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Hate Speech Aggression and Intimacy 02 02 – 18 04 2019

Press Talk
01 02 2019, 10 a.m.

Opening
01 02 2019, 6 p.m.



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→ Thomas Baumann, Candice Breitz, Elena Aya Bundurakis, Tony Cokes, Petra Cortright, Folkert de Jong, Verena Dengler, Ryan Gander, Yuri Pattison, Signe Pierce, Jim Shaw, Gunther Skreiner, Markus Sworcik, Amalia Ulman, Martha Wilson, Joseph Zehrer

Against the backdrop of current developments in politics and the media, the Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien (KM–), in Graz is focusing on freedom of speech, its use and its abuse. *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy* presents international positions in contemporary art that address forms of ever more aggressive communication and the effects of social media, as well as their media-related facets. Taking center stage here are people communicating through social media with their urge to express themselves socially, with their media-driven dedication and identity-questioning game of anonymity and role-playing. At the same time, however, these individuals yearn for their own personal boundaries and visibility, apparently on a quest for an updated kind of individuality and intimacy. To an increasing extent, the reactions from parts of the Internet community are ever more alarming, with people outdoing each other in their expressions of hostility, resentment, and hate. Other issues related to freedom of opinion, art, and press accompany the artistic investigations found in the project *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy*.

Free speech and freedom of public expression are an essential element of democracy. Expressing and exchanging thoughts and arguments enables people to get to know each other and to weigh different points of view, so as to arrive at a thematic formulation of a question. It also allows people to work together to reach a consensus in terms of content and to successively coordinate the results. Established formats for this sometimes elaborate process, which is, however, significant for the common good, include public discussions, talk shows, or parliamentary bodies. Traditional media take on a special role here, for they not only report and interpret the news but usually also offer a forum for the public, for instance by printing letters to the editor in newspapers, taking calls at radio stations, or soliciting participation in the appropriate television formats.

When it comes to formulating and disseminating our thoughts, the Internet has effectuated a sustainable change, which enables less filtered but nonetheless more intensive participation in public discourse on the part of individuals. The diverse social-media channels make it possible, in terms of both technology and content, to intervene not only in the online versions of traditional media but also in online forums of Internet-based media, with comparatively little effort. In this context, the surprisingly excessive, unfiltered expression of aggression and false information, as well as the manipulation of public opinion-making, has become a central component of present-day media discourse.

In view of a facile connection and a potential blending of the public and private realms in virtual space, a stronger focus is being placed on scrutinizing the subjective position of the individual or even on new connotations of personal intimacy. It seems as if a recently acquired self-confidence is arising from the reaction of erecting boundaries against certain societal and political developments, involving a heightened sensitivity to one's own psyche and corporeality, among other responses. The resulting experiments on the constitution of subjects, who on the Internet at times aggressively seek visibility and often become ensnared in contradictions, are a pivotal facet of the artistic exploration of *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy*.

In the exhibition at the KM–, the concept of intimacy is accorded special attention. It conveys a need for demarcation from outside space and the other, for retreat and tranquility, so as to be able to recognize and describe one's own self—and then to present it and act it out in an envisaged state of self-empowerment. Intimacy is based on a dependability of associations and references that describe this retreat in the form of accepted data and thus facilitate concentration on one's own self. Through technologies and communication forms on the Internet—especially in the fake news and aggressive hate speech running rampant there—it is precisely this dependability of the data situation that is constantly up for discussion, which additionally impedes the growing individual need for intimacy.

On the occasion of the exhibition *Hate Speech. Aggression and Intimacy*, the KM– presents next to 46 artworks by 16 international artists, a specially conceptualized exhibition architecture, which metaphorically addresses the function of the institution as a place for societal, free debate and democratic discussion: A central scaffolding divides the great main hall on the ground floor in the form of a sprawling platform with outgoing, flexible elements on two levels and enables the visitors to gain new perspectives on the space and the art. The scaffold, which can be conceived in different forms and can be assembled again and again, stands for the indefinite mass of possibility, with which we organize our – analogously as well as virtually communicating – society. Thereby, the possibility of an active participation in the overall concept of the exhibition was created, which turns the visitors into performers and – apart from their habits of perception – they are included in an extended process of reflection.

The exhibition *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy*, featuring various international artists, takes as its point of departure the alarming leanings of this development toward what is often much-too-direct speech. The exhibition contrasts this with critical examples in order to actively support the high value of free discussion and thus also democratic opinion-making within public civil society. The project is conceived as a contribution to collaborative discussion and pursues the goal of heightening sensitivity and consciousness for the virtual, public, and private space of opinion-making. Escalation was yesterday, de-escalate yourselves!

curated by Sandro Droschl

Supporting Program: Events and Art Education

The group exhibition *Hate Speech. Aggression and Intimacy* is accompanied by a varied program consisting of events, art education and the online publication of the Künstlerhaus, the KM– Journal. The supporting program serves as a complement to the exhibition and offers interested visitors the opportunity of a deeper thematic examination and wants to stimulate discourse.

Every Saturday at 11 a.m., the visitors of the exhibition have the opportunity to join a guided tour of the exhibition free of charge. On the 07.02., in the special format of the curator's tour, the director and curator of the exhibition, Sandro Droschl, provides a glimpse behind the scenes of the institution's exhibition production.

