



**SUPPORTING ARTISTS NE
ENTRANCE INTO THE VIEN**

**ADVOCATING FOR MORE
CULTURAL**

**MAKING VIENNA'S ART
UNFORES**

**W TO VIENNA TO FIND AN
NESE CULTURAL SECTOR.**

**DIVERSITY IN VIENNESE
PROGRAMS.**

**COMMUNITY MORE
EEABLE.**

REAL STORIES

AN EXHIBITION BY THE QM&A ARTIST COLLECTIVE 2020 (II)

Through their art, the 12 artists of the QM&A Artist Collective 2020 (II) address current issues on a personal and global level. Issues that for some and in certain places are more painful than for others, drive the artists to portray the reality of current times to the viewer.

The group show Real Stories is installed in four different locations in Vienna, behind five windows, and open for everyone to visit. In their artworks, the artists aim to honor the brave voices of those that were buried by a system that endures in time and space, due to the collective prolonged silence and negligence in societies. They share their personal stories of migration; the creation of myths in connection to their country of so-called origin, and also daily life in places where they currently live. They talk about the economic process in the system of culture, as an act of LUCK and an act of FAITH. They remind us of the Angelo Soliman story by juxtaposing two different connections to it in a context of cultural integration. They question our social relationships with one another and whether we are experiencing a loss in our ability to relate to the other as a unique human being.

Real Stories invites viewers to feel angry, sad, disappointed and helpless, and is an ungentle reminder that facing reality while embracing visual, sonic, and literary experiences enhances the feeling of connectivity and hope.

The exhibition can be seen February 24th to March 6th 2021.

Contributing artists:

Oluchukwu Akusinawa, Lilliam Armijo, Patrícia Chamrazová, Aklima Iqbal, Violeta Lena Leitner, Leila Samari, Olga Shapovalova, Alexandra Tatar, Ramiro Wong, Hui Ye and Ksenia Yurkova.

The QM&A Artist Collective (II) is the 3rd collective established by the Viennese initiative QUESTION ME & ANSWER. Each year a new collective is formed. In order to become part of the collective artists are encouraged to apply to our open call that is issued at the beginning of each year. The selected artists are divided in groups of two or three artists with which they then co-create an artwork over several months. The groups are formed by assigning artists that have been living in Vienna for a long time to artists that only recently moved to Vienna. This ensures that they have a different perspective on the Viennese cultural sector and can enter into a debate on its nature and inclusivity. Each group is assigned a curator to support their artistic process.

While the artists primarily work with their group, different events are organized for the entire collective to get to know each other better. The events can include guided tours in museums, studio visits and talks with important actors inside the Viennese cultural sector.

All photos by: Maria Belova

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WHO IMPLEMENTS QM&A

QM&A started as a joint initiative by Smaranda Krings, Osama Zatar and Justina Špeirokaitė and quickly grew to include many more people. Apart from the QM&A project managers, we work with curators from different galleries such as Improper Walls Gallery in the framework of the QM&A Artist Collective, cultural workers such as Mwitā Mataro who are supporting us in the implementation of QM&A On Stage, artists creating the program for the QM&A Kids Summer and many more colleagues supporting us on different projects.

QM&A is an initiative operated by the association Flüchtlinge Willkommen Österreich.

WHY DOES QM&A EXIST

It's hard for every artist to find an entrance into the Viennese artist community and art market. However, it's even harder as a person who has only recently arrived here, be it as a migrant or a refugee.

Oftentimes, people do not yet have a professional network in the Viennese art sector and don't have the needed amount of time to organically build up this network. QM&A wants to shorten this process of network-building and foster exchange between artists who have been based in Vienna for a long time and those who have newly arrived. Active network-building constitutes a vital aspect of this initiative, which is achieved by various programs and events. Furthermore, we offer courses to convey key competences for successfully navigating the Viennese cultural sector. These include lectures by gallerists, curators and bookers. As a newly arrived artist, certain difficulties arise in finding the correct venues for your exhibitions, concerts or any other form of cultural event. For these cases, we offer counselling and direct contacts.

