

IMAN ISSA *Proxies, with a Life of Their Own*

VIENNA 21.01.—26.03.2022

We are pleased to announce the first exhibition by Iman Issa at Galerie Elisabeth & Klaus Thoman in Vienna, who in 2020 started her professorship at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Iman Issa makes use of various media, including objects, video, sound and writing.

“Although the individual elements of each work are characterized by high precision and clarity, their interaction with the viewer resembles a complicated conversation, for which the basis of the term must first be negotiated ... a perception process that opens essential questions instead of closing them.” Nina Tabassomi, Taxispalais Kunsthalle Tirol 2020)

As an artist, Issa commonly works in ongoing series. In her exhibition the artist shows newly along former developed works from two of her series *Heritage Studies* and *Proxies, with a Life of Their Own*. The latter is composed of a collection of self-portraits, which are simultaneously portraits of other figures. The shape of each portrait / self-portrait is always qualified by a statement attributed to the chosen figure. All of the self-portraits start from a single generic form on which they are based and from which they might diverge to achieve singularity.

Heritage Studies, initiated in 2015, looks to artworks, objects, and structures from the past in an attempt to understand their relevance to the present and possibly the future. It consists of multiple original displays each of which is based on an existing museum object or element. Each display is further accompanied by a caption identifying its source. The sources span different regions and cultural lineages, but all belong to the past. The term “Heritage Studies” is employed in so far as it signifies a return to the past but one carried out with an idea of a practical end to the present and future.

Two more works round up the show. *Book of Facts: A Proposition*, from 2017, is display of a book documenting an exhibition that hasn't taken place and never will. All the material is formatted in the guise of information geared towards a specific thesis that can only be unravelled through engaging with the book's content and structure.

The Revolutionary is a 2010 audio work composed by the artist and generated by using text to speech software. It tells a fictional story based upon the linguistic term the ‘revolutionary’.

The artist would like to thank

Arne Clemens, Alexandra Dominic, Michael Drake, Holger Hönck, Hisham Issa, Shahira Issa, Ihsan Kenawi, Nicolas Linnert, Sandra Stemmer, Nina Tabassomi, Jill Winder.

Iman Issa, born 1979 in Cairo, lives and works in Berlin. As successor to Monica Bonvicini, she took over the professorship of sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 2020. Recent solo and group exhibitions include Taxispalais Kunsthalle Tirol, Innsbruck; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; MoMA, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; 21er Haus, Vienna; MACBA, Barcelona; Perez Art Museum, Miami; 12th Sharjah biennial; 8th Berlin Biennial; MuHKA, Antwerp; Tensta Konsthall, Spånga; New Museum, New York and KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin.