





Einfacher Hausrat Fig. 44, 2020 (on a display by Bar du Bois)

Gesso on beech plywood, spruce, 83 x 50 x 24,8 cm, exhibition views: *Unter Flaschen – Die Fledermaus in der Bar du Bois*, University Gallery Heiligenkreuzer Hof Vienna, 13.5. – 24.10.2020, photos: kunst-dokumentation.com



## *Hausstaub und Stubenfliegen*

published in: SPEED (boredom and despair), a publication created by Julia Steinbach and Laura Hatting

Der Mistkübel unter der Abwasch ist fast immer kleiner als der Müllbeutel. Somit ist er meist voll, wenn der Sack noch gar nicht voll ist. Manchmal fällt das gerade Weggeworfene über den überstehenden, ungestützten Rand des Müllbeutels und zu Boden.

Die Entwürfe entstanden aus der Anregung für die vom Kriege betroffenen Gegenden gegen die übliche Händlerware Stellung zu nehmen; es sind charaktvolle Typen für den einfachen Hausgebrauch, für die einfachen Verhältnisse und Bedürfnisse in der einfachsten, aber für das Material und Werkzeug charakteristischen Art. Jeder nicht

Widerstand gegen etwas zu hegen, von dem ich weiß, dass es gemacht werden muss, fühlt sich sinnlos an und das Nachdenken darüber wie Zeitverschwendung. Trotzdem bleibt das Nudelsieb tagelang im Becken stehen und der gräuliche Rückstand vom Kochwasser trocknet ein.

im Charakter der Sache gelegene Schmuck ist absichtlich vermieden. Vollständige Zimmereinrichtungen sind mit vollem Bewusstsein nicht gegeben. Großer Wert ist darauf zu legen, das gezimmerte Möbel in seinen Verbindungen wirken zu lassen und dem massiven Holz die Eigenart durch die Bearbeitung mit dem Messer, bzw. dem Hobel nicht zu nehmen. Derartige Möbel dürfen nicht geschliffen, nicht mit Glaspapier behandelt oder gar poliert werden.

Staub liegt am dunkel gestrichenen Betonboden, am Wannenrand im Badezimmer, unter dem Sofa. Staub flockt rund um den Verteilerstecker und das dort angesteckte Ladekabel. Dem Sessel, der neben dem Bett steht, habe ich die Funktion eines Nachtkästchens gegeben. Die zwei Bücher sind dazu da, das vibrierende Läuten des Handyweckers abzdämpfen.

Höher als ein Sessel  
und tiefer als ein Tisch,  
bestimmt zum Aufstellen für Waschgefäße  
usw.; auch die Ver-  
spreizung der Füße kann  
durch Einlegen von  
Latten als Auflagefläche  
benützt werden.

Eine Fliege kreist zwischen mir und der aktivierten Computer-Kamera, landet auf meinem Arm, hebt wieder ab, landet auf der Tastatur. Mein Gegenüber ist irritiert, weil ich im Versuch die Fliege zu vertreiben mit den Armen fuchtle.

Ich lerne, dass sich Stubenfliegen, jene „tagaktiven, temporalen Spezialisten“, rasant vermehren. Durch gute Umgebungsbedingungen, beispielsweise in Ställen, können bis zu 15 Generationen pro Jahr entstehen. Die Vorstellung einer solchen reproduktiven Geschwindigkeit macht mich schwindelig.

In meiner Familie haben sich bis jetzt alleinerziehende Frauen neben ihrer Erwerbstätigkeit als Fabrikarbeiterin und Krankenschwester um ihre einzigen Töchter gekümmert. Habe ich das Privileg, mich gerade nur um

mich selbst zu kümmern? *Self-Care*.

An der Armstütze rückwärts um einen Zapfen drehbar ist ein Brett befestigt, das aufgeklappt als Lehne und zugeklappt als Hackbrett usw. benützt werden kann.

Ich google „Hausmittel gegen niedrigen Blutdruck“. Dusche morgens erst warm, dann kalt. Viel trinken. Treibe regelmäßig Sport. Auf ausreichend Salz achten. Auch beim Stehen in Bewegung bleiben.

Die Krise bewirkt eine Wiederbelebung traditioneller, genderspezifischer Rollenverteilungen, von denen angenommen wurde, dass sie hinter uns liegen. Ich frage mich, wie und was ich zu einer kollektiven Neuverhandlung ebendieser Strukturen beitragen kann.

