

M I M /

Taking biology as a starting point, the works in the exhibition explore mimetic processes that are based on the understanding of and the empathizing with a counterpart. They present techniques of assimilation to a given context; they address the hiding and disappearance of animals and humans; and they deceive our perception through trompe-l'œil.

C R Y -

It is generally believed that these mechanisms of adaptation could be advantageous for the organism in question. However, in his essay *Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia* the sociologist Roger Caillois argues that contrary to popular belief, animals do not adapt to their environment for their own benefit, but rather out of a mythological desire to dissolve into the world. This relationship between the useful purpose of becoming another and the emancipation from that very purpose is put up for discussion in the works of the exhibition. After all, genuine empathy is only viable in the absence of purpose. The ability to make this distinction provides the key to developing one's own identity.

E M P A

The psychoanalyst Gohar Homayounpour states in *Against Empathism*: "The keyword for genuine empathy lies within "separateness", within the essential capacity to recognize difference. Otherwise, I am just getting to know you in order to prey upon you, so that I can eat you. For my insatiable narcissism needs to be fed over and over again."

T H Y

The works in the exhibition *Mimicry—Empathy* negotiate the formation of identities through experimental mimicry in various ways. Visitors are invited to discover images of their selves in the mirror of the exhibition.

## A project by Susanne Bürner Produced by Fræme

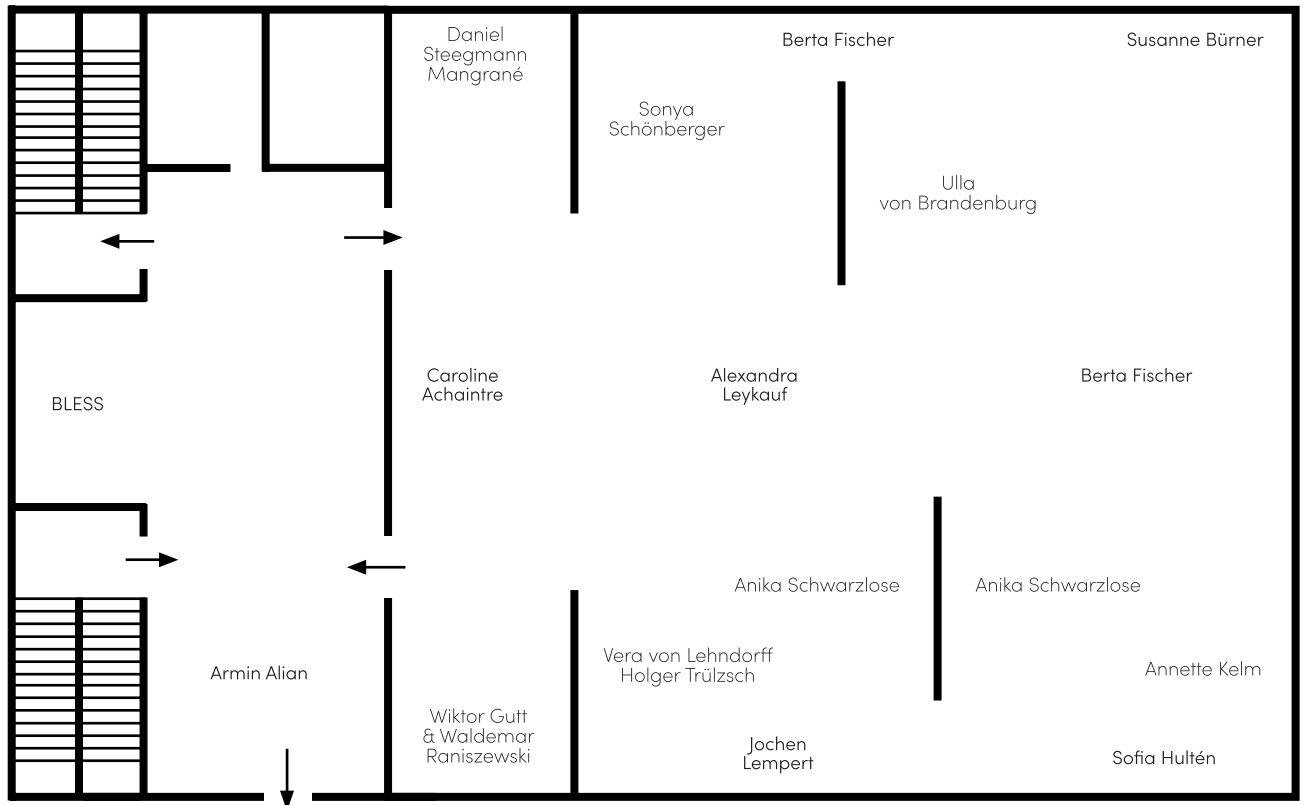
*Mimicry—Empathy* is a project that can take on different forms according to the places where it is presented. It was first shown in 2018 at the Lajevardi Foundation in Tehran as an exhibition accompanied by screenings, workshops and talks. It was followed in 2020 by an eponymous book. In other places the project will develop new forms.

Caroline Achaintre  
Armin Alian  
BLESS  
Ulla von Brandenburg  
Susanne Bürner  
Berta Fischer  
Wiktor Gutt / Waldemar Raniszewski  
Sofia Hultén  
Annette Kelm  
Vera von Lehndorff / Holger Trülzsch  
Jochen Lempert  
Alexandra Leykauf  
Sonya Schönberger  
Anika Schwarzlose  
Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

In partnership with the Friche la Belle de Mai and the Goethe-Institut Marseille.

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## FLOOR PLAN Tour Jobin, 4th floor



### CAROLINE ACHAINTRE IGOR, 2019

Hand-tufted wool, 260 x 165 cm  
Courtesy Galerie Art : Concept, Paris

Caroline Achaintre was born in 1969 in France and grew up in Germany. The German mythological and folkloric culture actually deeply influenced her work, including primitivism, carnival or sci-fi. She graduated from the Goldsmiths College of London – a city that she never left – where she discovered the wool gun which sparked her exploration of tufted works, an ancient craft weaving technique coming from India and China. Manual labor is very present in Caroline Achaintre's work. She also extends her practice to watercolor, ceramic and traditional basketry. Her tufted works, both abstract and figurative, always have an anthropomorphist dimension. Her hybrid creatures carry a tension stemming from the duality and coexistence of two personas within one being. Her pieces can be interpreted as a mask, a piece of clothing, an animal or a monster. It is the very strength of Caroline Achaintre: to question our capacity to exist in the world as individuals defined by complex and multiple identities.

*IGOR* is one of her tufted work. A pair of eyes and a posture can be noticed in this anthropomorphist piece. For the artist, the work emanates a kind of breathing that the use of wool evokes. *IGOR* could be a mask, and this title evokes its double. Indeed, in fiction, "Igor" is formally the sobriquet of an often shapeless and ugly archetypal figure. It takes care of the unwanted tasks of a hero of whom it represents both the antithesis and the double carrying their dark side. It refers to the idea of *doppelgänger* ("double" in German), a character of the German folklore popularized by the Grimm brothers, that presents as the evil copy of an individual, largely reinterpreted in literature and cinema. Caroline Achaintre therefore generates a tension between ugliness and beauty, monstrosity and magic, fascination and aversion. She confronts us to our own duality and hidden monstrosity.

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Caroline Achaintre exhibited in various institutions in France and abroad such as CAPC, Bordeaux, France (2020–2021), MO.CO., Montpellier, France (2019), Belvedere 21, Vienna, Austria (2019), De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-sea, England (2018), FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims, France (2017), BALTIC, Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, England (2016), Tate Britain, London, England (2015), Castello di Rivoli, Turino, Italy (2013), or Saatchi Gallery, London, England (2010).

## ARMIN ALIAN Diverted Poem, 2022

Mural, wallpaper, in situ installation  
Courtesy the artist

Through a pictorial language that is both figurative and abstract, Armin Alian creates a dialog between identifiable plant elements, with colorful segments, lines, stains coexisting on different two-dimensional plans causing a fragmentation of the usual surface of what is visible. In his artistic practice, Alian makes collages of overlapping landscapes, without however referring to a specific place, but rather evoking natural elements which are separated from their initial connections, and reconstitute a new possible geographical narrative. If Armin Alian's work usually articulates around mural paintings, with the pictorial and photographic mix on wallpaper *Diverted Poem*, he reveals some unexpected visual connections. Alian's mural work transcribes on a two-dimensional plan the many sides of reality with abstract details and details from daily life, in order to highlight some disparate visual reverberations.

"A wave changes its face to a curved line, and the line becomes a shadow, just a minute after. The sunshine, converted to non-transparent lines, and the mountains repeating themselves over and over. This is a permanent exchange between abstraction and figuration and between different elements of a landscape, when they try to make a logical relationship with each other and to build an image. They're constantly changing their face and becoming a part of each other, again and again. Can they be successful to make an image at the end?"

