

Filippo Berta

Born in Italy in 1977, lives and works in Bergamo.

„Homo Homini Lupus”

HD Video, 3:00 min

2011

The title, „man is wolf to man”, is a quote from the comedic Roman playwright Titus Maccius Plautus. Several wolves, on a desolate plane, are fighting over a flag as if their lives depended on it. The fight shows the power of the strongest and, at the same time, the necessity of imposing one’s self. The pack of wolves symbolises a homogenous human society, sustained by different and contradictory individuals, in which each one thinks only of themselves and is forever having to demonstrate their strength and power. The flag symbolises the human ambition to seize territory -and is a type of behaviour which is comparable to that of the wolf’s- territories that become a scene of fratricide.

Berta produces very strong images through this metaphor. Without intervening in the action, the animal behaviour of the wolves is left to run its course and to make a connection between identity and state simply in relation to the work’s title.

Élise Florenty

Born in 1978 in Pessac, France.

Marcel Türkowsky

Born in 1978 in East Berlin, Germany.

They live and work in Paris and Berlin.

„Shut up like a telescope”

Mixed media installation

2013

The Franco-German artist duo have been working, since 2005, with storytelling in the fields of cinema and installation. Films, publications and exhibition projects manifest their artistic research on the irrational, the survival of myths, and mechanisms of resistance, from the Old to the New World. The physical passing through different countries form an essential part of their artistic practice as does their contact with marginal characters. Based on historic testimonies, archives and conversations the artists develop a mosaic of visions and a patchwork of ideas that seem to respond to Heiner Müller’s motto: “One function of drama is the invocation of

the dead; the dialogue with the dead must not stop until they deliver the future which has been buried with them.”

During the residency at Matadero Madrid the two artists have developed a narrative based installation in relation to a short story written by them. The story brings together pieces of various well know European tales, which talk about European dreams and nightmares. In Gdansk they display the fairytale at the gallery window, like an invitation to the audience to enter their world reflecting ideas on Europe.

Marco Godoy

Born in 1986 in Madrid, lives and works in Madrid and London.

„Claiming the Echo”

HD, 5:30 min

2012

„Devaluing an Image”

Installation

2011

Solfónica is the name of a choir that started in 2011 in line with the 15-M movement who sang in the streets during various demonstrations held in Spain and this choir is the protagonist in Claiming the Echo. Based on Henry Purcell’s scores, the singers phrase the words with a certain beauty: “That do not, do not represent us”, “Social peace is soon to be over” and “They call it democracy, but it isn’t”. The song is a weapon, a non-violent means of calling attention to one’s concerns. In Devaluing an Image, Godoy takes the Euro as an artistic medium, the most important symbol of the European Union, which denotes an elimination of borders and trust in a shared future, and yet, each European state has its own emblem on “its” Euro. Godoy has deleted the ownership of these coins. All that is left over is a worthless currency.

Klara Hobza

Born in 1975 in Pilsen, Czech Republic, lives and works in Berlin.

„Diving Through Europe”

Video Trilogy

Start of project 2010, expected end of project 2040

In 2010 the artist decided to dive through Europe, establishing a travel itinerary that began in Rotterdam going down to the Rhine, continuing along the Meno until the Meno-Danube channel and finally from the Danube on to the Black Sea. For this project the artist attended three diving classes in which she learnt to live underwater. Fixing a 20 to 30 day schedule whilst also not ruling out the possibility of failure. After only the first attempt at entering the water, at the Rotterdam port between the North Sea and the Rhine, we encounter tragicomic moments of slapstick. For Hobza, the glorious objective of perhaps being the first to dive her way around Europe is of least importance, her work is more focused on the attempt itself, which pushes her to the limits of what can be achieved. Europe could be travelled through much faster by other modes of transport than diving. However, Hobza follows the meandering natural courses of rivers across the landscape and continues her fantastic plan. Probably the deepest possible experience of Europe.

Lukas Hofer

Born in 1979 in Isny, Germany, lives and works in Berlin and New York.

