

## ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE 2022

### Hungary / Croatia / Vienna / Sri Lanka

Opening: 10<sup>th</sup> of March, 2023 at 7 PM at Krinzinger Schottenfeld (Schottenfeldgasse 45, 1070).

Exhibition duration: 11<sup>th</sup> of March – 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2023

Opening hours: Tue-Fri 12 - 6pm & Sa 11-2 pm

#### Artists:

Đanino Božić (Croatia), Igor Grubić (Croatia), Tina Gverović (Croatia), Radhika Khimji (Oman), Ulrike Lienbacher (Austria), Christian Rothwangl (Austria), Felix Schellhorn (Austria), Erik Schmidt (Germany), Dominika Trapp (Hungary), Marcelo Viquez (Spain).

On March 10th, 2023, KRINZINGER SCHOTTENFELD opens the exhibition "ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE 2022" – a group exhibition of 10 national and international, emerging and already renowned contemporary artists. The exhibiting artists participated in the Krinzinger residency program in Petőmihályfa (Hungary), Kuberton (Croatia), Sri Lanka and in Vienna (Austria), in 2022 on the invitation of Dr. Ursula Krinzinger. The exhibited works were created in the course of the respective stays of the participating artists and reflect the different local conditions – ecological, social, cultural or political – coupled with the personal experiences of the artists and their influence on individual creative processes. KRINZINGER SCHOTTENFELD (formerly known as Krinzinger Projekte) was founded in 2002 as a project space and extension of the Galerie Krinzinger. Since then, the space has been realizing a very successful international program consisting primarily of thematic group exhibitions displaying fresh artistic positions. The artist-in-residence program is intended to offer national and international artists the opportunity to expand their networks and to produce and collect new impressions outside their usual working environment. Previous participants of the program have, meanwhile, become very successful representatives of important positions in the international art scene.

#### Danino Božić

(\*1961 in Pula, Croatia), studied sculpture at the Faculty of Pedagogy (today University of Applied Arts) in Rijeka. Since 1984, he has continuously exhibited on an annual basis. His work includes painting and sculpture, as well as drawing, artist's books and installations. Đanino Božić lives and works in Novigrad (Istria, Croatia). Božić has been present on the art scene for more than forty years, in Croatia as well as in (Central) Europe. All this time Božić creates, exhibits and follows with curiosity developments in the world of art, thus opening up new chapters and areas of research, of formal structures and their elaborations. Reorienting his artistic practice to free-choice research of problematic themes and their elaborations, Božić focuses on the "aesthetic state" subject to the regularities of relationships, proportions and arrangements, which he applies to the repertoire of particular "sets". What distinguishes those sets is that we ultimately describe them as order, playfulness, and randomness. Using the reversible strategy of correlation, difference and opposites, what Božić is about is a shift that is no longer a mere iconography of materials and themes, a mere assembling of parts, but rather a simultaneous and multi-dimensional connecting of actions that involve reflection on the artist's status and on possible relationships of his works with space, time and the viewer.

#### Archived Works

The village of Kuberton is about thirty kilometres from the city where I live. Close and far in the same time. Because in that isolated village with a few abandoned and dilapidated houses surrounded by forests, it is as if time stands still. There are two of us in residence. My colleague Igor Grubić, exploring Istria most of the time, and me, spending all my time in the studio. And in the garden. In fact, the garden was the trigger, the stimulus for the works I was going to make. Me and the garden, sounds and smells, I felt like a hermit. I abandoned myself to instinct. I painted 24 m<sup>2</sup> of paper with six thematic landscape experiences. The next step was "rationalisation", i.e. concentration. With the help of a scalpel, I cut the painted surfaces on the table into narrow strips, which I then densely stacked, laterally, into six handmade boxes. Thus, I compressed each painting of 4 m<sup>2</sup> into a volume of 19x19x2 cm.

That's how I archived the paintings. Why? Because of the fact that about 90% of artwork ends up in a depot, archive, often in a basement. Some of them never see the light of day. I shorten that process.

