

OTHER SESSION

ARTISTIC FREEDOM UNDER SCRUTINY - APRIL 20TH 3PM - DOCKS_TESA 2_ A SAN PIETRO DI CASTELLO VENEZIA



Heimat, 2022. Lesia Pcholka.

AN EXPLORATION OF ARTISTIC FREEDOM AMIDST THE
COMMEMORATION OF THE **70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
EUROPEAN CULTURAL CONVENTION.**

THE *OTHER* SESSION

As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention, which recognises creativity as having an inherent cultural, social and political value, it is a critical moment to stop and reflect on the state of artistic freedom in Europe today. To do this, the Council of Europe in collaboration with the Experimental Observatory on Artistic Freedom (OoAF) present the Other Session on the occasion of the 60th Venice Biennale.

Through a performative panel talk and artistic interventions and installations, we will probe the fringes of artistic practice, articulating the experiences of those pushed to the outside and those pulling from the inside, questioning the necessary conditions for cultural and artistic freedom and the role of rights and institutions in fostering this.

The Other Session is an open art event involving a performative panel, artists, curators, and Council of Europe representatives. The Other Session will assess the landscape of artistic freedom, through dialogues and performances in light of 70 years of the European Cultural Convention. Furthermore, it will review the role of existing cultural institutions in backing the Freedom of Artistic Expression, and the need for alternative spaces, organisations and various systems of support for those operating on the fringes. The project ultimately looks towards how we can provide robust and sustained support for silenced and neglected voices, practices, ideas and critiques emerging from the world of art and design. With its Manifesto on the Freedom of Expression of Arts and Culture in the Digital Era, the Council of Europe recognises arts and culture as powerful means for dialogue in democratic societies. The right to freedom of artistic expression is key to this. The Council of Europe brings together governments, artistic communities and civil society to exchange on the state of artistic freedom and identify policy and other measures to address challenges.

VENEZIA - APRIL 20TH - 3PM

Docks_TESA 2

San Pietro di Castello, Venezia.

Exhibition : 12AM-7PM

Performative Talk : 3PM

Performance : 4:30PM

Celebration : 5PM-7PM

CURATORS: **DAVID LIVER** AND **MICHAEL KAETHLER**

CONTRIBUTORS:

GABRIEL FONTANA

MATJAŽ GRUDEN

TIMEA JUNGHAUS

LUNA DE ROSA

HICHAM KHALIDI

KATA KRASZNAHORKAI

ANTONIO MANUEL

MASSIMO MAZZONE

LESIA PCHOLKA

ANNALISA RIMMAUDO

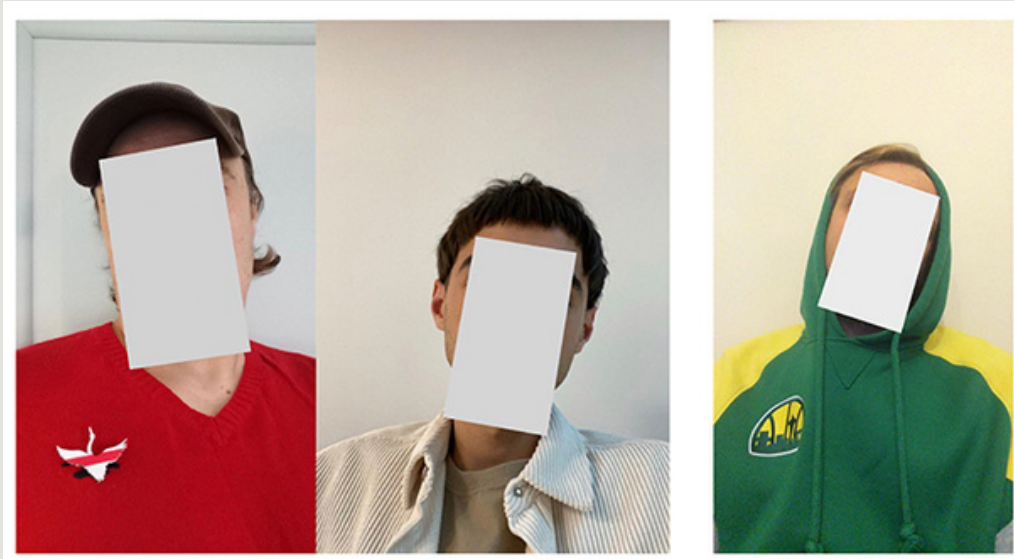
MANUEL BORJA-VILLET

WITH AGRISARTE

AND OLIVOLO.