Auch beim Stehen in Bewegung bleiben.

Das Holz für die Rückenlehne wird gebogen und an den Armstützen verspannt. Das Profil der Armstützen ist rückwärts nach oben flach, nach unten halbrund (Auflager für den Ellbogen), vorne jedoch oben halbrund und unten flach (Auflager für die Handfläche).

Ich stelle mir die umgekehrte Besetzung im Möbelhaus-Werbespot vor: „It will be what we did in here that will make us stronger out there“, prophezeit die Frauenstimme aus dem Off, während ein Mann einem Mädchen bei den Schulaufgaben hilft, ein anderer mit einem Baby im Arm aus dem Fenster schaut und ein weiterer zwei Kinder links und rechts auf seinen Hüften wiegt.

Verbreitung des Traggestells durch Verkeilung, Zahnverbindung beim Fußgestell, Fußplatte aufgedübelt.

Die Bestandteile des Teigs haben sich zu einem klebrigen Ganzen zusammengefügt. Es lässt sich nicht gut auf dem Blech aufstreichen. Ich betrachte meine Hand, den Kühlschrankgriff, dann greife ich zu. Drücke meine andere Hand in die Masse und auf die Tischplatte, die Sitzfläche des Hockers. Berühre mit teigigen Händen die Glasscheibe des Backrohrs, den Vorhang, den Wasserkocher.

Einfacher Hausrat, Kaiserlich-Königliches Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie Wien: Eigenverl.; 1916

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stubenfliege>

<https://www.textezurkunst.de/articles/im-virtuellen-kollektiv-gesprochen/>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFm0Z5op7b4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFm0Z5op7b4&feature=emb_logo)





The position of the voice,  
2020  
PU casting resin, stained  
beech, silicone, aluminum  
56 x 40 x 18 cm  
(panel size)  
exhibition views:  
*Haus Wien*, 21.09. –  
27.09.2020, photos:  
Jacqueline Neubauer



Present habitual, 2019  
 Stained beech, aluminum,  
 PU casting resin, silicone  
 54 x 200 x 14 cm

exhibition views: *hiccup*,  
 GOMO, Vienna,  
 11.10. – 05.11.2019,  
 photos: Sophie Pölzl



Mit den restlichen Erdnüssen legt sie eine Spiralförmigkeit auf das äußere Fensterbrett. Sie schließt das Fenster, schließlich ist November. Die Farbe des Vogels hat der Bestellung vom Holmquist aus New York eine neue Richtung gegeben. In diesem Moment scheint es unumgänglich: Das Kaffeeservice will sie lichtbraun grundieren und zum Kontrast braucht es vertikale Strichstrukturen – blaugrün schillernd, also aus Siliziumcarbid. Das Rezept dafür findet sich im roten Notizbuch, da ist sie sicher: 1940 neuerlich entwickelt, für den Cider Krug zu dem sie der Bernhard Leach überredet hatte: Bauchig, dickwandig mit starker Rillenbildung, plump. Ein Übersetzungsfehler der Wiener Formen, denkt sie. Aber dunkel und geheimnisvoll blaugrün schillernd.

Der Blick fokussiert nun scharf auf das rote Buch, das irgendwo zwischen den Werkstücken im Regal vom Plischke eingeklemmt sein müsste. Von hier gegenüber sieht das Regal selbst aus wie eines ihrer Rezepturnotizbücher, vollgestellt mit kleinen Formeln, die sich in die Höhe schrauben, und in Summe so viel mehr sein können. Dazwischen kleine Englischübungen, wie der hässliche Cider Krug.

Jetzt fallen ihr auch die Anfangsschwierigkeiten wieder ein: Kriegsgerüchte. Familiensorgen. Die Ausgeschlossenheit. Das Fremde um sie herum. Ihre Knopfproduktion. Stabilität und Gleichförmigkeit in kleinsten Variationen verkäuflich zu machen.

Mitten in ihren Grübeleien steht sie schließlich unten im Hof und hat bereits mechanisch nachgefühlt ob die Werkstatt von ihren Mitarbeiterinnen auch verlässlich abgeschlossen wurde. Sie geht nach links, obwohl rechts schneller wäre. Die spätnachmittägliche Hektik am Hyde Park hat sie nie verstanden und das Gefühl um einen Kopf kleiner zu sein, inmitten dieser Menschenmasse, erdet sie meist. Außerdem gelingen selbst ihr diese ausdämmernden Herbstfarben nur in Annäherungswerten.

