalle, while casting doubt on the building’s effort to “reflect the democracy at the heart of Europe” by creating the octagonal sinking platform in the space. An apparition will appear periodically. A partial presence, or spectre created by Bell and activated in Lewis’s space as part of their ongoing artistic conversation. It is a free-standing drawing that is placed and revealed as a performance at irregular intervals during the museum hours and upon request.

Isabel Lewis as well offers her space for a programme of engagement with artists with whom she shares an interest in embodied forms of knowledge: Lou Drago who will offer sonic meditations for accessing alternate space/time called *Suspending Time* with a soundscape comprised of minimal and drone music and Dmitry Paranyushkin who will propose 8OS, a bodily awareness and consciousness-raising practice he created that begins with an introduction of theoretical principles that are then put into physical action in the form of a workshop. Lewis advocates for the rehabilitation of the entire human sensorium



as a way to put into check what she criticizes as the visual dominance of contemporary culture.

Other formats that form the educational programme of the exhibition such as Meet & Speak in which refugees, migrants and adults raised in Germany discover the exhibition together, as well as Hybrid identities, Hybrid artworks, an inclusive dance workshop are invited by the artist to take place in *Gazebo SoS 2020*.

(*Miriam Barhoum*)

Lou Drago`s Suspending Meditation will be performed on the following dates:

Friday, 19 June, 4 p. m.

Saturday, 20 June, 11 a. m. and 4 p. m.

Dmitry Paranyushkins 80S will take place on

Thursday, 2 July from 11 a. m. until 4 p. m.

Friday, 3 July from 11 a. m. to 4 p. m.

Isabel Lewis studied literature, dance and philosophy. She works far beyond the borders of contemporary dance and develops her work in a variety of different formats, including lecture performances, workshops, music sessions, parties and so-called "hosted occasions".

**Nora Turato**

**THANKS, I HATE IT!, 2020**

Video

**HE'S NOT HORNY, HE'S JUST VERY AMBITIOUS/  
I CONSIDERED ASKING THE FLIGHT ATTENDANT  
WHETHER SHE WOULD MIND IF I JUMPED OUT OF  
THE EMERGENCY DOOR, 2020**

Wall painting

the artist, Galerie Gregor Staiger and LambdaLambaLambda

Language is the central theme of Nora Turato's performances, videos and wall works. She writes and performs spoken-word poems, interweaving text fragments from advertising slogans and everyday communication, and reflecting the language and textual culture of the present day. How is language used today, and which signals do sound and speech communicate? What effect does the aesthetic of visually perceived texts have? Language is constantly changing. It expresses the social spirit of our times in an audible and visible form. Nora Turato's artistic inventions focus on how language can be used to detect cultural development.

In the early 20th-century avant-garde, texts and text fragments frequently appear in images and collages. Dada and surrealism saw themselves as both visual art and literary movements. A number of their protagonists worked with painting,



collages, sculpture and poetry simultaneously. Design and typography became an important theme. Kurt Schwitters, one of the most important Dada artists, stated, "Typography can be art in some circumstances." The element of visual design in poetry began to become significant around 1930 with the emergence of concrete poetry. Here language itself becomes the theme. Its phonetic and visual aspects are the central focus, while the content recedes into the background. In the 1960s, pop art and conceptual art linked language or writing with visual art. This takes many different forms: texts can be the sole design motif; they can make clear statements or solely serve the imagination.

Today the fields in which language and visual art meet have multiplied immensely. They have expanded so much that it is often scarcely possible to clearly categorise a work as belonging to a particular genre. In music and literature, spoken-word performances emerged as an important form thanks to movements such as the Beat Generation in the 1960s. In the visual arts, the Fluxus movement played an important role in bringing spoken-word performances to the fore in this field. The fusion of the arts can be experienced directly in Nora Turato's works: her practice encompasses spoken-word performances, video and audio works, large-scale murals and graphic works as well as artist's books. The scripts on which her works are based reflect on media as well as on the design of the form and the content of the language with which we are confronted every day. She condenses text fragments from advertising and social media, everyday platitudes, film and literature into rhythmic speech acts and visually striking images. Her interest lies in the effect that language has in a particular context, the political appropriation of words, and the interpretation of language and how it is determined by the environment.

*(Johanna Adam)*

Nora Turato studied at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam as well as the Werkplaats Typografie in Arnhem.

#### **Laure Prouvost**

##### ***Metal Man and Metal Woman – In reflection we rest, 2019***

Two metal sculptures (man and woman), TV screens, videos, duvet

##### ***Metal man– Security 2019***

metal sculpture and video

##### ***Metal man– We will show you the way, 2019***

metal sculpture and oil on canvas

##### ***Metal man –Swept under the carpet, 2019***

metal sculpture, video, concret, carpet

##### ***Fuck I was born to be here, 2019***

Tapestry

Courtesy the artist and carlier gebauer, Berlin/ Madrid

Laure Prouvost creates intermedial installations that move between fiction and reality. Whether her works take the form of film, video, sound, sculpture or



paintings, they always have strong narratives. However, they do not follow the model of a traditional, linear depiction. Rather, they overturn our expectations and perceptions of language. The artist creates a sensory context, playing with misunderstandings and illusions. The multi-layered possibilities for interpretation of the written word are a central element in Prouvost's work. She merely seeks to hint with language and to suggest possibilities while leaving the final interpretation entirely to the viewer's imagination. Prouvost's manipulation of language recalls the Dadaists, the art movement that invented a nonsense language or sounds to demonstrate their rejection of the bourgeois way of life. She is inspired by the courage and the playfulness with which they handled language and experimented freely with it. This kind of experimentation is also part of her own artistic practice.