THE **OTHER** SESSION IS PRESENTED BY THE EXPERIMENTAL OBSERVATORY ON ARTISTIC FREEDOM (OOAF) WITH **THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE** AND IN COLLABORATION WITH **FREE TO CREATE.**

12AM-7PM



A **SHOWCASE EXHIBITION** BY BELORUSIAN ARTIST LESIA PCHOLKA DELVING INTO THE HARSH REALITIES OF REPRESSION, WAR, AND REFUGEE EXPERIENCES WHILE ALSO HIGHLIGHTING THE COVERT EXPRESSIONS OF DISSENT AMIDST ESCALATING AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES.

3PM

ARTISTIC FREEDOM UNDER SCRUTINY: A **PERFORMATIVE TALK** DESIGNED TO BE AN OPEN AND INFORMAL CHOREOGRAPHED DISCUSSION.

4.30PM



GABRIEL FONTANA'S **PERFORMANCE** ENGAGES WITH QUESTIONS SUCH AS WHAT ROLE DOES NATIONALISM PLAY IN SPORT, WHAT ROLE DOES SPORT HAVE IN GEOPOLITICS? HOW CAN WE TWEAK RULES OF A SPECIFIC SPORT IN ORDER TO SPECULATE AND OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO CURRENT SOCIAL PHENOMENA OF POLARIZATION?

5PM-7PM

HOSTED BY MATJAŽ GRUDEN A MOMENT OF FESTIVE **CELEBRATION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ECC** AND A RECOGNITION OF THE WORK STILL TO BE DONE.

LESIA PCHOLKA



Lesia Pcholka is a Belarusian artist, archivist and activist. She is the founder of VEHA Archive, a platform of researchers to study and preserve vernacular archival photography as a cultural heritage and one of the key elements of the visual history of Belarus. Her work explores everyday life, memory, and social issues through art and participatory practice. She has exhibited her work in solo exhibitions in Belarus, Poland, Austria and Czech Republic and in group exhibitions all over Europe. Pcholka earned her degree in Social Psychology from the Minsk Innovation University and graduated from several international educational programs, including ArtPlatform by the European Cultural Foundation (2018), The East-European School of Political Studies (2019), Sputnik Photos Mentoring Programme (2020) and others. In 2021-2022, she was welcomed as an ICORN artist in residence in the Polish city of Gdansk. As part of the residency, she created the exhibition "Weakness Street" in which the artist tries to find the means to express processes which are difficult to grasp and which pertain to the relationships between governmental administrators and Belarusian society. Currently lives and works between Berlin, Germany and Bielsk Podlaski, Poland.

GABRIEL FONTANA



Gabriel Fontana is an independent designer and creative director. Drawing on a social design framework, his work proposes to reshape sports to support upcoming societal shifts. In this context, Gabriel develops alternative team sports and games that deconstruct group dynamics and promote empathy. With this method, he developed Multiform (2019) for the municipality of Rotterdam; an educational programme for primary and secondary schools that contributes to inclusive physical education. More recently, Gabriel launched the Tournament of the Unknown (2022), a tournament series that reimagines togetherness. His work has earned widespread international acclaim within the realms of education, culture, and the sports industry, resulting in multiple design prizes, including the Pierre Keller award in 2023. His games have been played in schools across Europe, at Nike World Headquarters (US) and presented in renowned museums such as MoMA (US), MAC/VAL (FR), W139 Amsterdam (NL), Design Milan Week (IT) amongst others. He is a lecturer in the MA Social Design Programme at Design Academy Eindhoven (NL) and has lectured at New York University (US), Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam (NL), Sint-Lucas Antwerp (BE) and Saint-Etienne Higher School of Art and Design (FR), CityLab10, and CBK Rotterdam.

HICHAM KHALIDI



Hicham Khalidi is the director of the Jan van Eyck Academie in Maastricht (NL), current curator of the Dutch entry for the 2024 Venice Biennale, a Post-Academy for Art, Design and Reflection that offers residencies to international artists, designers – ranging from graphic, fashion, to food and social design–, writers, curators and architects. The Jan van Eyck has committed itself to exploring the agency and roles of the arts in relation to the climate crisis and its manifold effects. This institutional focus opens up a wide discourse and creates a framework that embraces a diversity of practices and allows for a multitude of voices.

Khalidi previously worked as an associate curator for Lafayette Anticipations in Paris, curated the ACT II group exhibition in the Beirut Sharjah Biennial in 2017, served as a cultural attaché to the Biennale of Sydney in 2016, and was chief curator of the Marrakesh Biennale in 2014.

