

OUR WAY[S] OF LIFE

15 May - 19 July, 2019
Private view: 14 May, 2019 - 6:30 pm

Featuring: Albin Bergström, Alexandra Wanderer, Ann Muller, Calvin Z. Laing, Catharina Bond, Gašper Kunšič, Julien Segarra, LA GEORGETTA, Lukas Janitsch and Rosie McGinn.

Curated by: Pita Arreola-Burns and Elliott Burns.

Vergangenheitsbewältigung, translated literally as 'overcoming of the past', is a term associated with the atrocities committed during 20th Century Europe. Within the cultural sphere, the phrase has come to describe the process of using literary and visual culture as a way to analyse, remember, process, cope with, learn from and move past the lived horrors of the generation, only so far removed as our own great-grandparents and grandparents. Whilst the term initially denoted that which related specifically to the Holocaust, the term has broadened to include responses to the fallout of both far-right and far-left regimes across Europe.

Displayed within the context of the Austrian Cultural Forum London, it is hard not to consider the exhibition *Our Way[s] of Life* with a yardstick: from Vienna's *fin-de-siècle* heyday, where a frantic and politicised cultural scene arguably positioned Austria as the centre of Europe, through to the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Followed by dictatorship, war, National Socialism and unification with Germany, the formation of an allied-occupied republic, civil war and independence, Austria can be viewed as a distilled metonym for Europe as whole. Now, looking at contemporary Austria and a resurgent far-right populism, the question which raises itself is – how far have we really come?



Our Way[s] of Life presents an opportunity for introspection. Many of the pieces, intimate and familial, invite onlookers into the microcosms—gardens, bedrooms, family stories—of varied European pasts. The viewers are afforded glimpses into often overlooked and complex narratives. In all of the works, the artists look backwards, actively forging their own identities with their cultural history. What sets the artists apart is the lens through which they gaze upon the past – nostalgia, humour, a sense of loss.

Marianne Hirsch describes postmemory as 'the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.' Echoes of Hirsch's *The Generation of Postmemory*, come about in two ways. The tribulations of previous generations are more than prominent in the contemporary European memory of these artists; they permeate their own sense of cultural memory and as viewer, we are positioned to acknowledge the tacit tension between personal and collective memory. However, Hirsch writes primarily about the transmission of memory via object or artefact. What the works in this exhibition reveal is a transference of memory emphatically through process.

Through almost tactile actions such as queering, performance, stitching, preparing food, the artists go further than to memorialise and investigate their heritage. They appear as acts of provocation as well as appropriation. For the viewer, these pieces are starkly haptic, as the artists manipulate the materiality of the past and display it in the present. Despite these memories being, in a way, twice-removed, there is something very physical and pressing about the connection we feel to these pasts, which challenges our perceived lack of agency in framing our histories.

The urgency is not incidental. In confronting and distorting the past, the works demand that we also confront the present. An overt sense of frustration at the current political landscape and its mirroring of past events is detectable in Vienna as well as elsewhere in Europe. The plurality indicated by the exhibition title does more than to label the collection of works; it hints with an equal mixture of hope and ominousness of potentialities – it is a call to action – how do we overcome the future?

- Marc James Gough

Austrian Cultural Forum London
28 Rutland Gate, Knightsbridge. London. SW7 1PQ
www.acflondon.org

austrian cultural forum^{lon}

ual: central
saint martins
MA Culture, Criticism and Curation

] a [academy of fine arts vienna

Event 01_ Settlement Hierarchy

Featuring: Calvin Z. Laing,
Daniela Grabosch and Martin Krenn

27 June, 2019 - 7:00 pm

Austrian Cultural Forum London
28 Rutland Gate
London. SW7 1PQ

Low density settlements are central to European national identities, from the English hamlet with thatched roofs and WI meetings, to Austrian alpine villages, nestled in the mountains. They represent ways of life which for the most part no longer exist, retreats into the past which become romanticised with time and modern sewage management. The artists featured in Settlement Hierarchy explore varied aspects of quaint history: from Daniela Grabosch's dark Google Maps journey through Mussolini's lakeside seat

of governance, Salò, now a popular tourist destination, to Martin Krenn's archival exploration of Austria's heart via the Open-Air Museum Stübing, a settlement of 97 historic rural buildings from different federal states, and a performance by Calvin Z. Laing, touching upon Scottish linguistics and his youth, growing up in suburbs of Edinburgh. Collectively these artists reflect upon our propensity to both memorialise the village and to carry an idealised version of it forward into our cultural subconscious.

Event 02_ We Remember

Online exhibition

14 May - 19 July, 2019

Off Site Project
www.offsiteproject.org

Existing in a parallel online state, *We Remember*, functions to compliment the artistic, political and personal investigations present within *Our Way[s] of Life*. Much as political activism on the ground, in the street, is mirrored by social media campaigning, this digital display suggests the increasingly proximate duality of the IRL and URL sides of arts practices. *We Remember* draws upon numerous references points, building a textural mix of digital materiality, from JPEGs and PNGs, to YouTube tutorials and music videos, texts and

3D models, Google Map locations and Image Search results. Navigable and interactive, it runs for the exact duration of the exhibition at the Austrian Cultural Forum London, featuring contributions from and allusions to the participant artists.