Ausgesprochen ambivalent stiehlt sie sich am Speakers Corner vorbei. Das ist ein ihr unangenehmer Ort. Niemals wird sie einen eigenen Gedanken wieder so prägnant formulieren können, wie es hier passiert. Außer in ihren Werkstücken.

Ein Schluckauf katapultiert sie aus dem Gedankenstrom. Verunsichert schaut sie in den Himmel und entdeckt erneut den Vogelschwarm. Jetzt kommt sie sich beobachtet vor.

Der Marmorne Torbogen, der sie sonst so fasziniert, lässt sie heute völlig kalt. Sie kommt vorbei am Selfridges Department Store. Dafür wechselt sie sogar die Straße: All die Bestrebung dieser Kunden ihren Lebensstandard zu verbessern – das ist eine Arbeitsdroge. Könnte sie aus diesem Gefühl eine Vase formen, wäre sie überaus zufrieden. Sie lässt Bond Street hinter sich, ebenso den Oxford Circus, wo sie nach links dreht und 10 Minuten vor Vorstellungsbeginn das Kino in der Regent Street erreicht. Bevor sie eine Karte kauft, mustert sie nochmals das Plakat: Schneeweiß ist die Vogelfeder aus dem blutroten Hintergrund geschnitten. "The Birds" steht in schwarzen Lettern darauf. Nur wegen dem Plakat, freut sie sich schon: Es ist simpel. Und hat eine geradlinige Form.

Georg Petermichl



Bedroom of the Lucie Rie  
apartment, 2019  
Marker on glass, alu-  
minum, silicone, inkjet print  
on paper, 50 x 70 x 2 cm

exhibition views: *hiccup*,  
GOMO, Vienna,  
11.10. – 05.11.2019





Substructure, 2019  
Gesso and gouache on  
birch plywood, redwood  
(Liane Zimblar's patio  
bench), 207 x 37 x 45 cm

exhibition views: *The San-  
tee Alley*, Mackey Garage  
Top, Los Angeles,  
07. – 13.03.2019,  
photos: Esteban Schimpf



## *Reading for a Substructure*

Dear Reader,

Since October, Eva Engelbert has been sleeping on top of race cars.

The race cars are icons printed on a bed frame: ornamental images hidden beneath a mattress. Paraphrasing the modernist architect Adolf Loos, an absence of ornament can be understood as a form of resistance. "Ornament is wasted labor power and hence wasted health."<sup>1</sup>

Dear Reader,

Since October Eva has been sleeping on top of paintings as an artist-in-residence in one of the Mackey Apartments in the Mid-Wilshire neighborhood of Los Angeles. She has been riding city buses. Dear Reader, If you are an artist, what is the work you do while sitting on a bench or in traffic? If you are working-class, what is the work you do while sleeping?

Eva has been studying the work of Liane Zimble, the first woman in Europe to attain an architect's license. Zimble arrived in Los Angeles, fleeing Nazi Austria the same year she became credentialed. In Los Angeles, Zimble designed patios and interiors, many for the homes of European Jewish exiles. Eva has been looking at the city through bus windows and through history, reframing. The 28 bus downtown. An armoire or a cabinet or a square chest of drawers, fit with cut-outs, ports of entry, ways in.

Dear Rider,

The parceling of land and redlining of property in Los Angeles is a history of erasure and revision. Following the National Housing Act of 1934 and the inception of the Federal Housing Authority, the Home Owners Loan Corporation graded Los Angeles along racial and economic lines. You can see this history at work in the houses designed for the middle class in the nineteen-fifties and sixties. Cool straight lines hold a sliding door, a glass membrane between living room and patio, between sofa and bench. The patio redistributes space, neither inside nor out: a fantasy of class ascension. The patio is to the shopping center what the car is to the bus. The rocking could put you to sleep.

Dear Adolf Loos,

What is *waste*?

What is the difference between conservation and preservation, reading and riding?

Sleeping, you do neither.