The second set created at the residence is *Rubbish Off my Desk, Rubbish Off my Floor*. By the way, I have been applying this procedure for years, wherever I work. At the end of my working day I collect the leftovers from the desk and the floor. Pieces of various patterns, papers, colour pencil shavings, fibres, hair, dried paint, etc. I carefully pack them into plastic foil wrap and duly date them. These are the archived pages of my work diary.

The third set is *Menu From Kuberton*. Those are collages created by combining rubbish from my desk and photos of dishes I found in old magazines. Namely, in addition to artistic production, I also engaged in culinary experiments. Again, minimalistic and ascetic. Without waste.

## Igor Grubić

(\*1969 in Zagreb, Croatia) lives and works in Zagreb, Croatia. Igor Grubić has been active as a multimedia artist in Zagreb since the early 1990s, making photography, film, and site-specific actions. His interventions into public space, along with films, explore past and present political situations while cutting through the fabric of reality. Grubić's critical, socio-politically committed practice is characterised by long-term engagement and investment in the subjects he chooses to work with. From the in-depth exploration of the fate of historical monuments and the demise of industry, to examination of the predicament of minority communities, his projects unfold over several years of research and grassroots, personal relationships. Though grounded in the documentary tradition, Grubić's work in photography and film is characterized by an affective and empathic approach, which is deeply humane and often poetic.

"We live in a patriarchal, conservative and traditional environment, a kind of forerunner of Europe, where Catholic dogmatism is still quite strong, and this affects all aspects of everyday and political life. This situation conditions the attitude towards minorities: national, religious, sexual. The discriminatory attitude that has prevailed for centuries cannot be changed overnight, and that is why long-term work is needed. Small contemplative actions, which I carried out as gestures of resistance to the dominant opinion and narration, caused conflicting reactions and started small discussions.

Realized during the course of two and a half years, in the style of artistic activism through little protest/spiritual interventions in the public space, I was faced with different sculptural and visual interpretations of the image of Jesus on the crucifix and came to the conclusion that due to the ambiguity of the physiognomy that would universally represent him, all these different figures and sculptures talk about a multitude of different persons who are embodied through his figure.

A multitude of different crucified characters seem to represent each of us.

Everyone who fights and who is ready to devote himself and even sacrifice his life for his beliefs, for the betterment of the community and the general good of humanity, symbolically embodies the idea and image of that spiritual teacher.

In the project *In theory and practice* (call him by his names), the multitude of diverse characters (anti-fascist, abolitionist, socialist, syndicalist, feminist, suprematist, situationist, utopist, pacifist...) encourages freedom of speech and tolerance towards differences and the need to expand the boundaries of love, and points to the ones of those who remained consistent and persisted in that line of struggle for a fairer, more responsible, more solidary, more spiritual and happier society."

(Igor Grubić)

His work has been exhibited in various international institutions among which: Tirana Biennial 2 (2003); Manifesta 4 (Frankfurt, 2002); Manifesta 9 (Genk, 2012); 50th October Salon (Belgrade, 2009); Gender Check, MuMOK (Vienna, 2009); 11th Istanbul Biennial (2009); 4th Fotofestival Mannheim Ludwigshafen, Heidelberg (2011); East Side Stories, Palais de Tokyo (Paris, 2012); Gwangju Biennale (2014); Zero Tolerance, MOMA PS1 (New York 2014); Degrees of Freedom, MAMbo (Bologna, 2015); 5th Thessaloniki Biennial (2015); Cut / Rez, MSU (Zagreb, 2018); Heavenly creatures, MG+MSUM (Ljubljana, 2018); The Value of Freedom, Belvedere 21 (Vienna, 2018); 58th Venice Biennale (2019); Yerevan Biennial – The Time Complex (2020); Bigger than myself, MAXXI (Roma, 2021).