„Melonflesh monument“

Mixed media installation

2013

Lukas Hofer's work navigates between art and architecture. Often physically immersive, his installations can occupy large spaces, and contain small details that can be explored intimately. Hofer creates references to history, and to approaches relative to society and individual identity. With the use of clear and translucent plastics, light, and images he creates environments that are both bewitching and irritating to the senses. During his residency Hofer has made Melonflesh Monument, an installation featuring a fragile, yet usable tower made from parts taken from previous works along with newly fabricated elements. Inside the construction, made of diverse and contradictory elements, different visual identities fight for dominance and attention. In form it is similar to the Tower of Babel, a structure that was doomed to failure as a result of conflicting identities and lexical confusion. In Melonflesh Monument, there is a state of schism caused by the antagonistic tension between the individual elements. Hofer's installation is a "conflicted construction" which is constantly "under construction". It seems remain an always-unfinished model for a type of unstable reality.

Francis Hunger

Born in 1976 in Dessau, Germany, lives and works in Leipzig.

„Willkommen in der Überproduktionskrise“ / „Welcome to the Crisis of Overproduction“

Poster, 59,4 x 42 cm, limited edition

2013

Feel free to take one

Forgotten, bizarre historical events, considered to be of secondary importance, are the starting point of an intensive research process and reflection by this conceptual artist, who examines political and social events as well as economic theories, so as to make them accessible in an artistic context.

Who is Europe for? Hunger has developed a very sharp piece: a limited edition poster that any visitor can take away with them. The image and title make reference to Romanticism and Pop-Art strategies. The artist recommends speaking about the crisis of overproduction rather than the financial crisis. As a way out of the crisis, he would prefer a change in values rather than handing out credit.

Cécile Ibarra

Born in 1984 in Tarbes, France, lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

„The residents”

Mixed media installation

2013

The artist mainly works with references to a place and its history, her work being particularly sensitive to the environment in which it arises. As a result there is a preference given to materials found in situ that on occasion also give evidence of having been used. Ibarra poses social and economical questions about society, which, as well as being dealt with seriously, are also faced with humour and wit.

During the residency at Matadero Madrid, Ibarra has developed an installation with found materials gathered from around the premises. She already brought a small video witch obeys an office window in Brussels during the night. You can see somebody moving around without knowing what is going on. It is up to your own imagination. During her stay in Madrid with seven other artists from abroad she developed an interview questioning the situation of an artist working internationally.

Through this installation Ibarra also questions the boundaries between fiction and reality, as well as trying to create new methods of production that involve other residents as a tool for a new collaborative economy.

Alicja Karska

Born in 1978 in Malbork.

Aleksandra Went

Born in 1976 in Gdańsk.

Artistic duet, collaborating since their graduation from the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk (2002). They live and work in Gdańsk and Warsaw.

„Closed Circuit”

Video

1:08 min

2006

The video by Karska/Went is basically a film still presenting a mirror image of a concrete water basin built among green grass, which is slowly being filled with water. The title of the work alludes to modern ecological solutions aiming at developing well-balanced water treatment, whose main objective is water economy through multiple usage, leading to the reduction of the exploitation of water resources. However, this work seems somehow disturbing, somewhat pinching.

The water basin, symbolizing the technological progress of the modern world, here – in its mouldy and shabby form - seems to be merely its relict. The deterioration of the construction standing for the contemporary engineering, might as well constitute a metaphorical decline of the power of civilization over nature, an elusiveness of man-imposed order in the face of forces of nature. The water, slowly but systematically filling in the basin, symbolizes the return of nature, the recovery of spaces once appropriated by man, all being an integral part of this coexistence of contradictions.

Adi Matei

Born in 1980 in Galati, Romania, lives and works in Cluj-Napoca.

„Jars jaws”

Jars, variable dimensions; video in b&n, sound, 7:33 min

2010

Adi Matei employs the use of various media to reflect on his country, his hometown and personal environment. The video-installation Jars Jaws is based on the artist's personal history: since studying at university he has regularly received jars filled with pickled vegetables, prepared by his parents. They always ask him to return the empty jars. Over the years, this action has become a process in which the jar itself has become a means of communication with his parents and birthplace. The video shows different people conserving their screams in a jar, an expression of frustration and individual dissatisfaction that in a country like Romania may otherwise only be expressed in silence. The jars, however, conserve memory and the present independent of external influences; and if needs be, for decades.