Every Thursday at 6 p.m. and free of charge, the event series *An Art Day's Night* (AADN) complements the current exhibition. Here, the thematic aspects of *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy* are being mirrored in lectures, talks and discussions of and with significant voices from science and culture. Moderated by Junior Curator Jana Franze, our invited specialist guests will offer, among others, lectures on the legal persecution of shitstorms on the Internet, on the intersection of political action and emotional expression and on new forms of self-expression in the digital sphere. Artist talks, concerts, catalogue presentations and film screenings highlight individual artistic positions from the canon of artists presented in the exhibition and beyond. Target audience of AADN are individuals, who are already acquainted with art, and especially interested persons who enjoy information and productive conversation.

Saturdays at 3 p.m., the new conversation series *Convo Club. Fresh Talks* invites younger positions from the areas of art criticism, music and journalism to the KM–: In a relaxed atmosphere and over a cool drink you can discuss controversial topics with interesting guests and host Verena Borecký, curatorial assistant at the KM–.

During *Hate Speech: Aggression and Intimacy* the visitors can pursue their own creative endeavors with the help of two workshops: At the radio workshop *On Air* on 09.02., the participants will learn how to write texts that function on an auditory level and how (visual) art can be translated into language. At the poetry slam workshop *On Poems* on 02.03., participants will experiment with a poetic and rhythmic feeling for language.

The special day for schools, *Classy Classroom!* on 27.02., is geared towards students and offers exciting workshops for all grades that have to be booked in advance.

The online magazine on the institutional platform KM– Journal (<https://journal.km-k.at>) is edited by the Berlin-based art critic Dominikus Müller and the curatorial team of the KM–. In it, the extensive project of the presented written and artistic approaches will be extended in order to intensify the discussion on hate speech and its illegitimate and ongoing attacks on democratically developed forms of communication.

Calendar

- 01.02. 6 p.m. Opening Ceremony, **KM– on the Decks**, Grrrls DJ Crew
07.02. 6 p.m. **Curator's Tour**, Sandro Droschl
09.02. 11 a.m. **On Air: Radio** Walther Moser, Workshop
16.02. 1 p.m. **Impuls Minute Concerts**, Performances of New Music
27.02. **Classy Classroom**, Program for Schools and all Grades
28.02. 6:30 p.m. external, **Limits of Speakability**, Panel Discussion at the Institute of German Philology
02.03. 3 p.m. **On Poems: Poetry Slam** Agnes Maier, Workshop
07.03. 6 p.m. **Hate Speech, Echo Chambers and Filter Bubbles** Christoph Bezemek, Lecture
14.03. 6 p.m. **The Square** (Ruben Östlund, 2017), Severin Dünser, Discussion and Film Screening
16.03. 3 p.m. **This ends now! Journalists Against Hate on the Internet**, Convo Club #1 Alexandra Stanic, Nicole Schöndorfer
21.03. 6 p.m. **Artist's Talk** Gunther Skreiner, Markus Sworcik with Jana Franze
28.03. 6 p.m. **Thinking Outside the Box**, Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl, Lecture
30.03. 3 p.m. **Objection! New Ideas in Art Criticism**, Convo Club #2 Johanna Rainer, Juliana Lindenhofer
04.04. 6 p.m. **BanHate App** Daniela Grabovac, Lecture
06.04. 6 p.m. **NO (Wave)? Anger and Negative Emotions in Music**, Convo Club #3 Kristina Pia Hofer, Christina Lessiak
06.04. 8 p.m. **Ana Threat**, Concert
11.04. 6 p.m. **Online Selves and the Performance of Relational Identity** Silvia Schiltermandl, Lecture

Saturdays, 11 a.m., Free Public Tour

Press Download: <https://www.km-k.at/en/exhibition/hate-speech/press/>

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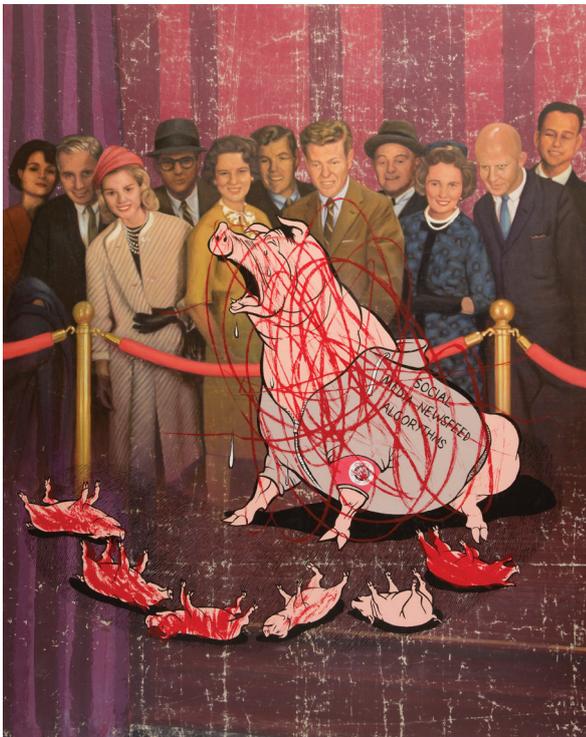
Thanks to: Layher Gerüstsysteme GmbH, Buchkirchen



Candice Breitz, Sweat, 2018,
courtesy KOW Berlin.



Ryan Gander, 2000 year collaboration (The Prophet), 2018,
courtesy Collection Lin Li, China; gb agency, Paris.



Jim Shaw, Tragedy Display, 2018, private collection,
courtesy the artist; Simon Lee Gallery, London.



Amalia Ulman, Dignity 01 (BUBBLE), 2017,
courtesy the artist; Deborah Schamoni, Munich.