*Armin Alian was born in Mashhad (Iran) in 1993, he lives and works in Tehran. He graduated from the Tehran University of Art. His work was shown in various exhibitions in Iran. Son travail a été montré à : Soo Gallery, Tehran, Iran (2020) ; Mohsen Gallery, Tehran, Iran (2020) ; 3 on 3 Summer Project, O Gallery, Tehran, Iran (2019) ; Iranshahr Surface Space, Tehran, Iran (2018)*

## BLESS Curtain with a view, 2022

Installation of curtains for 2 windows,  
cotton fabric, iron  
Courtesy BLESS

BLESS is a multidisciplinary and experimental project created between Berlin and Paris during the mid 1990's, by the duo of stylists and designers Désirée Heiss and Ines Kaag. By challenging the notions of design, fashion, production systems, and more sustainability, BLESS has been shaking for many years the aesthetic and formal codes, to conceive new creative interstices. It is through a collaborative and inclusive process, at the core of Kaag and Heiss' project, that BLESS creates diverse objects in its studio. Their creation, fashion accessories, design objects, clothes or pieces of furniture and customized shoes are parts of an innovative strategy away from usual overproduction paradigms inherent to the world of fashion. Each edition, since the first "BLESS n°00 1996" project, is therefore an opportunity for the duo to renew a pioneering and avant-garde discourse offering aggregations and connections between heteroclitic and pragmatic objects. In the framework of the Mimicry-Empathy exhibition, BLESS' gaze turns towards the windows of the building, a transition element between inside and outside. Heiss and Kaag imagine a site-specific work to the rhythm of time and seasons, that can be seen through an element originally used to protect. The semitransparent and layered curtains as flaring membranes, unveil images revealing the fleeting moments of the Friche's architecture and the adjacent urban surroundings, with a play on optical perspectives happening between the actual window and its image projected on the pieces of fabric. The moving installations by BLESS thus flare in the space creating with their movement, a fluctuating threshold projecting the viewer's gaze further.

*Désirée Heiss was born in Fribourg (Germany) in 1971, she lives and works in Paris. Ines Kaag, was born in Fürth (Germany) in 1970, she lives and works in Berlin. The duo's work has been displayed in the context of numerous international exhibitions: Freedman Fitzpatrick Gallery, Paris (France) 2019 ; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (Germany) 2018 ; Chicago Architecture Biennial, Chicago (USA) 2017 ; Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (Germany) 2016 ; Biennale Internationale Design, Saint-Étienne, (France) 2016.*

## **ULLA VON BRANDENBURG** **It Has a Golden Sun and** **an Elderly Grey Moon, 2016**

Super-16 mm film transferred to video, color,  
sound, 22 min 25 sec  
Courtesy Galerie Art : Concept, Paris

Ulla Von Brandenburg was born in Karlsruhe (Germany) in 1974. When she was younger, she acted in theater plays for a long time, a practice that still nourishes her work. She studied scenography and then art at the Hamburg School of Fine Arts. She now lives and works near Paris. She is an interdisciplinary artist who develops a multifaceted work using drawing, watercolor, textile installation or video, which reciprocally feed each other and respond to each other. Ulla Von Brandenburg is equally interested in art history and architecture, but also psychoanalysis and spirituality, all those matters helping her to investigate on the constructions of our social structures. Esoteric rituals, ceremonies and the carnival as a tool to transgress social norms, represent to her eyes the elements challenging our social and cultural practices. She questions the sometimes blurry boundaries between illusion and reality, and turns the visitor into an actor invited to experiment the space.

In her video, seven dancers handle colorful pieces of sheets in the space only inhabited with an immaculate white stairway. It is the artist's first color video, color being the main narrative element in it. Yellow, on which the video starts and ends, refers to the color of the sun but also to the absurd or the treachery in the field of theater, or to the corruption of unions in political history. The stairway simultaneously recalls the symbolic of the social scale and the Sun Pyramid, a place of worship in the Aztec society. The body movements, directed by the rhythm of the percussion sounds evoke the scene of a ritual for trades and gifts. This ceremony refers to the notion of "potlatch" developed by Marcel Mauss: it is a ceremonial based on gifts and counter-gifts during which people would trade goods of equal symbolic value. This practice allowed the colonists to dispossess the autochthons who were fooled into believing in the value of "potlatch" and exchanged gold against cheap trinkets. The artist uses this distorted cultural practice by the actors of capitalism to increase their wealth, as a starting point to question the tendency of our neoliberal society to merchandize everything.

*The work of Ulla Brandenburg was shown in numerous exhibitions such as the Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2020), the MRAC, Sérignan, France (2019), the Whitechapel Gallery, London, England (2018), the Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Germany (2018), the Perez Art Museum, Miami, USA (2016), or the Contemporary Art Museum, Saint-Louis, USA (2016).*