Albin Bergström [Sweden] studies Object Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, his practice explores notions of male identity, from explorations of archetypal protagonists in the western film canon to altered suits and the adoption of craft mediums such as sewing and weaving. He is the co-curator of Roundup, an annual exhibition established in 2017 which invites artists to participate in a one day exhibition in Bergström's family garden in Gothenburg.

Alexandra Wanderer [Romania] is a photographer, performance artist and filmmaker studying Art and Digital Media at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Her work expresses an interests in flora and its cultural connotations. Recent exhibitions and performances included: *Tired Eyes*, Shrinking Cinema, Blickle Kino, Belvedere 21 (2018); *To be in but not of*, University Library of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2018); and *Ohne Titel (Sommerausgabe)*, Fotogalerie Wien, Vienna (2016). She is a member of the queer-feminist choir Mala Sirena.

Ann Muller [Luxemburg] is a graduate from Object Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, with a background in BA Fashion from the University of Art and Design Linz. Her practice plays upon classical tailoring techniques, modifying, inverting and negating pre-given textile characteristics. Solo and group exhibitions include: *Codemania*, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna (2019); *Bar du Bois*, Galerie der Stadt Schwaz, Schwaz (2016); *Monpti*, Aquarium Kurzbaugasse, Vienna (2016), *Off the Coast of Me*, Neustiftgasse, Vienna (2016); and *YBSS.4.3.*, Ybbsstrasse, Vienna (2014). She is currently a member of XACTO, an artist group working with art, food and performativity, and between 2012 to 2016 was a member of the arts collective Bar Du Bois responsible for creating hybrid art bar installations.

Calvin Z. Laing [Scotland] is a performance artist addressing the effects of contemporary society upon the individual. Through performance and interaction in public spaces, everyday and often banal situations are used to draw attention to the anxieties and complexities that arise through learned social structures. He has exhibited solo shows: *Calvin & Ancient Times*, A-DASH, Athens (2018); and *Calvin & Drylaw*, Collective, Edinburgh (2013). Group shows, performances and screenings include: *HERE*, Rhubaba, Edinburgh (2018); *Calvin & Tiredness*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2018); *Folly*, David Dale Gallery, Glasgow (2017); *Looking Back Looking Forward*, Turf Projects, London (2017); *Citizen*, Chisenhale Dance Space, London (2016); *An Evening with Calvin & Steph*, Hotel Elephant, London (2016); *Calvin & Carmel*, LUX Moving Image, London (2015); and *Linking, Linking Arms*, Pig Rock Bothy Project Space, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh (2015). His work is held in the public collections of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the Royal Scottish Academy.

Catharina Bond [Austria] creates subversive sculptures which challenge socially determined norms and hierarchies, through modification she questions familiar and histori-

cally evolved frameworks. Solo exhibitions include: *Let me Play among the stars*, Gallery Reinthaler, Vienna (2018); *Kann dieser Leberkäse*, Red Carpet Showroom, Vienna (2016); and *Achtung die Furnier!*, Gallery Reinthaler, Vienna (2015). Her work has featured in group shows: *Before the beginning and After the End*, Hi Gordon, Vienna (2018); *Reload!*, Museum Kunst der Westküste, Föhr (2017); and *Gemischte Gefühle*, Landesgalerie, Linz (2016). Her curatorial work includes: *Adjacent Realities*, Austrian Cultural Forum, London (2015); and *LONDON | VIENNA | CALLING*, Semperdepot, Vienna (2014) and Mile End Art Pavilion, London (2013). She is currently studying MA Sculpture at the Royal College of Arts, London.

Daniela Grabosch [Germany] is a Vienna based artist whose performative practice migrates back and forth between digital and physical mediums. She holds an MFA in Performative Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and a BFA in Fine Arts and Digital Media from Hochschule Düsseldorf. Recent exhibitions include: *Hydrobutter*, Gomo, Vienna (2019); *Vie X Mrs*, South Way Studio, Marseille (2018); *Saló*, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg (2017); *Voyage #01*, Rua Dom Pedro V, Lisbon (2016); *Objective. The Artist Is Absent*, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna (2016); *Imagetanz*, Brut, Vienna (2015); *Super Looper*, Chambre D'Amis, Vienna (2014); *Post-Porn and Body Politix*, VBKÖ, Vienna (2012); and *In 3*, 3rd International Scenographers Performance Festival, Basel (2010). Grabosch is a 2015 recipient of the *Birgit Jürgenssen Preis* given by the Arts and Culture Division of the Federal Chancellery of Austria, the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Galerie Hubert Winter. She is the co-founder of the curatorial project YYYYMMDD and since 2019 a member of Austrian Association of Women Artists (VBKÖ).