## **Tina Gverović**

(\*1975 in Zagreb, Croatia – lives and works in Dubrovnik and London). Tina Gverović works with installation, drawing, painting, sound, text, and video. Her work – often in the form of immersive, disorientating installations explores the economy and history of materials. One of the key questions in her work is where lies the potential of the political vision and re-invention. She finished MA at Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht, and holds a doctorate from Middlesex University in London. She represented Croatia at the 57th Venice Biennial. Her work was recently shown as part of the Folkestone Triennial in UK, Corner Washington DC- USA, WKV Stuttgart, Museum of Arts and Crafts Hamburg, Trigon – Post Environment in Künstlerhaus – Halle für Kunst & Medien Graz in Austria, Suzhou Documents Biennial in China, Tate Modern and Tate Britain in London, and Busan Biennial in South Korea. Her public art commission, conceived in collaboration with Ben Cain, was recently installed at the University of Reading Campus. She held teaching posts at Slade School of Arts, Dutch Art Institute Roaming Academy, and WHW Academy in Zagreb. She is Course Leader for Sculpture at Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts, London.

Tina Gverović works with installation, drawing, painting, sound, text, and video. Her work – often in the form of immersive, disorientating installations considers affective relationships between people, places and materials, with a particular focus on ungrounded subjectivities. Gverović explores processes and accumulations, history and materiality, bodies-in-transit as moving masses or geopolitical entities, bodies that affect and bodies that are affected. Some of the works are conceived on a small scale as drawings, paintings and collages, but often aspects of these works are realized as large objects and environments which refer to the impact and influence of forces beyond our control. The work focuses on the relationships between objects, groups of people, borders and migrating bodies – these being subjects, motifs and physical elements that constitute the work. The care for these bodies being essential in the work. These issues are thought through the balancing and staging of various elements within the work, overlapping, displacing, and particularly through modes of display. One of the key questions in her work is where lies the potential for political vision, especially when linked to reverie and poetics.

Installation in the show: The work is concerned with ramifications of understanding the human body and its relation to migration. The work is formed of a number of layers (prints, drawings and paintings) mimicking geological strata. The methods employed (seemingly temporary or unstable positions, the fragility of drawn/printed elements ‘floating’ on fabric) explore migration as a metaphor, a thematic element and an artistic strategy for displacement. The bodies or figures are easily understood in terms of experiences of bodies, or rather people that are moved by geopolitics and human relations sickened by discrimination, but also by notions of located-ness in terms of earth, ground, air, water rather than cultural identity. Feeling apart of a place, a group, or a material and feeling apart from those things. Bodies oscillating incessantly and imperceptibly between on the one hand being objects and victims of political and natural conditions, and on the other being buoyed by or liberated from those.

Text: Tina Gverović.

## **Radhika Khimji**

(\*1979 in the Sultanate of Oman), lives and works in Muscat and London (Oman and UK).

From 1998-2002, Radhika Khimji studied at the Slade School of Fine Art and from 2002-2005 at the Royal Academy of Art, where she completed her studies with a Fine Art Post Graduate Diploma. In 2007, she graduated from UCL with a Master's Degree in Art History. After her Residency and a solo exhibition at Krinzing Schottenfeld in 2017 and 2018, Radhika Khimji's works were shown at a solo exhibition at Galerie Krinzing in 2019 and 2022. She has had solo and group exhibitions in various art institutions across the globe. Her works were shown at the Summer Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, London. Radhika Khimji is one of five artists exhibiting at the first Omani Pavillion at the 59th Venice Biennial until November 27, 2022.

Radhika Khimji playfully employs methods of construction on the surface of an image, intentionally destabilizing the relationship between figure and ground to reassemble a fragmented body and make it

abstract. Terms are set in flux, placing painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture up against each other to allow for a place between many polarities to emerge. Khimji has developed a collaged way of working informed by the physicality and materiality of the making process to deconstruct, evade and erase constructions of formulated identities. She borrows from surrealistic language to shift cultural stereotypes and make visible a body screened by certain censorship. According to the artist's statement, Radhika Khimji's works are 'at once a painting, a drawing and a collage' as well as 'embroidery and sculpture'.