Another important aspect of our work is advocating for more diversity in Viennese art programs. Vienna is a city with a wide range of diverse nationalities, backgrounds, experiences and genders and we believe that art should reflect this character. Cultural institutions should be a place where each and every one of us can recognize themselves or part of themselves. We don't believe this is currently possible and therefore aim to foster the discussion among cultural institutions to bring the topic to the agenda. The following questions should always be raised:

- Are programs designed and implemented taking into consideration different perspectives?
- Do the artists and curators invited correctly represent the entire Viennese population or just a small privileged part of it?
- Are invited artists that are not seen as "Western" being exoticised and tokenized or is this actively worked against?

We want to support cultural institutions in implementing mechanisms for the inclusion of artists with different backgrounds living in Vienna into their regular program. A strong focus has to be laid on working against the tokenization of people belonging to a certain minority. We want to constitute a force that helps ensure that Viennese cultural programs reflect the unique Viennese character that is diverse in genders, nationalities and backgrounds.



GAIA IS WATCHING YOU

Aklima Iqbal, Alexandra Tatar, Olga Shapovalova

Curated by: Kata Anna Tüz

2021

Installed at Das Café, 1070 Vienna

installation (photography, drawing, sculpture, found object)

Art is a great storyteller, thus the working process of Aklima, Alexandra and Olga too started with sharing their personal stories. Personal stories, stories of migration, soon led to myths in connection to the territory of so called place of origin, and also their daily life in the current location they live in. These local myths of their territories of origin were in the beginning the artwork's main topic. After getting into the flow of the collaborative work the topic of myths evolved: the three artists became mythmakers themselves. Also, myths of their various cultures showed similarities which gave the opportunity to combine them, involve them in each other and as so create new stories to tell.

Myths have an uncanny nature, they do not depict the truth and tend to misrepresent the other - a story, person, a creature to which one, perhaps the storyteller, can not relate. A feeling of strangeness, of the uncanny - which according to Freud describes not only the unfamiliar, but the familiar - resonates with the artists' creations. The dichotomy, that we as human beings crave for a place called home, fear the unknown yet see the known and the unknown in nature, where we eventually find our roots, our origin, our home. The traditional concept of home as one place is dissolving, the line between familiarity and unfamiliarity gets thinner.

The versatile use of media in the work, connects photographs, drawings and sculptures, directly to language. The artists' bodies were involved in the photographic and the drawing process, which was done performatively. The final artwork is based on an appropriation of the myth of Agnes, a multifaceted legend connecting the formation of the nation state through religious power evoked in nature. Its realisation was done with consciously chosen places in Vienna which have their own myths and complex histories (the Prater, Wertheimsteinpark). Myths are created and formed based on prejudices and class interests. The different visualisations of Agnes in the photographs also shows how the storyteller, not the actual story, influences meaning. The drawings on top of the photographs evoke a certain absurdity to them but also relate to the photographs creating a new visual level. The reciprocal effect which the photographs and the drawings have on each other in combination represent the playfulness of the conscious and subconscious mind.

The sculptures then act as reverse transfiguration, and become embodiments in the room itself. Through this, the work wants to break the idea of myths as misrepresentations and circulation of untruths, and restitute Nature with agency. This can be summarized by the artist's short statement: Gaia is watching you.





Alexandra Tatar is a transdisciplinary artist. In her work, she deals with processes of becoming, expending onto objects and other non-human beings, seen as an extended geography of subjectivity. She is also interested in the landscape of ‘problematic subjectivities’, those forms of individuation where the complicity with a hegemonial regime can be questioned.