Prouvost arranges a complex interplay of written words, language, sounds and moving images that has an intense, contemplative effect. In the quickly cut videos, Prouvost links nature shots, text sequences, the twittering of birds and images of people or bodies that recall dream sequences. The artist loves blurring boundaries, and this applies both to the media that she combines and to the content that she interweaves in her video works. Her metal sculptures seem to share their thoughts and emotions. They are performative in the sense that they speak directly to the audience. The sense of closeness this produces suggests an opportunity for direct communication between the work and the viewer, which is precisely the artist's intention. At the same time, she alludes to our relationship with computers and household appliances, which also communicate with us today. These "smart" everyday objects, gadgets and tools seek to convince us that they are perfect. By contrast, the small flaws and mistakes in Laure Prouvost's metal figures lead us to believe that we can see an approachable, almost human side in them.

(*Miriam Barhoum*)

Laure Prouvost seeks to restore a little weirdness to the world with her art. Consciously using language so that it is provocative or can be misunderstood is a central element of artistic practice for her. She won the prestigious Turner Prize in the United Kingdom in 2013 and represented France at the Venice Biennial in 2019.

### **Christian Falsnaes**

#### ***Self-portrait (Artist), 2017***

Performance, cut clothes on wooden frame, 160 x 120 cm

Three black wooden frames were the starting point for *PORTRAITS: Self-portrait, Portrait of Gallerist Sabine Schmidt and Portrait of collectors Christina Steinbrecher-Pfandt and Stefan Pfandt*. Under the guidance of the artist, visitors of an art fair became participants in a performance and co-authors of the collages. Christian Falsnaes asked passing visitors to cut his clothes off completely with scissors, as well as those of his gallerist and two collectors. Each of the single pieces of clothing were attached to one of the wooden frames. The result was a textile portrait of a



collector, a self-portrait of the artist and the portrait of a gallerist exhibited here. The art fair became a production site for art. With the works produced there, pictures were created which report on the performance and thus on its production. With the transfer of authorship to an anonymous fair audience, the usual capitalist trading strategies are destabilized.

### **SOLO, 2020**

white room, mirror, sound  
the artist and PSM, Berlin

Christian Falsnaes' works are brought to life when they are activated by the audience. More and more often the visitors are the sole protagonists of his works. The artist withdraws as a protagonist and develops concepts that others execute. In this context, he is interested in questions of authority and hierarchy, social rituals and group dynamics, in both art and daily life.

*SOLO* was conceived especially for this exhibition when it became clear that the originally planned work could not be carried out in accordance with the new distancing and hygiene rules. With *SOLO*, Falsnaes reacts not only in a practical way, but also conceptually, to a new situation that has determined our everyday life for several weeks now. Strict regulations apply in public spaces, which affect our interactions as well as the physique of each individual. We can only act in a way that is free from these still unfamiliar rules in private spaces. The artist reflects on how new social conventions change our intuitive behaviour in the short or long term – in our interactions with others, but also alone with ourselves. Falsnaes was born in 1980 in Kopenhagen, Denmark. He lives in Berlin.

(Johanna Adam)

### **Hannah Weinberger**

***we didn't want to leave, 2019***

Video and sound installation  
the artist and Gallery Fitzpatrick

Hannah Weinberger develops spaces of experiences, sound and video installations, that she conceives as complete compositions. *we didn't want to leave* is constantly changing. An algorithm produces an endless series of new sounds. Unique each time, they resound in the space and cannot be reproduced.

In her artistic practice, Weinberger is interested in entering into an exchange with the particular environment and achieving a subtle, yet palpable break with familiar perceptions.

*we didn't want to leave* only exists when visitors are present. Silence dominates the room until the first person enters it. In collaboration with various experts, Weinberger has developed a sensory installation that can detect when a visitor steps into the room and responds to the way in which they move inside it. This activates sensors, and Weinberger's synthetic compositions are played, controlled by an algorithm. It is solely the presence or participation of visitors



that triggers the sounds. The importance of the audience is further strengthened by a video installation that films the viewers and projects images of them while they explore the space. The projection seems to expand into infinity while the volume of the sounds changes with the visitors' movements. A minimalist composition fills the rooms, transforming the audience into an orchestra. In this experimental yet precise way, an interactive installation is created: the work ultimately becomes a soundtrack that is composed by a large number of people and accompanies its participants. Weinberger creates a space of possibilities that visitors can use creatively and shape. A mechanism that is scarcely noticeable despite its complex technology produces an immersive experience: visitors can allow themselves to drift in the flow of sounds and movements, letting themselves be carried away by the musical waves that they generate. At the heart of the work, however, is the experience and the moment. It is this unrepeatable moment that gives the work its ephemeral, elusive character.