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### **Ulrike Lienbacher**

(\*1963 in Oberndorf, Austria) lives and works in Salzburg and Vienna (Austria). Ulrike Lienbacher studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, a class for sculpture. Her works have been shown in numerous exhibitions in various art institutions, such as: Albertina, Vienna, Austria, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria, MAK - Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, Austria, Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, Austria, Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, Austria, Austrian Cultural Forum, New York, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria, MARTA Herford, Germany, Musée d'art moderne d'art moderne et contemporain, St .Étienne, France, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland, MOCAK - Museum of Contemporary Art , Krakow, Poland. She has also realised several projects in public space.

“During my time in Kuberton in September 2022, the garden became my extended living space - the outdoor space, the fenced garden in turn forming its own interior space in the vast sparsely inhabited surrounding landscape. I have always been interested in my work in the civilizing principles of culturalization as the containment and mastery of unbridled "natural" impulses. The garden as a kind of "coiffed", tamed nature requires constant controlling action against the literal wild growth, the proliferation, the sprawl. In the seclusion and silence, I have become increasingly interested in observing nature - the excessive Mediterranean vegetation but also the animals around. On nocturnal walks in the garden - adventurous voyages of discovery - I systematically surveyed the sometimes eerie space with my camera and brought home the garden's wealth of forms in many black and white images, highlighted by flash against the dark background, objectified but also abstracted. The nocturnal black of the garden space became the site of an exposed existential experience. A group of drawings takes up the rampant vegetation, sometimes strange and uncanny, the endless tangle of lines.”

U. L., Autumn 2022

### **Christian Rothwangl**

(\* 1993, Bruck an der Mur, Austria) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna with Professor Gunther Damisch and Christian Schwarzwald at the Slade School of Fine Art London, as well as the HFBK Hamburg with Jutta Koether, in behalf of the ASA stipend. The artist lives and works in Vienna, Austria.

Rothwangl's new series of works begun during the residency in Petömyhályfa (HU), shows large-format canvas paintings and a collection of drawings that deal with themes from queer culture and human relationships by deconstructing common orders. The drawings, created on the basis of instinctive gestures, demonstrate the starting point of the artist's work. He partially uses them as a study for painting on canvas, at the same time they represent an independent group of works that continues narrative strands begun, some of which correspond with the large formats. Individual motifs that oscillate between figuration and abstraction are taken up and further processed on the canvases.

In doing so, the artist extracts from a pool of recurring, ambiguous forms as well as live models, which inspire various associations but elude clear classification.

Some of the protagonists of the works shown in the exhibition are figures that appear to be mythical creatures, whose interaction suggests narrative subjects. A recurring motif is that of bodies interacting with each other, with the head of a horse instead of a human head. At the sight of these figures, which seem to have sprung from a fantasy world, the boundaries between reality and mysticism, between truth and illusion, become blurred. Through his works, the artist creates a mystical unreality that raises questions, provokes assumptions and stimulates the viewer to spin various narratives.

Another focus lies on the exuberant colour information, which assumes increasing importance in the artist's works. Like the recurring forms, some of which are reminiscent of ornamentation, flowing veils and bands of colour deconstruct spatial regularities and blur foreground, middle ground and background. The application of paint is characterised by a permeability that has established itself as the artist's personal signature and which he achieves by means of a specially developed technical refinement. The works are created through a process of constant overpainting and washing out of wet paint, which achieves the aforementioned permeability of the colours. The processual nature of the works is made clear, among other things, by seemingly unfinished elements, which allow for an open reading of the works and invite the viewer to make a variety of different thought connections.

Text by Claire Deuticke

Rothwangl's selected exhibitions include: Fallen forms, Groupshow, Essinger Haus, Mödling (2022), Residency Galerie Krinzinger, Petömyhályfa, HU (2022), When painting kicks in, Groupshow, Galerie Suppan, Vienna (2022), Stable friends, Vienna Art Week, Groupshow, Vienna (2021), Donkey balancing on a Tennis Ball, Solo show, WAF Gallery Vienna (2021), Nodepressionroom loves Vienna, Groupshow, Munic (2020) Rausprojekt Vol. 2, Groupshow, Hamburg (2020), satellite II at Hochhaus Herrengasse, Groupshow with Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna (2020), ASA Open Studios, Hfbk Hamburg (2019), Parallel Vienna, Karin Ferrari & Christian Rothwangl with Galerie Juenger (2019), Über das Neue/ On the New, Junge Szenen in Wien / Young Scenes in Vienna, Belvedere 21 Vienna (2019).