Asa Mendelsohn, March 2019

1 Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime," 1908





Sample Ring 1-4, 2019

Aluminum, acetal, grommets, split rings, diverse materials (material samples collected by Liane Zimble), various dimensions, exhibition views: *The Santee Alley*, Mackey Garage Top, Los Angeles, 07. – 13.03.2019





# HA Arbeit, 2018

36 Books and movies on DVD, wood, acrylic paint, cardboard, various dimensions

exhibition views: *Archipelago. Insel des unvorhersehbaren Denkens*, Hauptbücherei am Gürtel/Wiener Festwochen, 29.05. – 16.06.2018

*HA Arbeit* focuses on the Viennese workers' libraries at the end of the 19th century, whose history contributed significantly to the accessibility and democratization of the Austrian library system. Working in the Main Library of Vienna, Eva Engelbert asked library employees from different departments to recommend books and films that speak to the idea of labor, creating a unique bibliography. *Das Kapital*; *Bartleby, the Scrivener*; *Human Resources*; *Class Relations*; *Sex Work(s)*; *Insane*; *Blade Runner*; *Das Burnout-Syndrom*; *Das Geld reicht nie*, are just some of the 36 titles. The gaps in the library shelves, the original home of the materials, are filled with cardboard stand-ins created by the artist which allow a cross-reading of the library's inventory in relation to understandings of labor over time and across disciplines. Each cardboard stand-in also has a corresponding printed sign, with a cut out of the abstracted initials of the participant that recommended each work.







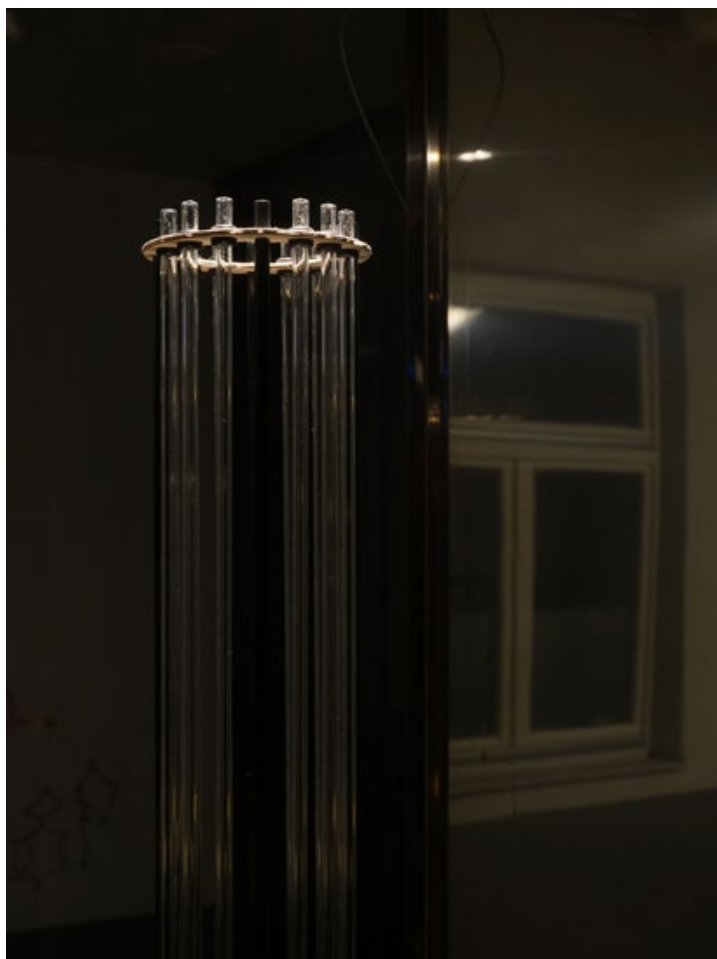


Nightlight I (1904), 2018  
Glass, aluminum, light  
fixture, 40 x 24 cm

Nightlight II (beam), 2018  
Glass, aluminum, glass  
paint, carbon, cardboard,  
rubber rings, 150 x 12 cm

Nightlight III (fungus), 2018  
PU casting resin, light  
fixture, 15 x 10 cm

exhibition views: *Nightlight*,  
Eva Engelbert, Elektro  
Gönner, Vienna, 15.02. –  
14.03.2018





Alternative drafts, 2017

Wood, paint, cement, sand, pigment, steel, various dimensions

exhibition views: *The Haze*, Eva Engelbert and Michael Strasser, Galerija SC, Zagreb, 17.11. – 02.12.2017