Hannah Weinberger studied at the Zurich University of the Arts, where she graduated in 2013 with a Master of Fine Arts (specialization in media arts). Early on in her artistic career, she presented her work in numerous solo and group exhibitions at home and abroad. She has been on the board of the Kunsthalle Basel since 2013. She is also a lecturer at the University of Art and Design in Basel.

(Miriam Barhoum)

### **Simnikiwe Buhlungu**

*Rolling-A-Joint: Revisiting Spike Lee*, 2015

Video: 6: 22 min

the artist

In her video work *Rolling-A-Joint: Revisiting Spike Lee*, Simnikiwe Buhlungu playfully creates audiovisual montages by combining spoken and written words with sound. She does not primarily see herself as a performance artist, but here she can be seen setting to work on extracts from scripts by Spike Lee (\*1957 Atlanta, Georgia) and “deconstructing” them in an inquisitorial manner. She dissects reworks and acts out the text. The acclaimed author, actor and director can without exaggeration be considered as a style-maker for an entire generation of Afro-American pop and film culture. His works are also referred to as “Spike Lee Joints” and directly compared to a perfectly rolled joint. Buhlungu takes inspiration from this, incorporating it into her video as a homage to the artist and a metaphorical act. Her video works resemble investigations that fundamentally question the emergence and spread of knowledge. She often works with text-based media, video and installation art, always drawing on the theory that art forms such as film and sonic engagements, as a way to create a sense of belonging and solidarity between narratives within and beyond the African continent and its many placements within a global context.

Her interest lies in telling personal, transgenerational and socio-historical stories and weaving them into a web. These narratives raise issues that preoccupy her and pose questions that she wrestles with at times. The use of sound and oral



narratives, publications – and their dissemination – form a large part of her artistic practice.

(Miriam Barhoum)

Simnikiwe Buhlungu currently lives in Amsterdam, where she has started her two year residency at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten.

**David Shrigley**

***The Artist, 2014***

robots, motor, wig, paper, pens  
the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery

***Inflatable Swan Thing, 2018***

timed installation with inflatable plastic swans  
the artist and Galleri Nicolai Wallner

David Shrigley uses humour and brutal honesty as artistic means. His drawings, paintings and animated films are often based on an interaction between the image and the text, while his sculptures, sound installations and interventions in public spaces combine striking visual force with subtle jokes. He finds food for his biting satire in clichés and conversations between people in daily life, but also in the art world. *Inflatable Swan Thing* and *The Artist* are two performative installations by Shrigley that question the concept of art and the traditional understanding of authorship.

There are probably not many artists whose works are on display in museums, galleries and art fairs, but also sold in the fashion and lifestyle sector. The *Inflatable Swan Thing* has its origins in an idea that was born out of necessity: when David Shrigley was faced with the problem of a sculpture that was too large to transport to Japan, without a moment's hesitation he produced an inflatable version – problem solved! This work was followed by a series of smaller, affordable swans for swimming pools. Shrigley does not see his art as being restricted to a particular medium. This applies as much to the development of his ideas as it does to their implementation in form and materials. The installation *The Artist* produces drawings continuously, but they are not created by the artist's hand. Instead, a small robot (a vacuum cleaner wearing a wig) guides the pens that it holds in its nostrils. Shrigley, whose work largely begins with drawing, clearly reveals one thing with this installation: the execution is not the actual moment of artistic creation. The artistic act always lies in the idea, whatever technique or medium is used.

When it comes to the distribution of his works, Shrigley is also more open than is common in the art market. His works are not only on sale in renowned galleries and at international art fairs; they can also be mass-produced items available for purchase in his online shop and from other vendors. This form of boundary crossing and consciously playing with the conventions of particular environments – and especially the customs of the art world – are themes to which Shrigley constantly returns. Humour always plays an important role in his work, but the questioning that he expresses with it raises issues of serious



concern for him. He not only questions the hierarchies that are used to distinguish between “high” and “low” art, or between high culture and subculture; he also playfully moves between these fields and between different media. He takes aim both at his role as an artist and at the rules that the art world keeps trying to impose on him.

*(Johanna Adam)*

David Shrigley studied at the Glasgow School of Art in Scotland from 1988 to 1991. He was a Turner Prize nominee in 2013.

### **Simon Fujiwara**

#### ***Empathy I, 2018***

5D-Simulator-Installation with sound, video, motion, water, and wind,

3:49 min

the artist and Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin

Simon Fujiwara engages with the images and narratives of our time. What kind of content shapes our everyday visual culture, how do we consume, and how do we communicate with the aid of different media? He is especially interested in the stories and strategies that individuals and societies use to define themselves and form their identities. Crossing the boundaries of different media, Fujiwara works with video and installations, performance art, sculpture, painting and a wide range of technical media.