## **SUSANNE BÜRNER** **Seide für V.B, A.P., B.D. und M.A., 2018**

Fine Art prints on Koh-I-Noor Paper,  
70 x 100 cm, each  
Courtesy the artist

In her artistic practice, Susanne Bürner explores through movies and photographs, the psychological dimension of static and moving images, by challenging our observation point. Her work gives special attention to the power of manipulation of the image, revealed in this series by an interplay on presence and absence. Her references come from biology, specifically concerning her reflection on coping mechanisms of the living and the architecture, considered as an attempt for the human being to organize and shape space and society. By exploring those fields, Bürner creates a universe of images describing the vulnerability of conventions. Since 2003, she is also interested in the publication of artist books and takes part in the creation of the publishing platform Monroe Book. In 2018 she creates the Mimicry-Empathy project presented at the Lajevardi Foundation in Tehran. With *Seide für V.B, A.P., B.D. und M.A.*, (2018) displayed in the Mimicry-Empathy exhibition (Tehran 2018), Susanne Bürner offers a layered trompe l'œil play, where the hands seem to be hiding in silk and in the fabric's folds, thus disrupting the viewer's gaze. For this series, she was inspired by the work of psychiatrist and photographer Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault. During the early 20th century, he was working at the psychiatric hospital of the police prefecture of Paris and carried out researches on draperies. He met some women accused of stealing some silk. In Bürner's photos, the hands appear and disappear, by sliding under the different plans, in a disturbing illusion game. This same pattern, used several times in her work, was also transposed in the work *Plee* (2020), a cotton blanket ornamented with images of intertwined hands, hidden in the folds of the fabric giving the impression of touching the person who stands on the installation.

*Susanne Bürner's work has been shown extensively at locations including the Los Angeles Filmforum, CAPC Bordeaux, Hamburger Bahnhof Berlin, Hygiene Museum Dresden, Kunstraum Kreuzberg, South London Gallery, Fotomuseum Winterthur and others. She curated exhibitions and screenings at Galerie Giti Nourbakhsh Berlin, L40 Berlin, Videonale Bonn and Lajevardi Foundation Tehran.*

## BERTA FISCHER

**Garmion, 2018**  
**Yraminion, 2022**

Garmion, acrylic glass, 250 x 300 x 450 cm,  
variable dimensions. Yraminion, acrylic  
glass, 80 x 80 x 48 cm  
Courtesy Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin

Berta Fischer (Düsseldorf 1973) lives and works in Berlin. Her work is built on light, which the artist is constantly exploring with its endless possibilities in terms of form and movement in the space. Her sculptures take the form of abstract, polychrome and fluorescent compositions. Each work is generated by the metamorphosis of lines, that mutate, crystallise and while reflecting their environment through their prism, end up moving away from it.

Berta Fischer's opalescent and organic structures are made of various synthetic materials. The original two-dimensional plan is unstructured letting voluminous but light three-dimensional installations appear, floating in the space or attached to the walls, reminding of both living and artificial organisms. The artist's artistic process is rooted in the work of the group Abstraction Creation active in the years 1930, specially through the productions of Belgium artist Georges Vantongerloo (1886-1965) made of Plexiglas, also Berta Fischer's favorite medium. The *Garmion* installation, recently shown in the framework of the « Into space » exhibition (Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 2021), an artistic conversation creating a visual dialog between the works of artists Bjorn Dalhelm (1974), Naum Gabo (1980-1977) and Berta Fischer, is composed of multiple see-through facets engraved with a laser from acrylic sheets then modeled.

*Her work feeds our imaginary: the ductility of its forms prefigures therefore the unexpected eventualities of aggregation or disintegration of reality's layout. Her work was presented in numerous solo and collective shows: Haus am Waldsee, 2021; James Fuentes, New York, 2019; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, (USA), 2019.*

## WIKTOR GUTT & WALDEMAR RANISZEWSKI

**Expressions on a Face, 1981**

Slide show of photographs, video, 11:13 min  
Courtesy the artist and Pola Magnetyczne  
Gallery, Warsaw

Wiktor Gutt was born in 1949 in Warsaw (Poland). He studied there at the Fine Arts Academy with sculptors Jerzy Januszkiwicz and Oskar Hansen – who is also an architect. Oskar Hansen is the author of the « open form » theory, developing the idea of a participative and adjustable architecture. Aware of this theory, Gutt later participated in its growth and its deconstruction.

Waldemar Raniszewski was born in 1947 in Poland. He studied sculpture at the Warsaw Fine Arts Academy, and followed the path of his friend Wiktor Gutt by joining the « Studio of Solid and Plane Design » ran by Oskar Hansen. Shortly after they met, the two artists started a project in 1972 which lasted until Raniszewski's death in 2005: The Grand Conversation. They share a common strong interest in body paintings and in the culture of primitive non-state societies. These correspond to the notion developed by anthropologist Pierre Clastre of a society with no State which organizes politics preserving equality between the members of the community. The duo works on reconsidering the artist / model relation in this sense, by inviting models to take part in the creation of the work on a same level as the artist. This cooperative relation pattern irrigates their work, often composed of photographs.