Eléonore de Montesquion

Born in Paris in 1970, lives and works in Berlin and Tallinn, Estonia.

„NAINE”

Video, 15 min

2009

The film NAINE („woman” in Estonian), in black and white, shows women, men and children bathing in the Narva River, which today delineates the border between Estonia and Russia. Interspersed archival images also show women partaking in a regional sporting event belonging to the Soviet era. Olga, a 50 year-old woman with an Estonian and Russian passport, talks about her life. Born in the Soviet era in the city of Narva-Ivangorod that, in line with perestroika and glasnost, in the nineties, became Estonian and European on one side of the river and Russian on the other. Olga only speaks Russian, but crosses the most northeasterly European border every day to work, shop and to carry out her life as a single woman with two children. She speaks of herself as a woman who is not in need of freedom, because in her generation, it has always been women who manage day-to-day living. She tells the story of what it means to live on the edge of Europe and how she has managed to survive among the old eastern Soviet states and Russia, and among ever changing conditions.

Antonio R. Montesinos

Born in 1979 in Ronda, Spain, lives and works in Madrid.

„Nuestros reinos estaban vivos en la imaginación de cada uno”

Installation

2013

The artist usually works by intervening in the exhibition space with low-grade materials, such as duct tape or found materials. His work always develops out of employing different geographical forms, such as models, statistics or charts. Through these scientific processes the artist examines real facts and at the same time uses them as a vehicle to introduce, into these seemingly accurate representations, fictions or different, more playful and improvisational processes. During the residency Montesinos examined the conflict of different identities on a national and European scale. Reflecting on the current European situation. Themes, such as the economic crisis, the North-South divide, bailouts and States denominated as PIGS. Through the juxtaposition of political models “Bottom-up” and “Top-down” the artist defines the construction of European identity and its coexisting models. The artist uses a visually understandable and directly experiential approach to extremely complicated undertakings in relation to our current European situation.

In Gdansk we see the result of a survey where Montesinos asked participants of the social movement that happened in Madrid over the last years about their origin, work, age and others. It is displayed as several diagrams.

Ciprian Muresan

Born in 1977 in Cluj, Romania, lives and works in Cluj.

„I'm Protesting Against Myself”

(co-author Gianina Carbuariu)

Video, 30:35 min

2011

The artist uses many mediums, such as sculpture, video and photography, works on paper and installation. He is part of a younger generation of artists whom are prior to post communist Romania. He is tackling the most recent history of his country and trying to situate it in a global socio-economic context. I'm Protesting Against Myself came about from a collaboration with a scriptwriter and a puppeteer. The puppet dressed in humble work clothes, protests against itself from a wheelie bin and encourages the viewer to join in with its protest. The concerns of its protest are its identity, thoughts and actions. Muresan examines the entanglement of the individual, society and power, in an ironic way. The work reflects on mass protests, which had an enormous importance for the country in its past, but, today, no longer forms part of revolutionary strategies. Protest movements today develop via different means. As a consequence, the puppet's protest seems tragically doomed to failure.

Dorota Nieznalska

Born in 1973 in Gdańsk. A visual artist identified with the critical movement, creates art objects, installations, videos and photography.

„The Cult of Memory” – a series of three videos

„Tannenberg-Denkmal”

Black and white footage with sound, 8:30 min/loop

2014

music: Richard Wagner, Siegfried's Funeral March from Twilight of the Gods, act III, performed by Sir Georg Solti & Wiener Philharmoniker

„Macht urlaub”

Colour footage with sound 6:20 min /loop

2013

Archive sound – a compilation of speeches made by Robert Ley (the head of the German Labour Front) from 1936 on the occasion of setting the cornerstone in the construction of the resort in Prora (Strength Through Joy organization’s seaside resort on the Rügen Island) and from 1937 on the occasion of launching the MS Wilhelm Gustloff.