At the centre of *Empathy I* is a 5D cinema similar to those found in theme parks. It has flight simulator chairs and wind and water effects. But instead of a fictional journey through fantasy worlds, the artist presents found online film footage. He has selected sequences from personal YouTube videos showing extremely emotional or intense physical experiences. Widely different scenes follow each other in rapid succession, evoking a huge range of emotions. The individual sequences are just long enough to give the brain the time span that it needs to grasp a situation and assess its meaning and importance. Then they are immediately followed by a new scene, shot like all the others from a first-person perspective. The moving seats simulate the movements of the camera, intensifying the impression of actually being right in the midst of the action. The virtual journey comes to an end after roughly four minutes, leaving us with many questions that are worth reflecting on.

Our world today is extensively digitalised. We communicate via various digital media, stream films, read e-books, play online games or find out about the latest news by reading online newspapers and following social media. Technological progress has created a multitude of new possibilities that are triggering lasting changes in the way that we live together as a society. Our media culture has changed much more fundamentally than is evident from the shift from scheduled television to consumption on demand, or from the printed book to the e-reader. This far-reaching transformation has now been a subject of debate in contemporary media criticism for some time. The characteristics of these changes go beyond the increased speed of communication and information, and the difficulty of distinguishing between journalism, the manipulation of opinion,



and advertising. The traditional sender-receiver model is also shifting. With the old mass media (such as newspapers and television), a sender directed its message at a large number of receivers. The growth of social media, however, is transforming this relationship, turning everyone into a potential sender.

Observations like these were the starting point for *Empathy I*. The accelerated dynamic of our visual consumption is resulting in a bitter battle for our attention. But the constantly growing volumes of available content and images are also resulting in a qualitative change. The most emotive image is the one that stays in our minds, whether it is bizarre, tragic, funny or exciting. It is not just our attention as receivers that follow this principle. Our pretensions to success as senders – which is measured in likes, shares, retweets and comments – are also guided by it. The digital and analogue worlds interact in this context through experiences and situations from our own real lives that are documented and staged via media. Validation is the objective of the digital response that we hope to achieve. This validation contributes significantly to how we form our personal identities. At the same time, demand is growing for intense digital visual experiences to consume, ones that promise diversion and stimulation. The self behaves like a product and a consumer in equal measure. In this way, it is able to satisfy its craving for validation as well as its curiosity and desire to watch.

However, intense, short-lived experiences leave emptiness behind them. There is no narrative or dramatic arc leading to an emotional climax; instead, aborted climaxes follow non-stop one after another. Digital technology's limited capacity to be a satisfying replacement for physical analogue experience and one's own emotional sensations is laid bare in Fujiwara's work. And yet the seductive potential of digital technology emerges in it as well. This potential lies to a large extent in its omnipresence and effortless availability. Without any effort on our part, a reward awaits us. It is conveyed via another person's feelings, which simultaneously encourage us to feel for them. But which emotions are being appealed to here exactly? The title *Empathy I* suggests that this is the critical question. Do our bodies and minds actually operate in such a way that real emotions can be produced artificially? Or will there always be a crucial difference between what we physically and mentally experience and what is conveyed via media, no matter how far technology advances?

Simon Fujiwara reflects these developments by making us observers of, and participants in, different situations in a carefully planned dramatic composition. We enter a waiting area, just like the ones that we encounter in everyday life. We draw a number. There are places to sit and a water dispenser, and free Wi-Fi is available. Several editions of *Fifty Shades of Grey* lie on the table. In each copy, a bookmark marks the place where the two protagonists in the story freely enter into a sadomasochistic relationship and sign a contract governing it. The work points to the fact that, day in, day out, we consciously surrender ourselves to the internet and in particular to social media. It is also a comment on the contradictions in our society: its liberal and democratic values are at odds with what is idealised and eroticised in the novel, which was much criticised as misogynistic and pro-capitalist. Against this backdrop, the novel's enormous success has been a source of preoccupation for Simon Fujiwara. During his research, he found out that so many copies of the novel had been given to the



charity Oxfam that it begged people to stop donating it. The donated copies were impossible to sell, but they could not be recycled either because the glue in the binding turned out to be toxic. Thousands of books were left suspended in a kind of limbo, without any possible way in which they could be used. The artist decided to buy all of Oxfam's stock and use it for his work in order to create a framework for reflection on this chain of paradoxes.

(Johanna Adam)

Simon Fujiwara grew up in Japan, Spain and the UK. He studied architecture at the University of Cambridge and fine arts at the Städelschule in Frankfurt. The artist's work is represented in numerous international collections, such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Tate in London. He was the recipient of the 2010 Baloise Prize at Art Basel and the 2010 Frieze Cartier Award and a nominee of the prestigious Preis der Nationalgalerie in 2019.