During the three days of the Rockowisko festival (Łódź, Poland) in November 1981 the duo installed a body painting studio offering people to paint on themselves or to be painted on their face and body. The festival was held on the eve of the implementation of the December 13, 1981 martial law imposing political and economic restraints on the daily life of Polish people. Justified by a challenging economy, martial law is in reality a political reaction to the rise of the independent opponent union Solidarność, genuinely questioning the established power. In this framework, the dissenting Polish youth yearning for freedom would gather to discuss, demonstrate their discontent thus revealing the growing gap between generations. Wiktor Gutt himself stated that the festival represented a movement of "the uncertainty of daily life towards harmony, or a temporary feeling of freedom". The body painting studio was therefore a space for freedom of expression, and speeches of protest and equality; the occasion to create an intimate link between the painter and the person who is painted for a few days.

*Wiktor Gutt and Waldemar Raniszewski's exhibitions include the ones at the Warsaw National Museum, Poland (2008), and the Repassage Gallery, Warsaw, Poland (1975 and 1977). On his side, Wiktor Gutt showed his work at the Kordegarda Gallery, Warsaw, Poland (2006), Showcase Gallery, Warsaw, Poland (1993), and the Repassage Gallery, Warsaw, Poland (1980).*

## SOFIA HULTÉN

### Grey Area, 2001

Video 9 min, loop  
Courtesy the artist and  
Daniel Marzona, Berlin

Sofia Hultén was born in 1972 in Stockholm (Sweden). She grew up in Birmingham (England) to the sound of British sitcoms and the Monty Python's humor. She studied sculpture and settled in Berlin – where she lives now – to go to the Berlin Art School. Her multiple practices include video, photography and performance.

She draws her research for her video work from the Newtonian principle of action-reaction, to question the cyclic repetition of seemingly pointless and absurd actions: she endlessly breaks and fixes objects, tries and tries without succeeding to hide herself in an office environment, or in the middle of abandoned objects in the streets. Her work always concerns the relation between human beings and objects. Her experimentations aim at disturbing our a priori linear or anticipated representations and expectations, that she carefully tries not to restrain to a finished narrative.

*Grey Area* is a series of attempts to vanish into the closed environment of a typical office reminding of the grey, gloomy and standardized atmosphere in the movie *Playtime* by Jacques Tati. Her grey suit, matching the setting, is a first attempt to disappear. The term "grey area" evokes a space where nebulous rules need to be clarified: a space of abstract actions. Therefore, the actions engaged by the artist clash with what is expected from the "sedentarius-sedentarius" the office employee seating seven hours a day, studied by the ethnologist Pascal Dibie in his book *Ethnologie du bureau : une brève histoire d'une humanité assise* (Éditions Métailié, 2020). References to cartoon and running gags slowly reveal a social examination. Indeed, her work refers to invisibilisation, she is away from sight but does not disappear. This state reminds of quantum superposition: a principle of quantum physics, one of the artist's inspiration. According to this principle, if a particle – for example an electron – can find itself on a point A or a point B, then it is both located on point A and point B, just as Sofia Hultén is simultaneously present and absent. Her work was the subject of a study on gender performativity in the work space: *Spaces that Matter: Gender Performativity and Organizational Space* by Melissa Tyler and Laurie Cohen. The office becomes a place for negotiation between gender identity and the way it is performed. In the light of "gender studies", the work evokes an attempt to escape oppression. Sofia Hultén deals with it her own way and schemes to avoid the conformist universe in which norms give her an unalterable role.

*Sofia Hultén's work benefited from several solo shows at Kunstverein am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, Berlin, Germany (2022), Musée Tinguely, Basel, Switzerland (2018), ángels gallery, Barcelona, Spain (2018), i8 gallery, Reykjavik, Island (2018) or Meessen De Clercq gallery, Brussels, Belgium (2010).*

## ANNETTE KELM

### Red Stripes 1, 2018

### 500 Euro, 2018

### Good Morning, 2018

### Light Double, 2018

Archival pigment prints. Red Stripes 1, 100 x 75 cm, 500 Euro, 75 x 56 cm, Good Morning, 75 x 56 cm, Light Double, 50 x 40 cm  
Courtesy the artist and König Galerie, Berlin

Attentive to the nature of objects, Kelm mixes in her works various figurative styles, going from still-lives to portrait or landscapes. She therefore questions the relations to objects and the possible cultural connections stemming from them. In her meticulous compositions, she crosses different artistic, cultural and historical references through which odd and artificial elements suddenly appear. Ordinary objects used in our daily lives, then become the characters of a detailed representation inviting the viewer to question the nature of those objects/subjects, and their productive relation. Through her photographic compositions, Kelm's artistic process specifically consists in deconstructing the symbolic aspect of certain representations rooted in our daily life. From new combinations imagined by the artist, the meaningful objects develop unprecedented relations. Several paradigms therefore operate in her work: for instance, Kelm questions the role of economic, of money and its worth, the result of a preexisting social convention that is universally accepted. In *500 Euro* (2018), the artist evokes the illusionary trompe l'œil effect, recurring in baroque visual compositions. On a geometric rhombus background retracing patterns of optical art, Kelm attached a 500 euros' bill with an elastic. Those bills were removed from production the year this photography was taken, which makes the value of the object even more pointless, moving it away from its original destination.