„Totenburg” (Mausoleum in Wałbrzych, Dolny Śląsk)

2014

In her videos the artist points out three memorial sites – the no longer existent mausoleum of the German national hero – field marshal Paul von Hindenburg in Tannenberg (currently Stębark); the unfinished seaside resort for the Third Reich working class in Prora, built under the auspices of the Nazi leisure organization - Strength Through Joy; and finally a ruined Totenburg Mausoleum (currently Wałbrzych), associated with the Nazi cult rituals. These are the tipping points, sometimes abandoned and neglected, sometimes adapted for new purposes. Who are they commemorating? And do new users of those sites personalize with their history? Or do they change it, appropriating it and adjusting it to their own needs? Nieznalska draws our attention to the moments when cultures and narrations intertwine, to the geopolitical transformations influencing the identification of the sites, based on the palimpsest formula of both generations and cultures. Preserving and archiving of memory through objects like mausoleums or monuments, establishing an inventory of sites forming the cultural heritage, is in a way subjective. For, who has the final impact on what and how has been commemorated, or inscribed in the collective memory? And does this subjectivism actually have any influence on the shape and form of the material legacy of particular nations?

Virgile Novarina

Born in France in 1976, lives in Paris.

„Ecrits et dessins de nuit”

Performance and objects

Something common to everyone is that a third of our lives are spent sleeping. Novarina, who in his working life is a mathematician and physicist, wanted to find out more about this issue, and fifteen years ago began systematically studying his dreams. The drawings and fragments of text were made unconsciously during the night and showed, during his Canoe trip around the whole of Europe, that language spoken in the day seeps out into the work made during the night. From this we can conclude that part of our identity is also defined through the language we speak. Novarina has lived this experience directly since travelling for ten years on his trips around countries that are on the banks of the Danube. He heard lots of languages, some of them leaving their mark in the night. Novarina slept in public spaces, - shop windows, galleries and festivals-, in order to make

everyone a participant in his research project. On this occasion he will sleep in Gdańsk City Gallery at Powroźnicza st. at the opening of the exhibition.

Julian Öffler

Born in German in 1985, lives and works in Bremen.

Paida Larsen

Born in Norway in 1984, lives and works in Berlin and Tinn, Norway.

„Mr. Emigrant“

Video, 4:50 min

2013

In Calais (France) thousands of migrants are caught on their way to Great Britain. Migrants who don't have permission to enter and who try -often every night- to cross the Channel in all kinds of conditions. During their stay in Calais they lived in the so-called "Jungles" of shacks made from plastic and debris in land set aside for crops near the ports. These people's ordeals begin in their home countries and continue on the supposed road to freedom.

The music video deals with European emigration policy and describes the desperate efforts made to find a better way of life by people who are ignored by society. A catchy pop song tells the story of the two artists' journey who for one week intensely examined the living conditions of the Calais migrants and uncovered the reasons for why they wanted to make the journey to London. Building a raft out of found materials won't be of much help.

Fabian Reimann

Born in 1975 in Bremerhaven, Germany, lives and works in Leipzig.

„Les anciens premiers“

Installation and projection

2013

The artist and editor of the freeman journal seeks out the stories behind history. Facts or insinuations that cannot be proven, redacted documents, partially destroyed graphical documents and incomplete archives that inspire a reading of the different truths gained from the fragments, invite an artistic interpretation of them.

Reimann operates between documentation and fiction, interpretation and reality. Memory is understood as something that gives identity to the human being. The invention of *Les anciens premiers* takes us back to the child's remark, whose mother came from a country "that no longer exists". This is something applicable to many European countries. A state as a shared organism is a relatively recent idea in humanity's history. And its requirements and conditions, as well as the state itself, are timeless in their appearance only.

Patricia J. Reis

born in 1981 in Lisbon, Portugal, lives and works in Lisbon and Vienna, Austria.

„Cutting the body: Cinematographic Cliché #2”

Installation, 150x100cm

2013

The work developed by Patricia J. Reis for this exhibition produces visual perplexity at first, but soon expresses its technical ingenuity. Reflecting on the linguistic representation of Europe as a body she literally amputates its limbs. Again and again in various texts and speeches, Europe remains defined as a body, as the sum of their parts. The video installation lays bare the dysfunctional nature of the whole upon the loss of its particular details. Reis has created a striking metaphorical image, that is visually impressive, irritatingly so, in its tactile qualities and evocative of a certain sense of evil.