### **Felix Schellhorn**

(\*1993, Schwarzach in Pongau, Austria) lives and works in Vienna, Austria. Studies at the Universität für Angewandte Kunst with Professor Brigitte Kowanz and Jakob Lena Knebl in the Transmedia Arts department.

Arriving in the dark.

I don't have a clue how it looks outside of the house.

My motorbike is parked in the other house.

It will be sleeping alone tonight.

So am I.

I just cooked everything edible I could find.

Potatoes with salt and apples from the tree.

I enjoy being alone.

A hornet is in my room.

The queen just passed away while I was sitting on my bike.

On my way to this place.

What Am I doing here?

Thinking about things.

Being with myself.

Writing.

Eating.

Drinking.

Reading.

Drawing.

Meditating.

Text: Felix Schellhorn.

### **Erik Schmidt**

(\*1968 in Herford, Germany) lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Erik Schmidt participated in group and solo exhibitions at institutions such as Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Artists Space, New York; MARTa Herford, Herford; Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Matsumoto City Museum of Art, Matsumoto; Museum der Moderne, Salzburg; and the Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid.

The drawings take us on a six-week trip the artist made last spring to Sri Lanka, across the villages surrounding Colombo, the capital city where mass protests began in March 2022 and spread all over the country. Protests of people who – thirteen years after the end of a long civil war – are still recovering and are now struggling with economic crisis, including power cuts and shortages of basics such as fuel, food and medicines.

In a drawing series based on pictures taken while wandering the streets, Schmidt individuates characters from the flow of people, absorbed in their life rhythms or activities, and portrays them on the pages of newspapers from which he received daily national news updates. The result is an extremely expressive juxtaposition of thick brushstrokes that offers a genuine insight into the local community, also displaying the “political ground” of it, despite the limited colour range and the area’s high humidity levels. Some portraits, instead, are later developed in his studio, using the peculiar technique of overpainting on printed canvas, and manifest his dynamic optical filtering of the world.

Text: Silvio Saraceno

Selection of solo and group exhibitions: Blancs de Blancs, Villa Schöningen, Potsdam (DE), 2022; Drei Farben Blau Weiss Rot, Walter Storms Galerie, Munich (DE), 2022; Follow George Grosz, Kunstsammlung Jena, Jena (DE), 2022; Retreat, Kunstraum Potsdam, Potsdam (DE), 2022; Revisiting, Galerie Claire Gastaud, Paris and Clermont Ferrand (FR), 2022; Schnee fällt hinterm Berge, Avlskarl Gallery, Copenhagen (DK), 2022; Ain’t no Mountain High Enough, Ze Tux Gallery, Tux, Tirol (AUS), 2021; Berliner Symmetrie, Davide Paludetto Gallery, Torino (IT), 2021; ongoing schmidt pick, Galerie carlier I gebauer, Berlin (DE), 2021; Sehnsucht und Fall, Videos aus der Sammlung Wemhöner, Kunstsaele, Berlin (DE), 2020; Fast Undurchsichtig. Bilder von Erik Schmidt in der Sammlung Glampe, Berlin (DE), 2019; Folge den Markierungen, Herz und Diabeteszentrum NRW, Bad Oeynhausen (DE), 2019; From Hand To Mind, Galerie carlier I gebauer, Madrid (ES), 2019; Globe as a Palette – Contemporary Art from the Taguchi Art Collection, Hokkaido Obihiro Museum of Art, Kushiro Art Museum, Hakodate Museum of Art, Sapporo Art Museum, Hokkaido (JP), 2019; Passion – Bilder von der Jagd, Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur (CH), 2019; The Only Way Is Up, Galerie carlier I gebauer, Berlin (DE), 2019; 10 years Videoart at Midnight, Babylon Berlin, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin (DE), 2019 and many others.