- (reads) "Haze is an atmospheric condition in which various particulates obscure the clarity of the sky. It may appear brownish or blueish and results in the visual effect of a loss of contrast in the subject."
- What is the subject?
- The object.
- But it is fake anyway.
- Is it?
- Its provenance before it was accessioned by the collection is at present unknown.
- How can you find out?
- By asking questions, also in other countries.
- Yes!... I wonder, what difference does it make when, in fact, there is no difference between the original and the fake.
- My friend Yves values her Rimowa copy very much.
- Fake, copy, replica, reinterpretation, imitation, parody, homage, cover, appropriation...
- I would call it alternative drafts.
- Because the plinths became architectural models?
- And the parrots eagles.
- (reads) "The museum plinths, round bodied, elaborated, nostalgic futuristic, were designed in 1987 during the renovation of the new museum spaces at Roosevelt Square."
- They are more present than the artworks and artifacts they support. Their shape reminds me of a massive building in front of my window. I liked to copy but slightly change them. Engage with them and return it to circulation.
- (reads) "A pair of porcelain parrots, Qing Dynasty, 18th century. Handy in size, glazed in yellow, blue, but mostly green. Exhibited at Mimara Museum in a fitted showcase and pictured in the catalogue of the successful 1985 exhibition Ante Topic Mimara. Collection Chinese Art."
- The two of them, research tells me, symbolize affection, fidelity, and deep, enduring love.
- Like plinths and objects. A long lasting relationship.
- Museums and their history.
- Back to, quote "To a large extent haze is pollution - a widespread form of air pollution - and a cause for concern."