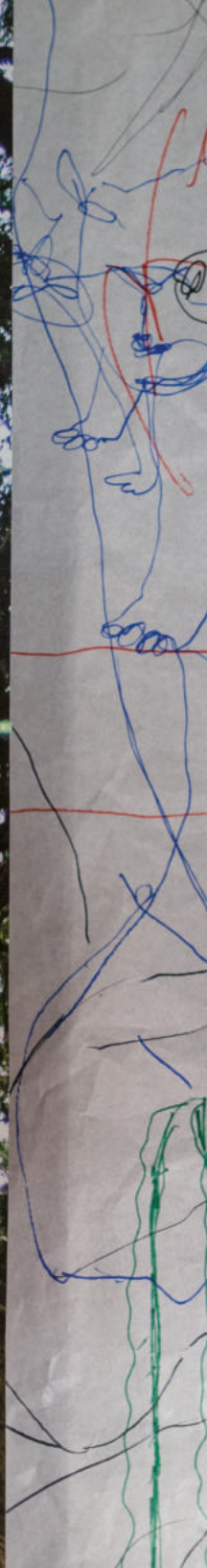


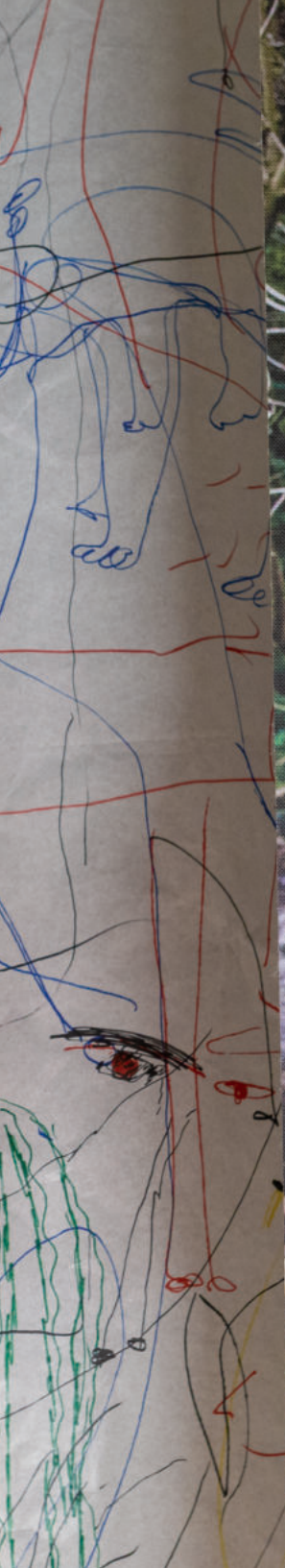
Aklima Iqbal is a painter. Nowadays she is working with new projects about human behavior, their actions, how they interact with their existing social infrastructure and new actions. She is now working with different media like absurd selfexpressions and absurd still life, also everyday drawing, printing and collecting documents because she believes in action.



Olga Shapovalova is a multidisciplinary artist. The main focus of her work is based on the research of new approaches within the sphere of politics, women question/feminism and the problem of modern art and new aesthetics.









HIDDEN

Leila Samari, Hui Ye, Lilliam Armijo

2021

Curated by Justina Speirokaite

Installed at Eben44, 1150 Vienna

sound, painting, poetry

It is a collective art work between 3 female artists: Leila Samari, Hui Ye, and Lilliam Armijo all from 3 different continents and backgrounds. The three contemporary artists have merged their different fields of work into a synergy of words (poem), paintings (oil canvas) and sound to express the main concept of their endeavor. HIDDEN has as purpose to give a voice to precise cases of violence against women, in the context of an ongoing fight for their rights.

This undertaking aims to honor the brave voices of those that were buried by a system that endures in time and space, due to the collective prolonged silence and negligence in the societies.

Listen to the audio here:



Lilliam Armijo is a poet and writer. Her work has been awarded in national competitions in 2019 and 2020. Some of her works: Maia and the Fireflies (2019), On the Edge of Day (2019), White Autumn (2020), Galazio and the Colorful Comet (2020), The other sea (2021).

Leila Samari is a painter and storyteller. The pictures, stories and poems that Leila created until now are a narrative of her personal experiences and feelings, her dreams and nightmares that touched her and came into her artworks unconsciously. External factors in artificial worlds like politics, war, racism, limitation and borders made the artist vexatious and influenced her.



Hui Ye is an artist and composer. Her works span on different media: video/film, installation, composition and live sound performance. By researching and deconstructing the relation of sound and moving image in her artistic practice, Ye explores the interests of how these (time-based) media can be mutually transformed in a particular way of which the initial auditory/linguistic information is being shifted and/or expanded.





FAIR

eben



The empty room
of the mirror in front of the
eyes, no car, no lines, no mural
preludes onto the wall
blanca que habia
cuerpo que habia
muertos crecenda a los
bosque.