### **Dominika Trapp**

(\*1988 in Budapest, Hungary) lives and works in Budapest, Hungary. Dominika Trapp graduated from the painting department of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in 2012. Her practice has been characterized by a two-way interest: on the one hand, a sensitive painterly approach that allows for intuition and introspection; and, on the other hand, an outward-directed sensitivity that facilitates dialogues between communities in the service of collective self-knowledge. Her works often address topics such as the relationship between tradition and contemporary culture, women’s fate in traditional Hungarian peasant communities, the historical context of eating disorders, or painting as a possible somatic method for artistic research. More recently, she has participated in the residency programs of Art in General in New York, the Erste Stiftung in Vienna, and FUTURA in Prague. In 2020, her solo exhibitions were presented at Trafó Gallery in Budapest and at Karlin Studios in Prague. In 2021, she took part in the 14th Baltic Biennale in Vilnius. She is currently a multimedia art fellow at the Doctoral School of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design.

## Unio Plastica Series

“The clip motif reflects on the union of the organic and the inorganic by borrowing the religious concept of unio mystica [the merging of the individual consciousness, cognitively or affectively, with a superior, or supreme consciousness]. I explore the layers of meaning and the genealogy of the claw clip as a symbol in my own practice by using intuitive painting as a research method. [...] Following the French philosopher, mystic, and political activist Simone Weil’s path, I gave voice to my somatic intelligence, my gut feeling, by way of painting – conveying a specific message developed by both my mind and my body. In this way I aim to explore my authentic relationship to feminism, and seek the answer for the question: What is artistic intuition and creativity, or more explicitly: how does the experimental practice of somatic intelligence emancipate creative and responsible will-power and freedom?”

Text: Dominika Trapp

### **Marcelo Viquez**

(\* 1971 in Montevideo, Uruguay) lives and works in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. Marcelo Viquez is a multidisciplinary artist who works in a variety of media, including drawing, sculpture, installation, painting, video, photography and music. Born in 1971 in Montevideo, Uruguay, Viquez studied fine arts in his hometown and later in Cuenca, Spain, before attending graphic design classes in Mallorca, where he has been living for more than two decades.

A fine observer of human nature, Viquez creates a protean oeuvre based on his own life – not without irony – from his emigration to Spain to the most mundane encounters. His works are shaped by his hopes, chances and unsatisfied needs, mirroring society through the lens of his idiosyncratic experience. Boldness is symptomatic of Viquez’ aesthetics, genuinely reflecting his musical practice as drummer in the punk rock band Prenatal. His visual work plays a personal game that develops from the most delicate drawings on paper to large-scale installations.

A saw made of rubber, a fire hose studded with nails, a wooden pallet turned into a gate, the roof of a taxi, Viquez finds inspiration in everyday objects that he turns into extraordinary sculptures, mockingly questioning their purpose. Playing on the concept of scale, juxtaposing antagonistic materials and decontextualising them, the artist thrives on oxymorons that often become a key to otherwise cryptic pieces. His paintings and drawings are articulated around written words that alert the viewer rather than being simple titles, bestowing a deeper layer of meaning upon the figurative compositions.

Viquez has had solo exhibitions at Museu de Mallorca, Spain (2022); CCA Andratx, Spain (2021); Taller Los Guayabos, Guadalajara, Mexico (2019); Museu de Porreres, Spain (2019); NR Projects, Berlin, Germany (2015); Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Spain (2014); and participated in the seminal exhibition ‘Socle du Monde: Biennale between Cultures’ at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Herring, Denmark, in 2010. His work is included in several institutional collections, such as Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Colección Olor Visual – Fundación Ernesto Ventós, Barcelona, Colección Tomás Ruiz – MAKMA, Valencia, Fundación Barceló, Palma, Ajuntament de Palma and By Art Matters, Hangzhou, China, amongst others. Awarded the Francisco Bernareggi Visual Arts Award (2017) and the Mallorca International Art Award (2022). And will be part of a grupo exhibition at TOR Art Space in Frankfurt, Germany, opening in April 2023.