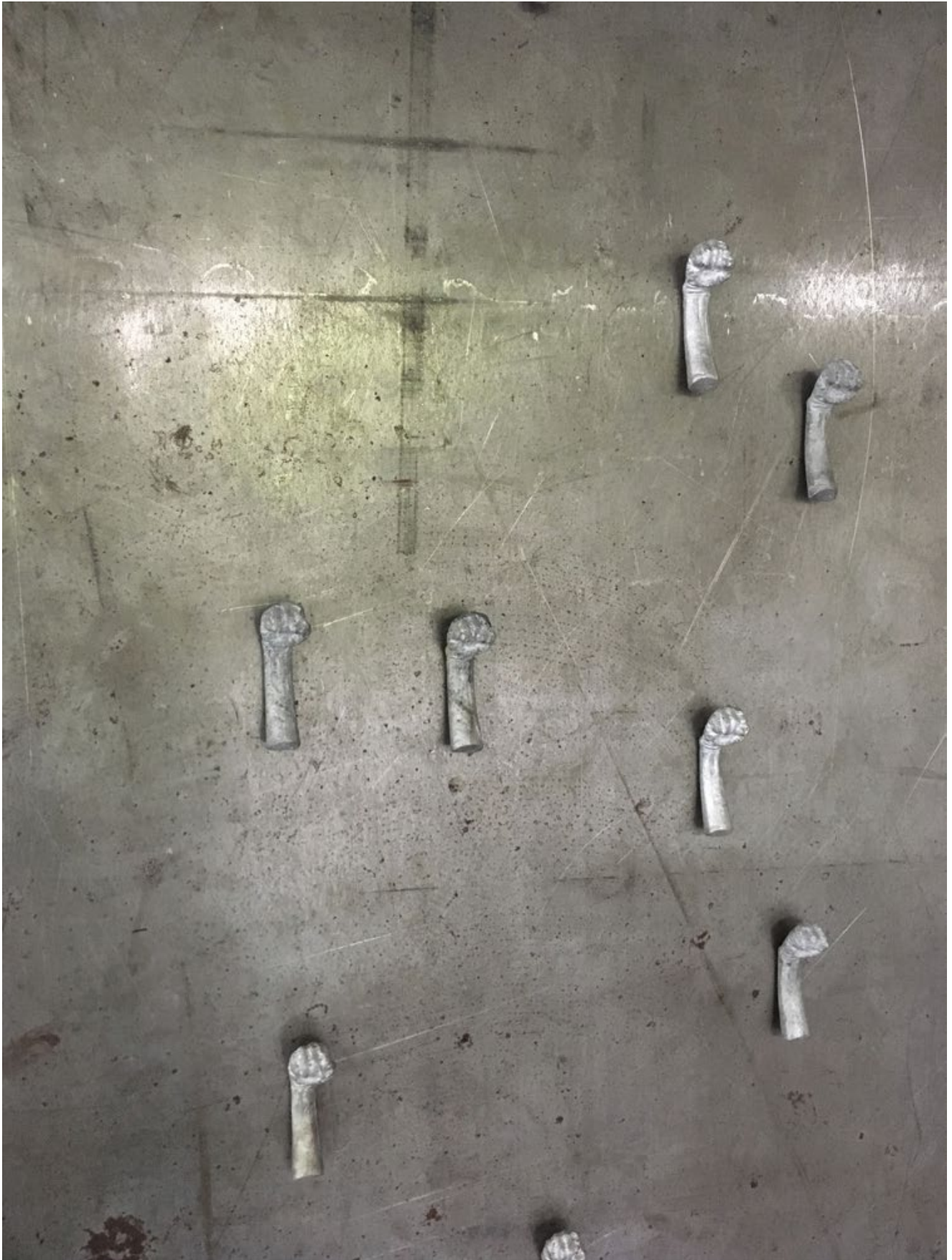


Formation, 2017

Reclaimed wood, indigo, cement, sand, various dimensions

exhibition views: *Dissidence*, Eva Engelbert, Studio Kalahan, Yogyakarta, 21. – 23.03.2017





1928/2017, 2017

Aluminum casts of a found object, magnets, photocopy, various dimensions

exhibition views: *Dissidence*, Eva Engelbert, Studio Kalahan, Yogyakarta, 21. – 23.03.2017

Laurens.



22 Desember 1928. Kongres Perempuan Indonesia yang pertama. Dari kiri kekanan: Ny. B. Guilarso, Ny. S. Kartawijono, Ny. Harjadiningsih, Ny. Hadjar Dewantara, Ny. Soekarno (Ketua Kongres), Ny. Soenarjo Mangunopriyo (sedang memukul), Ny. Sumardjati Suleh, Ny. Moendjoh, Ny. Anas, Ny. Dendjengsoe. (foto rep. 1849)



15 Desember 1928. Panitia inti Kongres Perempuan Indonesia dari kiri kekanan: Ny. Hadjar Dewantara (Wakil Taman Siswa), Dr. Soekanto (Wakil Otonomo-Kebudayaan), dan Soeparto (Pusat Indonesia) sekurang-kurangnya Soekartowijono. (foto rep. Mayu)



### *Dissidence*

The exhibition combines three autonomous works that I created during my residency at Sewon Art Space. What connects them is the reference to the human body, more specifically to a collective body, and the possibilities of resistance within the newly opened space at Studio Kalahan.

The forms and their materials are global – wooden beams and joints, concrete bases, raised fists out of aluminum attached with magnets to a metal door. Still very site-specific elements are integrated in the works: the teak wood is reclaimed and derives from traditional Javanese architecture, the concrete is colored with indigo paste from East Java and the aluminum is gained by melting former motorcycle license plates. A copy of a book page shows two rare pictures of the *First Indonesian Women's Congress of 1928* in Yogyakarta, which marks the recognized beginning of the organized women's movement.

The photographic work underlines an abstract investment in the land. Two women, one from New York City, the other from Yogyakarta, stage a pose, building a formation of defiance and support at once.



Body Mind Soul (Camille and Bu Pur), 2017

Archival print mounted on aluminum, 21 x 18 cm

exhibition views: *Dissidence*, Eva Engelbert, Studio Kalahan, Yogyakarta, 21. – 23.03.2017





### Two Chairs, Three Forms, 2016

Steel, car paint, blueback paper, 180 x 200 x 40 cm / 30 x 40 cm

exhibition views: *Coupé International Vol. Three – Eva Engelbert and Maja Marković*,  
French Pavilion, Zagreb, 15. – 24.6.2016, photos: Coupé International

As a guest artist, Eva Engelbert familiarised herself with the context of the French Pavilion. Her research followed links between Zagreb and Vienna: she focused on the furniture factory *Bothe&Ehrmann* which had a branch in Vienna and their headquarters at the terrain of Zagreb Rally. The factory was a symbol of economic success and importance of the timber industry by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, while its decline was marked by the French Pavilion, financed by Peugeot, which announced the rise of the automobile industry. Traces of the former factory directed the artist towards two chairs. Both are stored at museum depots, one in Vienna, the other one in Zagreb. Photographs of the chairs are attached to two metal panels, leaving a third one empty. All three panels in form of circular segments mirror the cylindrical form of the French Pavilion as well as the shapes of the visitors. They are varnished with car finish from Peugeot's latest range. In her work Eva Engelbert contrasts already forgotten and rare specimen of furniture with the shiny surface of the car industry. The usual procedure of displaying industrial achievements is reversed and simple artefacts take the place of a hyper-designed presentation. The chairs became a document of the depot itself, which invites us to reflect on its surrounding historical, social and economic factors. (excerpt from *Lines of Representation* by Irena Borić)