### **Begüm Erciyas**

#### ***Voicing Pieces, 2016***

Installation and performance

Concept: Begüm Erciyas

Realisation: Begüm Erciyas und Matthias Meppelink

Dramaturgy: Marnix Rummens

Live control: Niels Bovri, Eric Desjeux/Lieven Dousselaere, Begüm Erciyas

Text: Matthias Meppelink, Begüm Erciyas, Jacob Wren  
the artist

In *Voicing Pieces*, the visitor's voice becomes a protagonist in the enactment. In the intimacy of a booth, visitors are led by a simple score. They become the audience of their own voice. The act of speaking while hearing one's own voice turns into a theatrical and choreographic experience that takes on a new form with every single interpretation of the score. The voice becomes the site of action, a spectacle or a surprise. Aren't our own voices always strange and uncanny? Who is speaking when you hear your own voice? Instead of recognising ourselves in strangers, *Voicing Pieces* invites us to perceive the stranger in ourselves.

She, the reader, is always a beginner, initiating something. That's why reading is so seductive: a delicate conception and an initiation of change, a fragile start, which is also a practice of liberation. This quality of reading appeared so clearly the moment I placed the upper part of my body into the mushroom-like structure in the *Voicing Pieces* performance and opened the first page of the huge book, which was waiting there for me to be read out loud: with the first word the reading opened itself into an unstoppable, overflowing, almost overwhelming sequence of events. My voice tested itself, checked its colour and intensity, adjusting its frequency and the ways it was forming the consonants; but at the same time, it was also given back to me, to the reader. The text started to run through my body with its various shades, repetitions, echoes, coming closer and then receding, until my voice and the text finally uttered the opening of the



performance and I read aloud in the isolation of the mushroom: I'm speaking the beginning. I'm starting this sentence without knowing where it is going.

Isn't this exactly what reading is? We never know when we start reading where we are going, where the voice of the read words (be silent or loud) is taking us. Lisa Robertson, a poet, whose delicate essay on reading echoes strongly with my own viewing of this performance, described that quality of unknown in reading in a wonderful way: "As I read, my self-consciousness is not only suspended, but it is temporarily abolished by the vertigo of another's language. I'm simply a conduit, its gutter. This is a pleasure." And pleasure is exactly what is continuously experienced in the *Voicing Pieces* performance, in our playful reading of the text, waiting for us in the three mushroom-like stations. There is a sheer pleasure in the ways of reading and voicing the words loud into the unknown, towards something, which has yet to come, and our reading is establishing the very event, the very performance we are in. We are playing with words, inclinations, rhythms, repetitions, echoes, sounds, continuously voicing and amplifying these various non-semiotic dimensions of language that give it its affective and emotional qualities; the way in which language touches us, how it is made, how it is coming together, is similar to how poetry affects us. This performance is as much an exploration of the voice as it is an exploration of reading, an exploration of the complex relation between the reading of the written word, its typography, form, position on the page, and dependency from voice; its sensual, vocal and auditory dimension. [...] In this performance we trigger the very performance we are in, through the singular and isolated gesture of reading aloud, while at the very moment we actively take over the reading we simultaneously become a vehicle of the events that overflow in their intensity and proximity onto our body and to the text. [...]

(*Bojana Kunst 2017*)

The performance to the piece *Voicing Pieces* by Begüm Erciyas will take place on the following dates:

- Tuesday 16 June, from 1 p. m. to 4.30 p. m.
- Wednesday 17 June, 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Thursday 18 June, 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Friday 19 June, 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Saturday 20 June, 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m. (english version)
- Sunday 21 June, 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
  
- Thursday 16 July, 11 a. m. from to 5.30 p. m.
- Friday 17 July, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Saturday 18 July, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m. (english version)
- Sunday 19 July, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
  
- Thursday 13 August, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Friday 14 August, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.
- Saturday 15 August, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m. (english version)
- Sunday 16 August, from 11 a. m. to 5.30 p. m.



**Gisèle Gonon**

**Work With Us, 2018**

Mixed media, Audio loop 4:45 Min.

the artist

Gisèle Gonon works in diverse media, often combining sculpture, drawings, video and sound. She is especially interested in the forms, colours, functions and social context from which a medium emerges. She links her research with collecting the materials that she works with: objects, tools and acts become altered and alienated from their original function. Gonon's multimedia installation *Work With Us* calls into question the substance and methods of the modern world of work, exposing the advertising language that companies utilise to recruit their staff. The audio loop sounds mechanical, computer-generated, but is spoken by an actress. She is meant to sound "unreal" at the same time she is trying to sound as human as possible, which underlines the absurdity of the matter.