For her portraits, she approaches the principle of series by proposing subtle variations in the subject's pose and their expression. *Light double*, therefore presents the photo portraits of gallerist Johann König and musician Sonja Cvitkovic. In the professional photography jargon, the term "light double" refers to a double meaning: it can indeed correspond to a quick technique for lighting tests preceding the effective session, or to a precise research on the right image luminosity adjusted retrospectively in the studio. The work of Annette Kelm finds itself in this visual and semantic scope: the light of the two portraits appears differently in their lower part, which makes the analysis complex, namely did one of the two subjects played the role of a "light double" in the making of the other's portrait? In her series, Kelm thus preserves the temporality effect guaranteed by processes of repetition and mutation of subjects.

*Annette Kelm, was born in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1975, she lives and works in Berlin. She graduated from the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg. Her works were presented in numerous group and solo shows: Deutsche Bundesbank, Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany) 2020 ; Kunsthalle, Vienna (Austria) 2018 ; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit (USA) 2016 ; MMK, Frankfurt-am-Main (Germany) 2015 ; MOMA, New York (USA) 2013 ; Venice Biennial, Venice (Italy) 2011, MOMA PS1, New York (USA) 2006. Her work is part of the collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris (France) ; MOMA, New York (USA) and MOCA, Los Angeles (USA). She won the « Camera Austria Prize » award in 2016.*

## VERA VON LEHNDORFF & HOLGER TRÜLZSCH

### Hörzing Grotto, 1971

Series of 3 photographs,  
performance, 100 x 100 cm, each  
Courtesy the artist

Vera von Lehdorff and Holger Trülzsch were both born in 1939, she was born in Königsberg (the current city of Kaliningrad, Russia), and he was born in Munich (Germany). She studied art at the Fachschule für Gestaltung of Hamburg, then textile design in Florence (Italy). He studied painting and sculpture at the Munich Fine Arts Academy. Vera von Lehdorff was an iconic fashion model during the 1960's known under the nickname of "Veruschka", she then moved away from modelling while realizing that her body was used a tool at the service of advertising and fashion business. At the same time, Holger Trülzsch was producing a polymorphic work between photography, drawing, painting, sculpture and music. They crossed paths in 1969, but it is however after the movie *Veruschka* (1971) by Franco Rubartelli, that Holger Trülzsch foresaw a genuine artistic collaboration, while it was generally admitted that contemporary art and fashion were two separated worlds. Vera Von Lehdorff was in Roma for the shooting, during which she painted her face imitating the pattern formed by the pebbles of her balcony. Her gesture resulted in a scene in which her painted face fades and vanishes into a stony landscape. This strong image permanently affected Holger Trülzsch who then sparked off their collaboration.

Together, they developed a radical practice of body painting, going further than the one made popular in mass media (such as the cover of the "Playboy" erotic magazine in the March 1968 issue) and the hippie movement. Her previous collaboration with Dalí – who covered her with shaving cream – allows Vera to consider her body differently, as an artistic medium. According to her, it "is no longer a simple clothes rack but it can be an instrument for metamorphosis, a painter's canvas". In that sense, Holger Trülzsch and Vera von Lehdorff then worked on "recapturing" her body by deconstructing its fashion icon media characteristics. They elaborated through photography, video and performance a staging work of the paintings on Vera's body, that they camouflaged in the rusty surroundings of an abandoned warehouse, or in the natural environment of a cave or a wood. In the *Hörzing Grotto* series, Vera von Lehdorff melts into the wet environment of a cave. Silent and peaceful, the image recalls the tragic myth of Echo: a nymph who was in such an immense sorrow withdrew in a cave and watched her beauty faint until it turned into only dust. This ageing simultaneously refers to the taboo linked to body deterioration inherent to the fashion industry in which age is subject to discrimination. The work of Vera Von Lehdorff and Holger Trülzsch thus questions the fetishism of the female body caused by the – male – gaze. In that sense, their work seems to prefigure the current topic of the "male gaze", the one of the heterosexual white man perpetuating stereotyped and sexist representations of female and queer characters in culture and the media. This "male gaze" exposes the asymmetry of power and the urging tendency to overrate women's physical beauty – often operating in the field of fashion. In response to the alienation of the body through the gaze, Vera Von Lehdorff and Holger Trülzsch's work offers to open the field for a sensitive and ambiguous narrative oscillating between fear, melancholy and the beauty of a body decked in the veil of nudity.