Chair – Wagner, Otto, design, 1912; Bothe & Ehrmann (?), production, Vienna, 1912; 95 × 44 × 52 cm; Museum of Applied Arts Vienna, Depot



Chair – Designer unknown, Pilar, Martin, commission; Bothe & Ehrmann, production, Zagreb, 1904; 93 × 46 × 48 cm; Museum of Arts and Crafts Zagreb, Depot



Spatial emblem for G.B., 2016

Carbon, PU casting resin, Velcro, fabric, aluminum, 47 x 180 cm

exhibition views: *The Observatory*, Special Astrophysical Observatory of the Russian Academy of Sciences (SAO RAS), Karachay-Cherkessia, 16.10. – 05.11.2016

*Dear Galina Balaschowa,*

*On my way to Rome last summer I picked up a magazine for the flight and came across your biography. The article labeled you the „creative mastermind behind the Soviet space program.” In the midst of a militarized space race, you brought the principles of modern Soviet architecture into the final frontier. As the only female architect in a team of engineers and scientists, you designed the interiors of rockets, space ships, control rooms, and living quarters. You created a semblance of reality in a fabricated environment. You built a world in outer space — from the walls all the way to the emblems on the astronauts’ suits.*

*I like to look at your beautiful watercolors, I look at them over and over again. They are delicate and precise, arriving to me from an unknowable time.*

*You made color systems to suggest spatial orientation, and a feeling of gravity in a space that has no gravity. You said that you didn’t feel that gender was an issue, but you still earned less than your male colleagues. You said that even though you have been associated with space travel for almost three decades, and continue to follow the development of this daring human discipline, you never wanted to fly into space. I dedicate my work, here at the Special Astrophysical Observatory of the Russian Academy of Sciences, to you.*

*Eva*





Land der Hämmer, 2015

Cement, sand, debris, 40 x 40 x 4 cm (dimension of a tile)

exhibition views: *Mission W*, Biosphärenpark Wienerwald, Vienna, 04. – 31.10.2015, [www.mission-w.net](http://www.mission-w.net), photos: Studio DCW

*Land der Hämmer* is a sculptural artifact of the artist's engagement with the Nazi past of the Schirach-Bunker in the Vienna woods. It also preserves a personal action. The impulse to smash the bunker's concrete remnants is the spatial expression of a "liberation" from a kind of architecture which she experiences as a political straitjacket and an instrument of power and control. At the same time, by this process, she breaks the material down into its component parts, using them to construct a fragile sculpture. Layered one on top of another, the tiles exhibit different levels of processing: some are completely sanded down, while intact chunks of concrete protrude from others. Things that do not disintegrate: the terrazzo floor in the kitchen of post-war apartments, built from the rubble of the bombed-out city; *Mein Kampf* in bookshelves, disguised in a crochet cover; detailed plans of the bunker in the city and state archives – right up to the moment of capitulation, the Nazis were still adapting and improving it. All of these things bear witness to the "marriage" of architecture and ideological insanity. The bunker is a place in the forest where we can palpably feel the continued effect of the past on the present. It is a place where different standpoints and possible ways of relating to (one's own) history can become the subject of a shared discussion. (Ella Gallieni)



*Open to all*

Address identification



*Rainwater management*

Coexi

New Universe, 2014

Pigment prints, framed, wall paint, adhesive letters, 110 x 540 cm / 20 x 29,7 cm  
exhibition views: *Pipe Dream*, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, 29.01. – 14.03.2015





*Das Neue Universum* was a popular amusement park located on the site of today's Nordwestbahnhof freight station between 1843 and 1870. This place of entertainment was also a political one: During the Viennese October Revolution worker assemblies were held there, at times resulting in bloody conflicts. Lithographs from the 1840ies in the collection of the Wien Museum show the park, its attractions and visitors strolling under the trees. On the basis of these reproduced prints and different (language) patterns, which she found used in both the submissions of an architectural competition for the redesign of the abandoned freight station terrain as well as in political rhetoric, Eva Engelbert constructs collaged images that oscillate between nostalgia and science fiction. The cut-out shapes, inspired by the blocks drawn in the plans, reveal hidden universes and make linguistic representation and visual presence collide. (Irena Borić)