Job adverts filled with loud promises of creative freedom, personal development and fulfilment can be found everywhere on the labour market as companies seek to capture the interest of potential candidates. Such adverts are especially common in the world of start-ups: "Think big and act fast", "A positive environment" and "Go for it and own it" are phrases from the audio loop in Gisèle Gonon's work. Overwhelmed by recruitment adverts that promise heaven and earth, we experience the labour market as a complex system of incentives, promises and requirements that extend far beyond the professional sphere, encroaching on our personal lives. The artist thereby casts a critical eye over the capitalist belief system and sheds light on its influence on the world of work. "The new spirit of capitalism"<sup>1</sup> is also reflected in start-up culture. It seems as if it is no longer enough today to merely work for a company. Instead, employees must internalise its corporate values and identify with them completely. Work experience and professionalism are disregarded. Gonon's goal is to disrupt and interrupt mechanical processes and to stage a kind of sabotage. All of this is linked to a strong political undertone, yet still always full of humour and subtlety. Her distorted representation of the "coffee fountain" is an especially striking example of how she achieves this. Here the artist refers to the noria effect, which describes a method for calculating the difference in wage costs between new, younger employees (with lower salaries) and their older counterparts (with higher salaries).

*(Miriam Barhoum)*

Born in France, the artist has studied at the School of Art and Design in Saint-Étienne, she lives and works in Berlin and is the Co-Founder of the Collective CCPC (Collisions, Cataclysmes et Permis de Construire).

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<sup>1</sup> Luc Boltanski/Ève Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, Paris 1999; English title: *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, London, 2005. The authors see their book as a critique of ideology. It examines how the ideological justification for capitalism has changed over time.



**Rachel Monosov**  
***The Blind Leader*, 2018**

performance, installation, photographs and text in four acts

the artist and Catinca Tabacaru Gall

Rachel Monosov's work is characterised by a great diversity of media. She uses her performances, photographs, videos and sculptures as a means to artistically explore social and political phenomena. How do social conventions, political power and cultural identities emerge and become established? Her performative installation *The Blind Leader* questions the effects of violence and control by the authority of the state and the importance of individual freedom and self-determination.

With *The Blind Leader*, the artist has created an installation that asks how the mechanisms of social and political control operate. "If someone asks you to sit on the ground with them, that's one thing. But if someone asks you to sit on the ground while they stand over you, that's something different." This sentence forms part of the installation and describes a power mechanism that borders on violence. The state's authority is, in reality, often characterised by strategies that seek to intimidate and to create deterrents by inducing fear. What kind of effects this has on a society in the long term is one of the questions that Rachel Monosov raises.

*The Blind Leader* is formed of four scenes, each of which includes a spatial installation, a performance and an image-text combination. *The Space In-Between* consists of two cactuses that are fixed to the wall so that only a small space separates them. Avoiding injury on the spines of the cactuses calls for a delicate and dangerous balancing act. Any false move can have physical and mental consequences.

The second installation is entitled *Waiting Room*: a fine, flexible wire mesh defines a tight space into which two performers both force themselves. The power that markings exert, even if they do not represent any real boundaries, is something we encounter in various contexts, but we are often confronted by it in waiting areas. They act as invisible, yet mentally highly effective barriers that are secured by the rules of the social consensus. Here Rachel Monosov alludes to the fact that, for many people, waiting has become an existential condition that forces them to remain in a closely confined, strictly regulated space.

The artist creates another scenario with *Finger Print*. The installation is a reference to the latent feeling of criminalisation that having one's fingerprint taken produces. Originally developed to investigate and identify criminals, fingerprints are taken in many other contexts today; for instance, they are a mandatory procedure when entering certain states.



The fourth scene, *Forced*, consists of a fixture on the wall that forces the performer to adopt a particular posture. The metal rods compel them to remain in a rigid, uncomfortable position that requires tension and self-control. Movement is either completely impossible or highly restricted. The work addresses the issue of individual freedom and the question of who is allowed to enjoy it and who is denied it. Rights to freedom are by no means equally distributed around the world, and the pursuit of them is marked by a lack of fraternity. Our origins and our nationality largely determine the degree of individual freedom that we are allowed to assert.

The global situation is dominated by political conflict, humanitarian crises and the migration that they result in. Against this backdrop, the resilience of our liberal and humanitarian values is proving to be fragile. Do various forms of violence and harsh restrictions become socially accepted too quickly? Isn't the price that we pay for a (supposed) sense of security too high if fundamental rights are violated or restricted as a result? Rachel Monosov puts these questions to us by creating specific situations into which we can project ourselves – partly mentally, partly physically. With the work's title, *The Blind Leader*, she highlights the shortcomings of an authoritarian apparatus of power that leads society to run the risk of blindly following rules and accepting injustices without resistance. In some cases, social rules and conventions that have the blessing of religious, political or ideological authorities are handed down from generation to generation, without ever being questioned. Instead of a reawakened social consensus, what we are often experiencing is the consolidation of authoritarian structures and mechanisms.

*(Johanna Adam)*

Rachel Monosov was born in St Petersburg and grew up in Israel. She studied in Jerusalem and Ghent (Belgium), and now lives and works in Berlin.