KATALIN KRASZNAHORKAI



Katalin Krasznahorkai (PhD) is a Berlin-based art historian, curator and author. Since May 2022 she is the Lead Curator|Artistic Director at the Brandenburgische Gesellschaft für Kultur und Geschichte in Potsdam and a Lead Expert-Advisor at the Council of Europe for the project “Free to Create – Create to be Free”. In her academic research she focuses on diverse aspects of artistic freedom focusing on the interaction between state security operations and art and Black Power in Eastern Europe. Recently, she worked as a Gerda Henkel Senior Research Fellow at the University of Zurich (2020–2022), doing research on Black Power in Eastern Europe in Arts and Culture. ITC Grant Coordinator and MC Member Switzerland (2020–2024) in the COST-Action 18204—Dynamics of Placemaking in Europe. In 2020, she curated with Inke Arns and Sylvia Sasse the exhibition “Artists&Agents. Performance Art and the Secret Services” at HMKV Dortmund, which was awarded as “Exhibition of the Year 2020” by the German AICA. With Sylvia Sasse, she is the editor of a volume of the same name, published by Spector Books 2022. Her monograph “Operative Art History or Who is Afraid of Artists?” was published by Spector Books in 2023.

TIMEA JUNGHAUS



Timea Junghaus is an art historian, a leader of the Roma cultural and political movement, and a contemporary art curator. She is the executive director of the Berlin-based European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture – the transnational institute for the recognition of the Roma minority in Europe – founded in 2017. She has researched and published extensively on the conjunctions of modern and contemporary art with critical theory, with particular reference to issues of cultural difference, colonialism, and minority representation. Junghaus was a scientific fellow of the Working Group for Critical Theories at the Institute for Art History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2010–2017). Junghaus was founding director of Gallery8 – Roma Contemporary Art Space (www.gallery8.org) in the middle of the "Roma district" of Budapest (2013–2017). Gallery8 was the winner of the 2014 Catalyst Contemporary Art Award (of Transit Hungary) and the 2014 Otto Pankok Prize awarded by the For Roma Foundation of German writer and Literary Nobel Laureate, Günter Grass.

MASSIMO MAZZONE



Massimo Mazzone is a multifaceted artist and activist known for his contributions to the realms of sculpture, architecture, and academia. His work creates occasions and facilitates the experience of horizontally shared knowledge as a means for freedom of creation and expression. Through collaborative endeavours and academic engagements, Mazzone actively fosters an environment where creativity flourishes and artistic expression transcends boundaries of property, body, architecture and all institutional constructs. Throughout his career, Mazzone has exhibited his works in various national and international exhibitions, earning accolades and prizes for his contributions to the fields of sculpture, politics, and architecture. His insightful essays on body, sculpture, politics, and architecture have been published widely.

LUNA DE ROSA



Luna De Rosa, is an Italian activist and multidisciplinary artist from the Roma diaspora who works and lives between Berlin and Milan. The body is the starting point of her artistic work: through interventions in the public sphere she expresses the relationship that binds the body to the social context that essentially governs and defines it. In recent years, her artistic work has focused on the vulnerability of ethnic minorities, particularly the Roma, who are strongly affected by exclusion and racism. Through the use of different media, from performance to painting and installation, De Rosa addresses the urgency of challenging misunderstandings, stereotypes and representing the multiple identities of Roma cultural and psychological heritage, focusing especially on the issues of Roma identity and femininity, creating dense images that almost metaphorically follow the friction and conflicting realities of ideas related to being an artist, Roma and woman searching for a way to exist in the middle, to be multiple, to remain irreducible.

AGRISARTE & OLIVOLO



The AgrisArte Association aims to evoke, enhance, protect, rediscover, and promote the historical and cultural heritage of the farming world on the island of Sant'Erasmo. With an environmental sustainability perspective, the association utilizes and works with fabrics made from natural fibers. AgrisArte engages cultural initiatives primarily operating in the agricultural and artisanal sectors, as well as in the promotion of traditions within the lagoon island territory. It values ancient arts and crafts, including spinning, weaving, tailoring, darning, embroidery, knitting, crochet, basket weaving, as well as culinary traditions and peasant gastronomy.

The Auser Olivolo Aps association is a Social Promotion Association whose aim is active participation in the social and cultural life of the citizens of Castello and beyond. Over the years, it has organized thematic conferences, book presentations, foreign language courses, history of Venice and general history, art history, dance, drawing, photography, computer courses, theater history, bobbin lace, needle lace, guided tours, and excursions. In 2023, it saw the participation of 146 individuals, including 94 women and 52 men, as members.