Gašper Kunšič [Slovenia] employs the symbolic heritage of his country through textile painting, sculpture, installation and digital graphics. He is a student of Object Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and Media Art at University of Applied Arts Vienna, with a background in painting at Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Ljubljana. Solo shows include *Enthusiastic Gaze*, Kino Šiška, Ljubljana (2018); *Moment of Uncertainty*, Dobra Vaga, Ljubljana (2017); and *Pavilion of Hope*, WhiteDwarf Projects, Vienna (2017). He has featured in group shows including: *Focus sur la Jeune Création*, Atelier Vis-à-Vis, Marseille (2018); *Tomorrow is cancelled*, Krinzinger Projekte, Vienna (2018); and *Jozė*, Plečnik House, Ljubljana (2017). He is a recipient of a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture, Republic of Slovenia.

Julien Segarra [France] is a student of Conceptual Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, working across photography and audio his practice actively questions the space of the banal, confronting personal and collective memories. Exhibitions include: *Höhenrausch - Das andere Ufer*, OK Offenes Kulturhaus, Linz (2018); *Flüchtige Blicke*, Iran, Kaeshmaesh, Vienna (2017); and *Monde Vaste Monde*, Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris (2013). He is co-founder of the curatorial platform anele RAGES, which works at the

intersection of art and politics, upcoming and past projects include: *Where did your neighbour go?*, Vienna, Palermo and Athens (2019); and *Beyond one's own territory*, Raumschiff, Linz (2017).

LA GEORGETTA [Romania] is a mixed media performance artist, poetesse and DJ who plays with gender, clichés, prejudices, religion, politics and convention. Recent exhibitions and performances include: *pollesch wäre das nicht passiert*, der Anno Literatur Sonntag, Café Anno, Vienna (2018); *get not high get not low (the fear)*, Rundgang, Academy of Fine Art Vienna, Vienna (2018); *JukeWortBox*, Grazer Autorinnen Autorenversammlung, New Bar, Vienna (2017); *RO_ A roadshow*, Donnerstags in der Bibliothek, University Library of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna (2017); *secrets*, Pink Panic Room, Rhiz, Vienna (2017); and *schachmatt (oder: nur die lippe zählt)*, Queer Revolutionaries...?, Startgalerie, MUSA, Vienna (2017). Under the same stage name, she has also performed as a DJane in Austria, Germany, Italy and Romania.

Lukas Janitsch [Austria] is a Vienna based artist whose practice emanates from a biological fundament. Solo exhibitions include: *OCEC*, Landesgalerie Burgenland, Eisenstadt (2019); *Das ahnt keiner*, unttd contemporary, Vienna (2016); Caspar David Friedrich Galerie, Greifswald (2015); and *syn-anthrop*, unttd contemporary, Vienna (2014). He has featured in group shows: *Only Human*, Austrian Cultural Forum, London (2017); *past perfect simple*, 2025, Hamburg (2016); *Contemporary Carpet Couture*, Parallel Vienna, Vienna (2016); *sphere*, Mohsen Gallery, Teheran (2015); and *Willkommen im Paradies*, Landesgalerie Burgenland, Eisenstadt (2015). He was a 2015 recipient of the *Caspar David Friedrich Prize*. He is represented by unttd contemporary in Vienna.

Martin Krenn [Austria] is an artist, researcher and curator who examines sociopolitical topics through photography, video, web-based tools and public projects. He teaches at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, was awarded a PhD by Ulster University in 2016. Recent solo exhibitions and public projects include: *The Real Glory and Other Stories*, 1335Mabini, Manila (2018); *Point of Leisure*, We are the Market, Onomatopoe, Eindhoven (2017); *Mahnmal Friedenskreuz St. Lorenz*, Kunst im öffentlichen Raum Niederösterreich, St. Lorenz (2016); *Die ganze Welt in Zürich*, Shedhalle, Zürich (2016); *Gedenktafel Hotel Metropole*, Into the City / Wiener Festwochen, Vienna (2015); *...truth should be honored*, 1335Mabini, Manila (2014); *World's End*, Galerie Zimmermann Kratochwill, Graz and EGFK & OKK|Raum, Berlin (2013); and *Memory in (Post-)Totalitarianism*, Galerie Zimmermann Kratochwill, Graz (2011). From 2006 to 2009 he served as chairperson of the Austrian Artists Association and he is a member of IG Bildende Kunst. He is represented by Galerie Zimmermann Kratochwill in Gratz.

Rosie McGinn [England] is a London based artist who unpicks fleeting moments of euphoria and despair, with recent works gravitating towards sport and leisure. Her solo shows include: *3 for 1*, Picnic Gallery, London (2018); *Window Project*, Gazelli Art House, London (2017); and *Boxing Stare Downs*, AVD, online (2017); as well as group exhibitions: *Young Gods*, Charlie Smith Gallery, London (2019); *Rebel Souls*, Data Editions, MIRA Art Rio, Rio de Janeiro (2018); and *Same, Same but Different*, The Lightbox Gallery, Leicester (2017). She was a 2018 recipient of *The Gilbert Bayes Award* from The Royal Society of Sculptors.