### **Raphaella Vogel**

#### ***Tränenmeer, 2019***

flatscreen, chromed steel tube, dog hair, polyurethane elastomer, shower chair, speaker, amplifier, video: 19:21 min  
Courtesy De Pont Museum, Tilburg

#### ***Puppenruhe, 2019***

aluminium trusses, chandelier, dolls  
the artist and BQ Berlin

#### ***Untitled, 2019***

polyurethane elastomer, fibreglass, acrylic, synthetic resin, steel  
the artist and BQ Berlin



**Morgenstern, 2011–2019**

Acrylic on canvas, polyurethane elastomer  
from the collection of Anke und Frank Delenschke

**Wizard, 2019**

surf sails  
the artist and BQ Berlin

**Hijab Hund, 2019**

Buntstift, Öl, Lack, Lederleim auf Ziegenleder, Polyester/Oil pencil, oil, varnish,  
leather glue on goat leather, polyester  
the artist and BQ Berlin

**Ambigua, 2018**

Oil, ink, silicon on elk and horse leather

From the collection of Katharina Grosse

**Mummy, 2019**

Oil pencil, oil, ink, silicon, leather glue, iron-on film, earring on elk and goat  
leather

From the collection of Katharina Grosse

Raphaela Vogel combines different, often contradictory media and art genres in a virtuoso manner. Her installations bring together objects and sculptures with videos in which she often appears herself, sings or plays the piano. Painting, collages and assemblages also form part of her work. However, her great strength lies in staging complex dramatic compositions in space in which narratives emerge between media stations with sculptural elements. Surrounded by these often exuberant installations, visitors find themselves in a dream world: all the elements seem to belong together although they do not form a logical or linear storyline.

The physical or visible presence of artists in their own works has played an important role in the visual arts since the 1960s. Female artists in particular have used performance art, videos and photography to liberate the female body from its role as a passive object in art. The contemporary generation of artists has long since accepted this understanding of their own role that conceives it within a pluralism of possibilities, and this can also be felt in Raphaela Vogel's work.

In the video installation *Tränenmeer*, the artist appears in a bright pink dress. The viewer sees her, surrounded by raging waves and foaming surf, as she stands barefoot on a rock playing an accordion. The artist filmed herself using a drone with a 360-degree camera angle; as a result of this, the video seems to inescapably pull the viewer in. The image is overlaid with a haunting soundtrack formed of different layers: a baby's cry, the sounds of a video being cut, the artist's own piano improvisations, a clock ticking and the song *Ich hab keine Angst* (I Am Not Afraid) by the singer Milva. It also quotes the famous "fear of death scene" from Heinrich von Kleist's play *The Prince of Homburg*.

Fear and exclusion dominate the images and sounds. Their multiple layers accentuate rather than diminish their intensity. The virtual, cinematic sphere



becomes merged with the physical sphere of the arranged space and objects. As the first work in the presentation and its centrepiece, *Tränenmeer* sets the atmosphere and the context of the works to which Raphaela Vogel relates it. For the sculpture *Puppenruhe*, she has hung a bundle of dolls from the centre of a truss structure so that they form a cluster of small, lifeless bodies. When the dolls are linked to the sound of a baby crying and to the neighbouring sculpture of an enormous tarantula, a mentally complex assortment of incongruous elements is formed. The motif of the spider is notoriously feared and also always has female connotations. Raphaela Vogel relates her own identity to this with humour and irony by invoking the tarantula.

The dense, multi-layered dramatic composition is open for the audience to interpret for themselves in the context of the space. Its fullness, however, is not based on a horror vacui, but rather on a deliberate artistic intention. Settings that expand into the space create proximity between the visitor and the works. This closeness runs counter to the impulse to distance oneself. The space is occupied completely – physically, acoustically and mentally. A densely woven web of references unfurls like conceptual threads between the works and seems to draw the visitor in closer and closer.

*(Johanna Adam)*

Raphaela Vogel grew up in Nuremberg, where she studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, and later at the Städelschule in Frankfurt.



## Online Publication

### STATE OF THE ARTS Video Installation Performance

Instead of a printed catalogue you will shortly find additional information on the exhibition and its artists at [www.stateofthearts.de/en](http://www.stateofthearts.de/en). The website serves to prepare and follow up your visit, but also works as a guide within the exhibition.

The screenshot shows the website for 'STATE OF THE ARTS' at the 'BUNDESKUNSTHALLE'. The main banner features the dates '16. Juni – 16. August 2020' and the title 'Die Verschmelzung der Künste'. A list of artists is displayed on the left, and a central image shows an art installation with a yellow circle containing the text 'STATE OF THE ARTS' overlaid. The footer includes the 'STATE OF THE ARTS' logo, the text 'gefördert von: Die Bundesagentur für Kultur und Medien', and navigation links for 'Kontakt', 'Datenschutz', 'Instagram', and 'Twitter'.