See they reflect in water
will we away their doubts

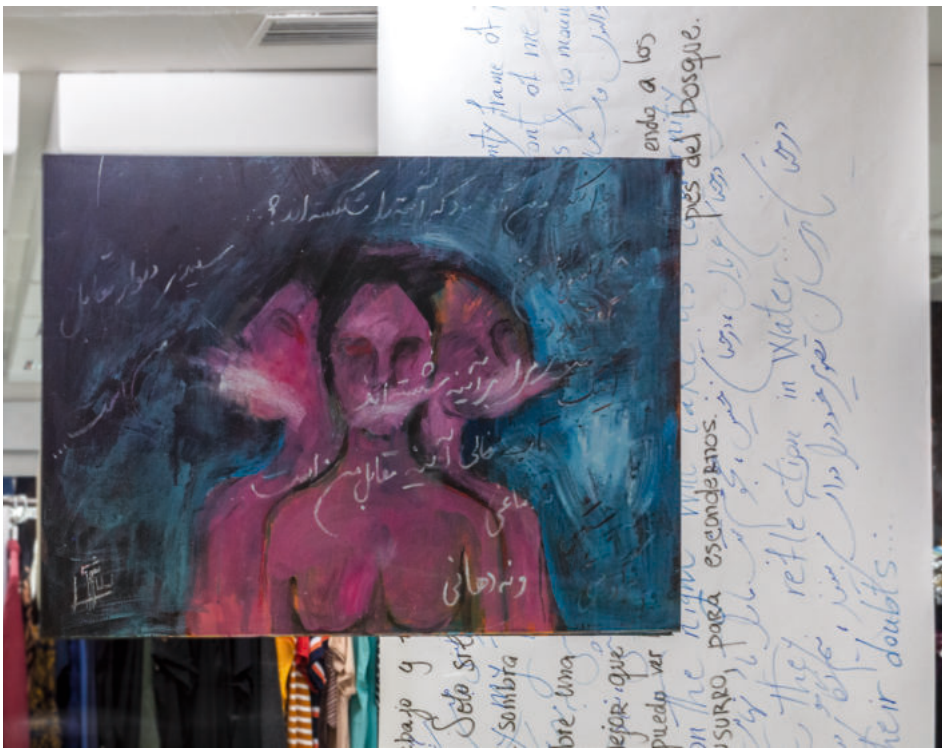
ON THE RIGHT
SUSURRO, PARA
ESCONDERNOS.