Max Schaffer

Born in 1985 in Santiago de Chile. Lives and works in Berlin and Vienna.

„Specific Vocabulary”

Objects

2012

Max Schaffer always travels through countries and cities with his eyes wide open. He is after objects, which become the inspiration for his thoughts and ideas, manifesting them anew. Yet, by no means is Schaffer to be defined as a collector of everything. The objects of his desire are carefully selected. Not always does he acquire them in a "legal" way. He purchased the hand-painted signboards with prices on them and the goods they advertised from sellers at the Greek market. The torn cardboard box, the tattered piece of pink paper, and often almost illegible hand-made inscription emphasize the individual character of those objects, which can be attributed to different people. From them one can infer not only the tradition, but also the culture and personality of the writer. At a first glance, the signboards look very familiar - numbers, symbols of Euro are recognizable for

the majority of us. Unlike the Greek inscriptions. That is why, not knowing Greek, we are not able to decipher which products they advertise.

Pablo Serret de Ena

Born in 1975 in Madrid, lives and works in Madrid and Sweden.

„Überdrome“

Installation

2013

The behaviour of societies is mostly defined in relation to their surroundings, whether they be natural or artificial. In his projects, the artist works within these contexts, reorganizing and altering their elements in order to confront a situation. The artistic practice thus becomes a huge playground, a permeable laboratory where disciplines, authority and languages connect themselves with other elements and blurriness occurs to their distinctions. For the exhibition at Matadero Madrid the artist has developed a mini golf course that connects individual elements of the other participating artists to one another. Reflecting on the mutual perception of Spain and Europe in terms of being holiday destinations and how that perception changes the behaviour, spaces and structures of both parties. In Bremen and Gdansk he is showing the sound of the mini golf game with sounds when you reach the goal. The song is a slow motion version of “The final countdown” sing by the musician group “Europe”. Mini golf is understood here as a translation in terms of scale whereby its value is reduced to that of a “souvenir”, as a theme park in terms of identity.

Andrzej Wasilewski

Born in 1975, a Polish visual artist.

„Inhibitor of Ideology“

Installation

2013-2014

Wasilewski’s art encompasses two seemingly distant elements: technology and humanities. His installations composed of mechanical circuits, paradoxically allude to and communicate moral messages lined with political, social and cultural undertones.

The Inhibitor of Ideology contains several objects made of plasma speakers. They constitute generators creating high-voltage discharges as a source of sound waves. The inhibitors recite in various languages the quotations taken from Plato’s “Republic” – a fundamental text from the point of view of the history of philosophy

and politics of the Western civilization, whose ideology – especially today - is often considered controversial because of its totalitarian predilections.

The Inhibitor associated with the notion of violence and justice, here on the one hand advertises a certain defined ideology, on the other hand refuses access to it, threatening with electric shock. This mechanism seems to reflect Plato's often contradictory messages, in the course of which it is impossible to determine the exact ideas with which the author sympathizes. At the same time it constitutes the point of departure for both the reflection on the world's condition, as well as the artist's self-reflection.

Krzysztof Wróblewski

Born in 1962 in Przasnysz. A painter and photographer, since 1994 a monumental painter in public space. Since 2000 he has been working on the project called „Peripheries” which refers to territories situated outside big city centres; to the marginal and the trivial elevated to the status of the unusual and the uncommon.

„Peripheries”

Paintings

From 2000 – now

„Peripheries” is a composition arranged with water colour paintings, forming a 10cm-high line, which increases in stages, constantly growing. It constitutes a fairly contrary narrative about places, based on a subjective selection of motives, which are represented by realistic images juxtaposed in a form of a diptych with their abstract counterparts. Those motives on the one hand recognizable, at the same time fade away in memory gleam, becoming symbolic representations, remaining merely a net of triangular pixels, in order to remerge from the sub-consciousness in their full form and meaning. Linearity is the only rule organizing this cycle. We will not find here chronology, logic, beginning or end. Its open formula might imply the continuation of the history and its interpretations. The artist creates a kind of painting code, with the help of which he communicates with his viewers who enter the interaction the moment they recognize and personalize the depicted motives.