## JOCHEN LEMPERT

**Phasmides, 2013**

**Ginkgo, 2014**

**Belladonna, 2013**

**untitled (Mimikry und Einfuehlung), 2018**

Gelatin silver prints. *Phasmides*,  
23,7 x 17,7 cm each, diptych. *Ginkgo*,  
47 x 39 cm. *Belladonna*, 30 x 24 cm  
each, diptych. *untitled (Mimikry und  
Einfuehlung)*,  
30 x 24 cm  
Courtesy the artist

Former member of the collective Schmelzdahin, active between 1979 and 1989, Jochen Lempert's process focuses on experimental cinematographic production, and in parallel he studies biology at the Bonn Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität. In the tradition of this scientific heritage that fascinates him, he devotes himself to photography in the early 1990 to start, among others, a long documentary work with *The Skins of Alca* (1992-2017) project, which consisted in detecting the traces of the extinct great auk (*Alca impennis*) in the museums of natural history around the world. His photographic practice refers to the plant and animal kingdom, to atmospheric changes, to humanity's marks, to perceptible and imperceptible phenomenon. In his images, he creates unexpected links to signify the coexistence of living forms: in the *Belladonna* (2013) diptych, the black and shiny sphere of the deadly Solanaceae's bay responds to the squirrel's vibrant eye, while in *Phasmides* (2013) animals and plants seem to almost merge into each other: the stick insects' camouflage make them look like dry sticks, a living and non-living element. *Ginkgo* (2014) reveals the segmented leaves of an almost abstract tree and, in the background, the presence of human beings proves to be a furtive passing through. His argentic black and white photographs are unframed and gathered in small groups, to reinvent new visual connections where each image dialogues with the others, a metaphor of the complex system of living phenomenon.

Jochen Lempert was born in 1958 in Moers (Germany), he currently lives and works in Hamburg. His work was shown in many solo and group exhibitions worldwide: *Fundació Miró, Barcelona (Spain) 2022*; *Villa Carmignac, Porquerolles (France) 2021*; *Le Crédac, Ivry-sur-seine (France) 2020*; *Bildmuseet, Umeå (Sweden) 2018*; *CA2M, Madrid (Spain) 2018*. In 2017, he was awarded with the Camera Austria Award for Contemporary Photography.

## ALEXANDRA LEYKAUF

### Stick Men, 2021

7 silk-screened mirrors, Braak Mann, 183 x 33 cm. Braak Frau, 174 x 31 cm. Dickes Bein, 157 x 44 cm. Mund, 174 x 47 cm. Possendorf, 137 x 69 cm. Kind, 118 x 26 cm. Boddenbjerg, 89 x 39 cm.  
Courtesy the artist

It is by digging into various collections of prehistoric arts that Alexandra Leykauf found some enigmatic representations of small human-like wooden statues: this is the starting point of her work *Stick Men*. The more ancient statues are dated from 500 years before Christ and embody divinities from German paganism, in which the first human-like couple was formed from two stranded logs found by the sea side. By appropriating wood, humanity created idols in their image initiating therefore a circle of creation-representation.

Her artistic research often starts with a deep research in the meanders of archives or libraries seeking images that she can also collect from the vestige of a burnt movie theater or an abandoned theater. She removes them from their context, challenging the original aspect the image and the notion of author. Her installations usually propose an unprecedented layout of photographs, copies or video through a staging work within the exhibition space. It is in that sense that she is close to the figure of the "artiste-sémionaute" (described by art critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud), an artist who "travels" in between the signs and cultures they spend time with to "trace lines of thought" that are meaningful and rhizoidal in a moment where the abundance of signs challenges us to the vacuity of the global discourse.

With *Stick Men*, the artist invites the viewer to reflect themselves in the mirrors of her installation, as the echo of this circle of creation-representation that she offers to appropriate through the game of an ontological play on perspective. The simple and abstract looking statues, carry a slight anthropomorphist dimension – a mouth – leaving space for projection and imagination where matters of identification can be questioned.

*Alexandra Leykauf was born in 1976 in Nuremberg (Germany), she lives and works in Berlin. She graduated from the Fine Arts Academy of Nuremberg, and moved to Amsterdam to study photography and video at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. She finishes her curriculum at the Amsterdam Royal Fine Arts Academy. Alexandra Leykauf's works were shown in numerous exhibitions including at the GAK Bremen, Bremen, Germany (2022), Villa du Parc, Centre d'art contemporain, Annemasse, France (2020), Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea, England (2017), Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles, France (2016), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2011), or the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris, Paris, France (2011).*

## SONYA SCHÖNBERGER

### LOSS, 2022

Diptych, 2 photographs, mirror, hinges,  
50 x 60 cm / 23 x 32 cm  
Courtesy the artist