Residencies : CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain; Programa de residencias, Taller Los Guayabos, Guadalajara, Mexico; Krinzinger, Croatia.

*Freedom to be consistent.*

The project with which Marcelo Viquez arrived at Krinzinger’s artistic residency in Kuberton in September 2022 is relatively simple to describe, and somewhat more intricate to accept in its terrible cryptic sense. Its title is "Freedom to Be Constant," and in it one can already begin to glimpse the reference to Kafkaesque doom, to the Sisyphian curse of man's breathing, walking forward, and belief in his possibilities for autonomous action. Nothing could be further from what cruel reality dictates -

Descartes was a visionary, yes, but given the advances in the determination of the determinism that coerces the world, he must be considered today in the same rank in which we place the inhabitants of the Paleolithic caves-. Freedom is a cushion on which rests the bad conscience of the animal wounded by the routine of instincts and primal needs that, at bottom, and on the surface, is every living being on Earth.

The image that constitutes the leitmotiv of the project is materialized in the bust of a donkey on which hangs a string that holds, before the obtuse sight of the animal, a carrot. The obviousness of all these elements and their conjunction make any explanation unnecessary. What the project proposes as a charge of depth has to do with other resources characteristic of contemporary art and postmodernity: the allusion to the famous theme of the reproducibility of the work of art, and also, associated with it, to the issue of appropriationism and, consequently, to the use of already existing images as elements of new works, which in another context acquire new meanings.

One hundred and twenty drawings executed in an individualized but exactly equal manner make up a sequence that is neither innocuous nor innocent, especially considering its content. Life is a primary pursuit of an insurmountable satisfaction or need, and the freedom that one apparently enjoys is channeled in that daily repetition, almost infinite, of the same acts, thoughts and obsessions. Surely the donkey would be truly free if the carrot did not exist, but then, what would it live for? Would it be able to generate any memorable act from that hypothetical uncarroted freedom?

The fact that these one hundred and twenty drawings are not one hundred and nineteen copies of one original, but one hundred and twenty originals presumably the same, is of capital importance in the project's thesis. It reaffirms the insubstantial circularity of life, while ironizing the use of industrial image reproduction techniques, so common since Pop Art (Warhol and company) and some conceptual artists like On Kawara put them on the art market's table. But, as I say, here we are not dealing, in practice, with physical reproducibility but with metaphysical reproducibility. A resource managed on the basis of an idea that also contextualizes and puts in tessitura a tradition of recent birth.

The last detail I want to highlight, although it is perhaps brought here by the skin of my teeth, is the aforementioned appropriationism. Marcelo Viquez, in this dazzling sequence, appropriates the first drawing (a material he has made himself, but which already belongs to the real and external world when he comes to pick it up), and uses it in the second, in the third, and so on up to number one hundred, but not as a repetition without further ado, but as a conceptual element of a new piece that also acquires a new meaning at each step of the series. Drawing number forty-three does not have the same sense as forty-two, since that accumulation, that evil sediment is entering putrefaction (remember how oil is formed, by deposit and compaction of organic matter that thus enters into a state of rotteness), thus conveying that feeling of absolute hopelessness in the face of the meaning of life. An absolutely contemporary resource, which reminds me of the one used in "the part of the crimes", those brutal three hundred pages of sober and stark annotation of the data and circumstances of the murdered women in the utopian city of Santa Teresa (a transcript of Ciudad Juarez) that Roberto Bolaño arranged in his novel 2066. The reading of this almost infinite sequence of murders leaves the reader with an aftertaste of horror impossible to convey with a less reiterative resource. The accumulation, the endless number of cases and images (in the case of Marcelo's work) transmit a feeling and an idea of the horror of existence that has no parallel with any other form of expression.

That the series culminates with some ceramic sculptural pieces of the same image would come to be another cultural wink, as if the hundred drawings had the same rank as the sketches that, for example, Michelangelo made for the making of his David (subject of another project, by the way, by Marcelo Viquez with which he won the Visual Arts Prize of Santanyi in 2017). But when one meets, to end the tour of "Freedom to be constant", the bust and full-body sculpture, naked, of the artist himself, the irony reaches unimaginable heights. The artist himself, and therefore the very action of the practice of art, is subsumed in the inanity of that primary, instinctive, non-spiritual, repetitive, eternally recurrent pursuit of a carrot that only distracts the craving of every animal for a few tiny instants in the midst of the immense ocean of time.