Material: Wien Museum, Stadt Wien (MA 21)  
 enf ernst niklaus fausch architekten, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Sauerbruch Hutton Architekten, Podrecca & Podreka, Riegler Riewe Architekten ZT Ges.m.b.H, Dietrich Untertrifaller Architekten, Gasparin & Meier Architekten, Pool Architektur ZT GmbH, ARGE frauen bauen urban





Versammlung, 2013  
34 C-Prints, framed, felt  
26 x 34,6 cm

Tokyo Blue/Congo Blue,  
2013  
2 C-Prints, framed  
125 x 100 cm

Musa tropicana, 2014  
Wood, lacquer, borrowed  
potted plants  
75 x 140 x 110 cm

Zugvogel, 2014  
Concrete, relict of a bronze  
sculpture by Alois Heidel  
(1958/59)  
150 x 260 x 28,5 cm

exhibition views: *In the  
field*, Eva Engelbert, MUSA,  
Vienna, 04. – 28.02.2014,  
photos: MUSA





## *In the field*

The works presented in the exhibition were created in parallel, bringing together things apparently distant from each other. This creates a resemblance to theatrical backdrops, an appearance which the pieces then investigate.

The photographs *Tokyo Blue* and *Congo Blue* depict blue-colored foil stretched out in the middle of the site of Vienna's Nordbahnhof. The Nordbahnhof was one of the most important railway stations in Habsburg Austria; today it is a place where waste ground is being transformed into a new city district. Elements of the picture appear through a filter: shimmering through the foil are the contours of the new buildings which constantly encroach onto the undeveloped spaces. Nothing is directly known about the origin of the names "Tokyo Blue" and "Congo Blue," which are part of a popular filter system for lighting design, photography and architecture. They are just "great effect colors," to be assigned, without context, to a location. Which blue would the picture's location have, were it to be turned into a color? And if the light was artificially altered, what photographic image of the site would result? The construction is reminiscent of a photo studio backdrop. But placed here, in a gap between buildings, it becomes the main subject of the photo, a projection screen for departure and distance.

The subjects of Eva Engelbert's "zoological" research are animal sculptures in concrete, stone and bronze, commissioned by the Viennese municipal authorities in the 1950s and 1960s. The sculptures, dubbed "exotic" at the time, were placed in many municipal buildings and public housing projects. Mostly anachronistic – not in dialogue with contemporary art of the time – they simultaneously thematize and domesticate the fantasy of "distance." Scattered throughout the city, often hidden behind elevators or other architectural additions, they survive silently in time. Christa Vogelmayer's elephant grows together with the surrounding prickly hedge, while Alfred Hrdlicka's playing lions sink slowly into the ground. A sealion by sculptor Othmar Jarmen was recently moved, when a housing project in Vienna's Darnautgasse could not be renovated and had to be demolished. The empty plinth in front of the dilapidated building forms a monument to disappearance, without itself disappearing. Engelbert locates the animal sculptures and collects them. The result is the photo series *Versammlung* (assembly): a cartography, both historical and contemporary, of props which evoke both home and the "other."

The piece called *Zugvogel* (migratory bird) shows a plinth with the remains of Alois Heidel's fountain-sculpture, completed in 1958-59. The goose, later stolen, once stood together with two other sculptures in the Johann-Kapshof, a public housing project in Vienna's 20th district. Since the theft, the sculpture's relict, a bronze baseplate, has been stored in the depot of MUSA, the contemporary art collection of the city of Vienna. The depot's function as an archive is made clear, but a question is also raised: whether it makes sense to limit the accessibility of art objects, protecting them from vandalism but also taking away their function as art in public space.

Recreated on the exact dimensions of the staircases in public housing projects, a model-like staircase serves as a presentation surface for typical house plants with tropical origins. The plants of the installation *Musa tropicana* are on loan from staff offices in Vienna's municipal departments 18 (for city planning and urban development) and 21 (for district planning and land use), which are located in the floors above the exhibition space. Here, the white cube, the civil service, and thickets of bureaucracy encounter one another. (P.P.)