STATE OF THE ARTS BUNDESKUNSTHALLE //

☼ 16. Juni – 16. August 2020 ☼ Die Verschmelzung der Künste

Begum Erciyas  
Christian Falenes  
David Shrigley  
Dries Verhoeven  
Gisele Gonon  
Hannah Weinberg  
Daniel Lewis  
Laure Prouvoet  
Nora Turato  
Rachel Monosov  
Raphaëla Vogel  
Simnikiwe Buhlungu  
Simon Fujiwara

STATE OF THE ARTS

gefördert von: Die Bundesagentur für Kultur und Medien

Kontakt  
Datenschutz  
Instagram  
Twitter



## Current and upcoming Exhibitions

### **WE CAPITALISTS**

#### **From Zero to Turbo**

Until 30 August 2020

Capitalism is far more than simply an economic system. It is a social order that has shaped our thinking, perception and existence for centuries. Approaching the topic from a cultural and historical perspective, the exhibition examines the fundamental characteristics of Capitalism – rationalisation, individualisation, accumulation, money and investment as well as typically Capitalist dynamics such as unrestricted growth and creative crises. In a way, this ‘DNA of Capitalism’ has long become part of our own DNA. How does Capitalism shape our identity and history, for example in terms of our individuality, sense of time, and attitude to material possessions? Can or must we change it – and do we want to?

With a selection of objects taken from the realms of art, history and everyday popular culture, the exhibition sheds light on a complex subject of great social relevance that touches each and every one of us.

Educational programme in cooperation with the Federal Agency for Civic Education.

### **DOUBLE LIVES**

#### **Visual Artists Making Music**

23 June to 18 October 2020

#### **Media conference: Tuesday, 23 June 2020**

Taking its starting point in the sizable number of important artists who are as dedicated to musicmaking as they are to their visual practice, the exhibition focuses on the presentation of music. Large-screen projections of videos of concert and studio performances conjure a sense of being present at the live event and showcase different approaches to staging performance situations. The exhibition spans the period from the early twentieth century to the present. Beginning with Duchamp and the Futurists, Yves Klein and the Fluxus artists Nam June Paik and Yoko Ono, it moves on to the key figures of the 1960s and 70s such as A. R. Penck, Gerhard Rühm or Hermann Nitsch. The protagonists of Proto-Punk like Captain Beefheart and Alan Vega usher in the numerous artists’ bands of the 1980s that numbered artists like Albert Oehlen or Pipilotti Rist among their members. The stylistically more heterogenous scene since the 1990s is represented by Carsten Nicolai, Emily Sundblad et al.

### **FRAGMENTS FROM NOW FOR AN UNFINISHED FUTURE**

#### **An exhibition of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation**

30 June to 30 August 2020

#### **Media talk: Tuesday, 30 June 2020, 11 a.m.**

The world is in flux: Old classification systems are being turned upside down and appear less reliable. Achievements once considered definitive, for example the creation of an open, peaceful world, are threatened by populist movements and the global threat of climate change and human rights violations. In light of this, it is becoming ever more important to take a stand. Fourteen young



scholarship-holders of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation do just that. With their photographs, video works and installations, they address social questions such as diversity and migration and champion an engagement with the world that conceives of all the arts as an integral part of an overarching social discourse. With Saskia Ackermann, Darío Aguirre, Yevgenia Belorusets, Cihan Cakmak, Soso Dumbadze, Öncü Hrant Gültekin, Raisan Hameed, Carsten Kalaschnikow, Ksenia Kuleshova, Dariia Kuzmych, Sebastian Mühl, Neda Saeedi, Amir Tabatabaei und Vilmos Veress, curated by Beate Eckstein and Annelie Pohlen.

### **MAX KLINGER AND EUROPE**

16 October 2020 to 31 January 2021

Max Klinger (1857–1920) is one of the most controversial artists of the Symbolist movement. In his paintings and sculptures, he turned away from the stale academicism and idealisation that governed figuration at the time and embraced a naturalism that shocked his contemporaries. His novel approach played an important role in the modern conceptualisation of the human figure. Inspired by Wagner's idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, Klinger sought to overcome the division of the creative disciplines and to fuse painting, sculpture, architecture and even music into a single harmonious whole. His monumental Beethoven statue of 1902, widely regarded as the epitome of late romantic veneration of the composer, will go on display in Bonn at the end of the Beethoven anniversary year of 2020. The retrospective marking the 100th anniversary of Klinger's death in 2020 sets out to open the way for the long overdue reassessment of the artist's work.

### **JERUSALEM**

#### **Longing for the Holy City**

11 December 2020 to 5 April 2021

The biblical city of Jerusalem has a history that goes back several thousand years. A melting pot of different cultures and religions, it is marked by symbols and myths. The singularity and complexity of the city rests first and foremost on the shared history of the three Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – and their holy sites. The city's significance as a religious centre, as a site of hope and dreams of salvation, has made it a phenomenon. Few cities have had as many depictions devoted to them – many of them capturing an idealised vision rather than a real place. The exhibition showcases the countless images of Jerusalem in European art and cultural history and examines the multifarious religious and artistic ideas, political dreams and scientific findings that gave rise to them. It presents the splendid relics, reliquaries and souvenirs conquerors and pilgrims alike have been bringing back to Europe ever since the Middle Ages as well as the books and paintings, travelogues and historical models created in Europe by artists, writers and scholars.

Subject to change

As of June 2020