Sonya Schönberger lives and works in Berlin where she studied social anthropology to pursue her schooling at the Universität der Künste. Her artistic practice, deeply marked by an examination of the impact of historical traumas on human beings, specifically focuses on a work on memory, testimony and archiving. Multidisciplinary artist, Schönberger is thus interested in several mediums, shifting from photography to theater or to installation. In her research, she studies urban transformations caused by political and social disrupts, demographic changes, but also the consequences of migrations and the loss of bearings stemming from it. She also pays attention to the effects of traumatic historical events on current generations. In this perspective, Schönberger carried a long work in Germany on young generations and their need to question and understand the past, expressed in issues of guiltiness and innocence, through material and immaterial testimonies. In the *LOSS* (2021) photography, the artist covers her face with the ashes of her deceased friend. This ceremonial alludes to the connection that existed between her and the late person. She also installs a mirror on the image so that the viewer can reflect themselves in it and be a part of the artist's thought.

*Her work was part of numerous artist residencies and exhibitions in Germany and abroad: Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry (UK) 2021; Kunsthaus, Dresden 2020 (Germany); FRAGMENTA, Malta 2017; IVS Gallery, Karachi (Pakistan) 2015; Museum der Dinge, Berlin (Germany) 2014.*



## ANIKA SCHWARZLOSE

**Tank, 2013**

**Techniques of Redefining Boundaries, 2022**

Tank, vidéo, projection, 18:11 min.

Techniques of Redefining Boundaries, 18 photographs, 40 x 50 cm each

Courtesy the artist

Born in Berlin in 1982, Anika Schwarzlose lives and works in Amsterdam. She graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and the Konst-Högskolan in Malmö, Sweden. Artist and researcher, she explores through her work the power and manipulation of images in the representation of historical and politic events. With her series of photos *Disguise and Deception. A mimetic exchange of strategies for make believe* (2015) Schwarzlose seeks to decrypt and question the operating mechanisms of images, especially in a military context. She carries out an investigative work on the experiments of the group "Tarnen und Täuschen", the special unit of the former GDR army developed during the Cold War, and still active today, in charge of producing and implementing camouflage and visual trickery techniques. For example, this group would make fictional equipment aiming at troubling the perception of the enemy by giving the impression of the presence of important human resources and means on field. It is in this perspective that Anika Schwarzlose carries a research and creation work questioning our visual codes to investigate on the principles of camouflage and its forms, in-between visibility and invisibility. The movie Tank is part of this investigation: a still frame of the mimetic object, conceived to be transportable and easy to install in the space, is here decontextualized and displayed. A member of the Bundeswehr staff is inflating a fake tank unfolding in the room. It then progressively deflates to reach its initial position again on the floor, breathless.

*Her works were presented in the context of many exhibitions and festivals among which the International Film Festival in Rotterdam (Netherlands) 2021, or at the Foam Fotografiemuseum in Amsterdam (Netherlands) where the Disguise and Deception (2014) project was revealed.*

## DANIEL STEEGMANN MANGRANÉ

**Phasmides, 2012**

Film 16 mm transféré en vidéo HD couleur,

22 min 41 sec

Courtesy Galerie Esther Schipper, Berlin

Daniel Steegmann Mangrané was born in Barcelona (Spain) in 1977, he lives and works in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). His protean artistic process questions the relationship between nature and culture through various techniques, such as drawing, sculpture, video or installation. Mesmerized by the Amazonian forest, an essential element of his research process, he addresses in his creation some interactions between living things to transcribe the relationship between the work and the viewer in an organic unity exempt from any form of hierarchic organization of reality. Particularly concerned by biology and anthropology, Steegmann Mangrané is interested in the work carried in the 1950's by Brazilian artists Lygia Clark (1920-1988) and Hélio Oiticica (1937-1980), characterized by the will to involve the viewer in the artistic process. Poetry also feeds Steegmann Mangrané's research. He digs into the texts of poet Stela do Patrocinio (1941-1992) leading a reflection on body, space, apparition, disappearance and perception.

In *Phasmides*, 2012 (16mm film), the artist captures in a both natural and artificial setting, the apparition and the vanishing of stick insects, and their long, extended and mimetic bodies. In 1935 already, in the surrealist journal "Minotaure", Roger Caillois was interested in the assimilation and dissolution potential of this mimicry master. During the sequences, the paradox of the presence/absence of the insect thanks to his camouflage, produces in the work a long wait and a delicate surprise. The life of those "insect-leafs", evokes the possibility of an organic integration between the being and its ecosystem, and testifies on the place of living things and the sensory perception of the viewer at the heart of Daniel Steegmann Mangrané's poetry.

*His work were displayed in different solo and group shows worldwide: Punta della Dogana, Venice (Italy) 2020 ; Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, Milano (Italy) 2019 ; IAC, Villeurbanne (France) 2019 ; 14th Lyon Biennial, Lyon (France) 2017 ; Lafayette Anticipations, Paris (France) 2015.*