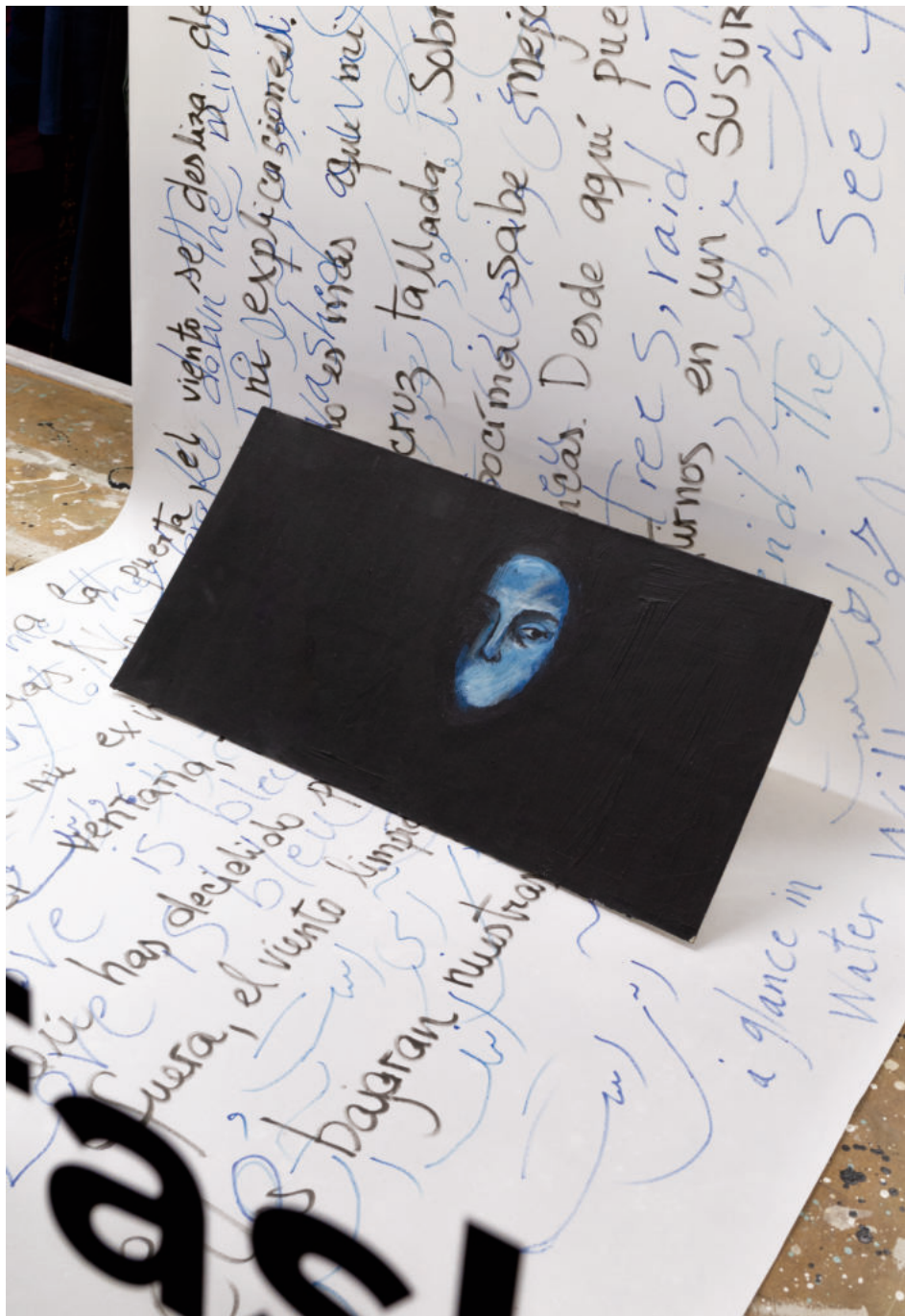
See they reflect in water
will we away their doubts

See they reflect in water
will we away their doubts

Sustainable fashion









THE CONCRETE ARGUMENT

Patrícia Chamrazová

2021

Curated by Elisabeth Hinkel

Installed at burggasse24, 1070 Vienna

installation (latex)

The project questions our social connection and whether we are experiencing a loss in our ability to relate to the other as a unique human being. It's a memorial speaking about the connection and the loss. It's like „the homesickness you feel while you are still at home.” It's about the feeling of missing something and not being quite sure what it is. This concept is called Solastalgia and it also refers to the distress specifically caused by the change of the environment around us... is it slowly vanishing? Metaphorically speaking the latex is like our skin - the skin in which we live at the moment. It's very tense because something as cold and as hard as concrete is deeply imprinted in our skin cells. Our skin shapes our experience of the world around us. Its folds, creases and contours define the physical limits of our identities. Are we able to release the tension while the concrete is imprinted in our skin... ? The second layer of the project refers that the stretched piece of latex is an imprint of a specific place. A place - a piece of a path in a yard which literally connected me and my partner with whom I started this project. Despite unpredicted circumstances we were not able to finish it together. I decided to finish the project alone but during the process I always felt like there is something missing - like it can not be completed without her input. So for me it also became a memorial of our collaboration.

Patrícia Chamrazová is an intermedia artist. Fragile parts of her personality fly in the virtual and expand the perception of „self“ far beyond reality. Patrícia belongs to the category of techno-optimists. Her aim is to point to a complex personal life experience that involves exploring the space balancing on the edge between the physical and the virtual. She's metaphorically connecting the latest technologies and the art world. Always deconstructing, destroying and reshaping the reality. Revealing the toxic-paradoxical ambiguous beauty of chaos while reinventing the reason and the risk to be a human being.











PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE

Ksenia Yurkova, Ramiro Wong

Curated by Ale Zapata

2021

Installed at Aa collections, 1150 Vienna

installation (mixed-media)

On average, an emerging artist applies to 50 - 70 exhibitions or festivals annually. Half of these demand a one-time payment in the form of an entrance fee which ranges from 10 to 30 Euros, amounts that add up to over 900 Euros only in contributions. When there's a positive outcome, these investments translate into participation in 3 to 4 projects in which the production costs would – most likely – be paid; however, this does not include other fees, nor royalties. At such events, works are usually not for sale – the events are run by non-commercial institutions–, this alone creates different levels of conflict that are deepened when taking into consideration that the official status of an artist is proved by a CV which should contain a list of international projects. Statistically speaking, most contributions to these international competitions are paid by artists who come from countries where governmental support for the arts is either negligible or absent; thus, part of the international cultural processes in the European territory is subsidized by developing countries of Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and/or Latin America.

„Lottery“ is a very appropriate word to describe this economic process within the systems of culture, up to the complete confluence of contexts: for example, in Germany or the Netherlands, the lottery subsidizes the arts and culture sector. This, of course, is not as entertaining as the situation in Sweden, where the culture is supported through weaponry sales. Nevertheless, it sounds like a symptom: culture lives off of the hope of the poorest segments of the population, including immigrants, the hope to change their lives for the better; in other words, at the expense of those who do not have access to culture.

To meditate on this matter, artist Ksenia Yurkova invented a ritual: buying lottery tickets every day for six months and keeping a schedule of income and expenses. After half a year, the calculations stated that the artist had a deficiency of 206 Euros – which became the material cost of this part of the work. The handmade paper is produced from a stack of loser lottery tickets, and the chart depicts a six-month cash flow. Her work, which was conceived before the crisis, took on new relevance during the pandemic lockdowns, touching upon the issues of remuneration for artists and support for culture.

Starting from this premise, artist Ramiro Wong made an analogy of the aforementioned economical processes to different systems of spirituality and superstition, for they are as abstract as belief itself. The video showcases an intimate act which is no longer intimate and in turn assisted with almost surgical precision as a metaphor for accepting one's faith. The installation depicting the losing history was assembled with translucent aluminum mesh, a material both used at the beginning and the end of this project, whilst the triptych format simultaneously creates and separates the space with light emerging from the blindside.

In the video: Ksenia Yurkova, Ramiro Wong, Ale Zapata, Kata Anna Tüz, Urtė Špeiroidaitė, Justina Špeiroidaitė, Barbora Horská, Rene Vogelmann, Camilla Lengauer

Ksenia Yurkova is an artist, curator and researcher. She considers her leading artistic media to be text, photography, video and installation. Lately, the artist is researching the phenomenon of affect in its autonomous bodily emanation; in its personal and political registers. She focuses upon how a stage of individual perception, to which one can relate memory, traumatic recollection and problems of identity construction, transforms itself into affects of the political body.



Ramiro Wong is a transdisciplinary artist. Dynamics of displacement, aesthetics of othering, are perhaps the two most relevant terms that define Ramiro Wong's artistic practice. Throughout his works one can find political and sociocultural concerns that address local narratives and individual stories, questioning how identity is formed as well as its processes of apprehension and deconstruction within diverse historical and geographical contexts.





9
Reminders





For their collaborative project at Question Me & Answer, **Oluchukwu Akusinawa** and **Lena Violetta Leitner** followed the traces of the historic figure Angelo Soliman as their source of inspiration and developed two positions both dealing with issues of integration and racism. Through irony and poetry, through facts and through fiction, the two works complement each other.

THIS IS HIS STORY, OUR STORY MY CASE I REST

Oluchukwu Akusinawa

2021

Curated by Urte Speirokaite

Installed at Das Café, 1070 Vienna

video installation

Despite his high educational acquisition, Angelo was at his death unjustly reduced to his body, body of color, to his origin-black Africa. “An exceptional life, an ignominious death”.

I chose this art project in honor of Angelo Soliman, who though very much enlightened, highly integrated but still was reduced to an object of display, shaming blackness and through this act was reduced to nothing less than an animal. Even animals deserve respect! Angelo was a victim of racism and discrimination.