ANTONIO MANUEL



Antonio Manuel is one of the main names connected to experimentalism in Brazil between the end of the sixties and the following decade. The artist instigated the art world in the 1970s, representing the freedom of expression in his pieces, at the height of the Military Dictatorship. Faced with the dilemma to conduct freedom of expression in a country where civil rights were threatened, the mediatic appropriations of Antonio Manuel and his interventions with his own body strive to subvert and criticize the forces of repression and question the institutional politics. Alongside Artur Barrio and Cildo Meireles, Antonio Manuel began producing performances and installations amid the repressive climate of Brazil in the 1960s and '70s. Manuel evaded systems of state control, circulating censored artworks in newspapers and creating performances as metaphors for oppression, such as one in which participants hammer away at locked boxes containing newspaper clippings.

ANNALISA RIMMAUDO



Annalisa Rimmaudo obtained her PhD in Contemporary Art History from Sorbonne University Paris I in 2003. She has been Deputy Curator at the Contemporary Collection of the Centre Pompidou in Paris since 2007. Additionally, she has been a member of the editorial committee of *Aware*, Archives of Women Artists since 2017, and the president of the Christian Boltanski Endowment Fund, created in 2023. Her research interests include visual poetry, Fluxus, conceptual art, and performance. She has participated in various symposiums and curated numerous exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou in Paris and its international branches in Metz, Malaga, and Shanghai. Among her recent publications are "Jim Dine Painter's Theatre" (CDLA, 2023), "Mirror of Portraits" (West Bund, 2024), and "Christian Boltanski Journal" (Manuella, 2024).

MANUEL BORJA-VILLET



Manuel Borja-Villet is the Director of the Catalan Museums and has been the Director of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía since January 2008, where he has led the reorganization of the permanent collection, and is one of the institutional agents of Spanish culture. He studied History of Art at the Universitat de València (1980) and Yale University (1981-1982) and received a PhD in the Department of Art History of the Graduate School at The City University of New York in 1989. During his studies in the United States, Borja-Villet was awarded a Fulbright fellowship. Borja-Villet has directed three of the major art institutions in Spain: Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona (1990-1998); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA, 1998-2008); and Museo Reina Sofía (2008-present).

He has curated solo exhibitions of some of the most important artists of the last century: Marcel Broodthaers, Lygia Clark, James Coleman, Óyvind Fahlström, Luis Gordillo, Hans Haacke, Lygia Pape, Antoni Muntadas, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Nancy Spero, Antoni Tàpies, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Fischli & Weiss, William Kentridge, amongst others. Borja-Villet was also a member of the Consulting Committee of Documenta 12 (2007), and the chair of the jury for the 52nd Venice Biennial (2007).

MATJAŽ GRUDEN



Matjaž Gruden is Director for Democracy at the Council of Europe since May 2018. His responsibilities include Council of Europe activities on education, youth, civil society, media freedom, journalists safety, culture, cultural heritage and sport. Matjaž Gruden is in charge of leading the preparation of the Secretary General's annual reports on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe. Matjaž Gruden previously served as Director of Policy Planning, Deputy Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland, political adviser and speechwriter for the Secretary General Terry Davis and President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Lord Russell-Johnston.

Prior to his career at the Council of Europe, he was a diplomat at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, posted in Brussels. As a member of the first team of Slovenian diplomats accredited in Brussels after the recognition of independence of Slovenia, he has contributed to the establishment of formal relations and the negotiations of first cooperation agreements with the European Union.

Matjaž Gruden regularly publishes articles on European, human rights and democracy related issues, notably in the Slovenian media. A book of essays "Long Live all the Nations" was published in 2018.

ABOUT

THE OTHER SESSION

David Liver & Michael Kaethler

Liver and Kaethler have been collaborating over the last decade through writing, curation, teaching and artistic production, including multiple contributions at the Venice Biennale. They stand as co-directors of OoAF in Amsterdam and co-created the Other Session series in Venice, solidifying their commitment in shaping other forms of critical and experimental dialogue.

ooaf.art

The Council of Europe

The CoE is an international organisation, based in Strasbourg, which was created in 1949 and now includes 46 European countries. Set up to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Home to the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.

www.coe.int

FREE TO CREATE

“Free to Create – Create to be Free” is a digital #exhibition conceived by the Council of Europe. It was set up in consultation with the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage, and Landscape (CDCPP) to mark the 70th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In November 2020, the CDCPP launched a Manifesto on the Freedom of Expression of the Arts and Culture in the Digital Era. Member states of the Council of Europe are invited to provide up to two artworks referring to the Manifesto and the overall topic of artistic freedom.

Further Details: for further information, images, or to arrange interviews, please contact OoAF here:

info@ooaf.art



The OoAF