And time, blind and merciless, is what ultimately describes all reiteration.



Text: Carlos Jover

*Kubertons's women*

Contrary to what it may seem, internalizing an absence does not help to lose weight. That inner hollowness weighs much more than if its space were filled with lead. It is not air that fills an absence but a swarm of sorrows -never better said. When the absence is irreparable, as if it was an amputation of the soul, one must learn to live on the edge of that intestinal black hole, with the tension of remaining on one's feet and on the edge of being irremediably absorbed.

Marcelo Viquez's experience in the autumn of 2022 in the artistic residence that Krinzinger Gallery has in the remote town of Kuberton, in northern Croatia, has become an authentic initiatory journey in search of Kurtz, that Conrad's character located beyond Good and Evil, in the heart of darkness. Like the jungle, Marcelo's creative mind is overflowing and multidirectional, so that no one expects to find, as a result of this inquisitive journey, the diary of a personal tragedy, or a collection of staves of all the sighs with which human misfortune intends to cover the pantheon of reality. The most extreme satire, as an uppercut against the jaw of the world; the uninhibition in the handling of the representation of what resists to be represented; the low blow to the testicles of conventional morality, all immersed in the tradition of drawing in black -what in literature and cinema has come to be called, without further ado, genre noir- which in Central Europe can be traced back to the expressionism of Otto Dix (in his drawings also monochrome), or, in terms of the thematic treatment, to the path opened by the Austrians Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka, make this portentous work of more than fifty pieces executed in two months a compendium of what could be and is not, a bazaar of rarities among which the artist would like to share that feeling of intimate absence that haunts him.

During most of the time of the artist's residency, the real population of Kuberton was reduced to one inhabitant: Marcelo. Taking into account the absence with which the artist has been living for the last year, it is perhaps possible to understand that he populated the locality, in his work, with the protagonists of his dreams, desires and obsessions. Not so much in the way that Rulfo, in *Pedro Páramo*, filled the census of Comala with ghosts, but rather in the organic way that Petrarch flooded his spirit with the unreachable shadow of a missing Laura in the Provençal solitude of Fontaine de Vaucluse. The *Songbook*, after all, would come to be the compendium of the poet's artistic residence in the remote and tiny village where the source of the Sorgue River is located.

Most of the characters portrayed by Marcelo Viquez in Kuberton are outlined in the form of a naked woman. They are not only there, and so, as an obvious plastic claim of the sexual drive that moves the bodies, on the planet, within that frenetic and unconscious dance towards the perpetuation of the struggle of life against nothingness. Also, due to the feeling of absence that haunts him, as I have been saying, these census drawings of an uninhabited town should be understood as part of the series of self-portraits in which the artist is currently immersed. Although it may be hard to believe, these women are not only the embodiment of a repopulating fantasy, but also constitute an enormous exercise in self-reflection, a deployment of self-representational resources along the lines, as I already mentioned in relation to the exhibition at the Museum of Mallorca in Palma on the occasion of the awarding of the Mallorca International Art Awards 2022, of the self-portraits of Van Gogh and Francis Bacon. In the case of *Kuberton's Women*, Marcelo Viquez not only delves into his concrete and circumstantial physical or mental state, but also into his metaphysical and prospective state -if I may use these expressions here-, pursuing the lives that could have been valid had he lacked creative concerns; happy lives in a good way, and in a bad way procarious, though vertiginous. If one adds to all this the tremendous conceptual punch that his work so often carries with, it can be understood why visiting Kuberton's census is so much like a boxing match.

And as in the penultimate scene of the movie *Fight Club*, the crucial boxing match is the one that confronts the fighter not with his shadow but directly with himself. That is the essence of the true exercise of self-portraiture.

Text: Carlos Jover