Listen to the audio here:



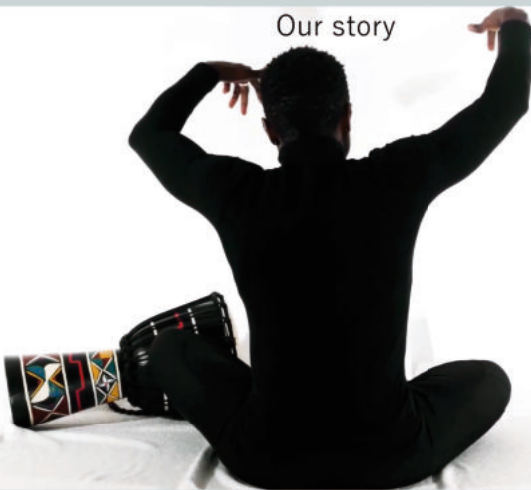
Oluchukwu Akusinawa is a Nigerian gender nonconformist queer-feminist, performance artist, singer, songwriter, ex-nun, co-founder and vice chairperson of QueerBase Austria (Emeritus), active member of TGEU, board member of Afrorainbow Austria and board member of the Verein zur Förderung migrantischer und queerer darstellender Kunst.



The weight of my pains



Our story



ANGELO1796.

ESSENCE OF ANGELO SHARING & INTEGRATING ESSENCES SINCE 1796

Lena Violetta Leitner

2021

Curated by Urte Speirokaite

Installed at Das Café, 1070 Vienna

video installation

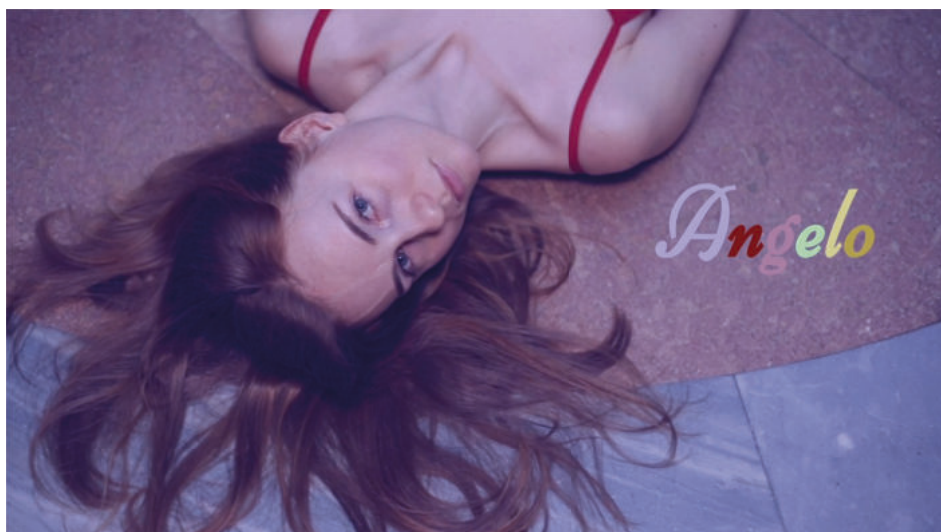
All around the world our fine creations are famous for their innovative design, unique texture and luxurious experience. By developing a unified database linking specific information around materials we are empowering people all over the world to make the best out of themselves.

All of our products are more than natural and the selection of our qualified contributors is a very sensitive, highly controlled procedure.

Performance by Nora Staggl.

Lena Violetta Leitner is a transdisciplinary artist and the founder and head of IZMP (Integration Centre for Migrated Plants). In her artworks she explores power structures and social patterns using the means of irony and humour. The works, which range from installations and interventions to (sculptural) performances, scrutinise our constructions of what is 'natural' and 'foreign' or 'alien'. They employ language in the form of code, text and sound, hacking objects, systems and structures. Part of her practice is the collaborative process.





...a team of artists and a creative direction team...
...the heart of the brand...
...the brand's identity...

STORY: OUR STORY

...the brand's identity...
...the brand's identity...
...the brand's identity...



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My bones



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE NUMEROUS PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS WHO CONTINUOUSLY SUPPORT OUR WORK AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING VIENNA'S ART SCENE REALLY REPRESENT THE VIENNESE SOCIETY. BECAUSE VIENNA IS DIVERSE IN GENDERS, NATIONALITIES AND BACKGROUNDS - VIENNA IS ALL OF US.

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