

exercises in reading
calender studies
ecologies of the margins
practicing hearing
annotations
collection of trials to describe reality

series of works
by bellu&bellu

title bzw.
and/or
Dis-articulating bodies of speech

series Exercise in Reading, #13

description conjunctions, offset print, mail, site-specific (available at galerie@best-bernaue.de), video installation, Galerie Bernau, site-specific, 2021

documentation <https://vimeo.com/564635084>

and/or Even if
or if as though,
indeed, and only by the way.
And in that yet maybe
if only yet,
albeit if not.
Nonetheless,
as far as when? Instead
nor either or in fact,
like just
and furthermore as
soon for that.
And in this
maybe yet besides, whereas as well
at last such as
in case
again
and whether if,
since almost none.



title Anarchist Portraits

series Ecologies of the Margins, #7

description herbarium of wild cereals; habitat: borderzone between the industrial agricultural area and the renaturation of the steppe vegetation; location: Divnogorye, Voronezh, Russia; 50.967°N 39.300°E; date: 6/8-6/9, 2017

context This grass grows on the threshold between the spreading steppe of the nature reserve and the fields of industrialized agriculture. Grass is the colloquial term for wild varieties of cereals; they are often the first to spread into ecosystems that have been disturbed by outside interference. In contrast, cultivated varieties of cereals function as a symbol of prosperity and wealth - cereal species were part of all socialist emblems. But what if their wild relatives stand for a different utopian project, in which their symbolic value is not a function of their use value, but their ability to regenerate and organize themselves over and over again?

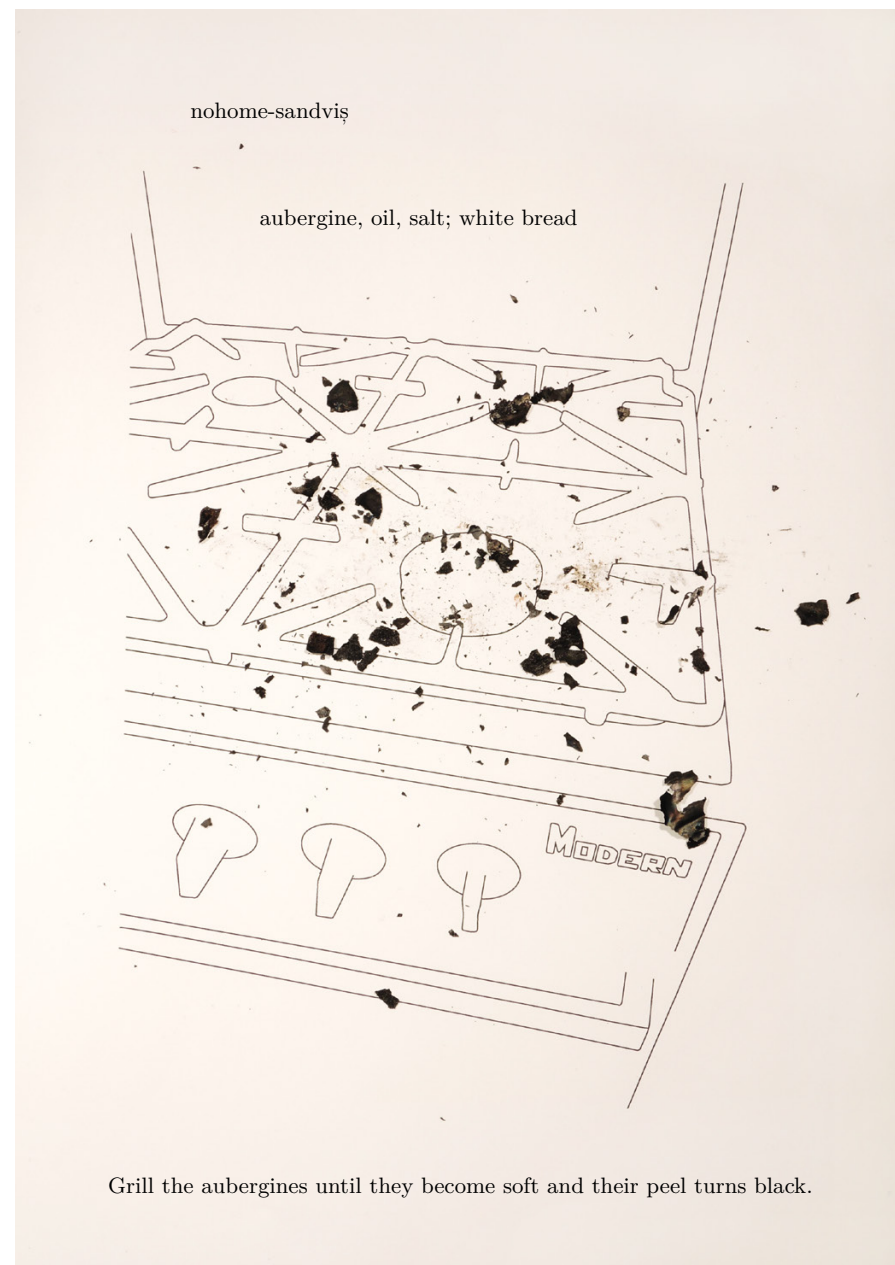


title nohome-sandviş

series Annotations, #12

description upcoming publication *Breadcrumb*, eds. Eliot Felde &Cristina Ramos, 2020 (2021)

bellu&bellu ~~love to eat and drink~~ — at least in theory. Their research-based and (often) site-specific works evolve from everyday dialogues about everyday life in ongoing series of attempts as experiments and exercises. In their works they explore different forms of writing and their effects/agencies on /a hegemonial reality/ies. They view (the transfer of) recipes and tastes as a bodily/embodied writing of disarticulated memories and minor histories.

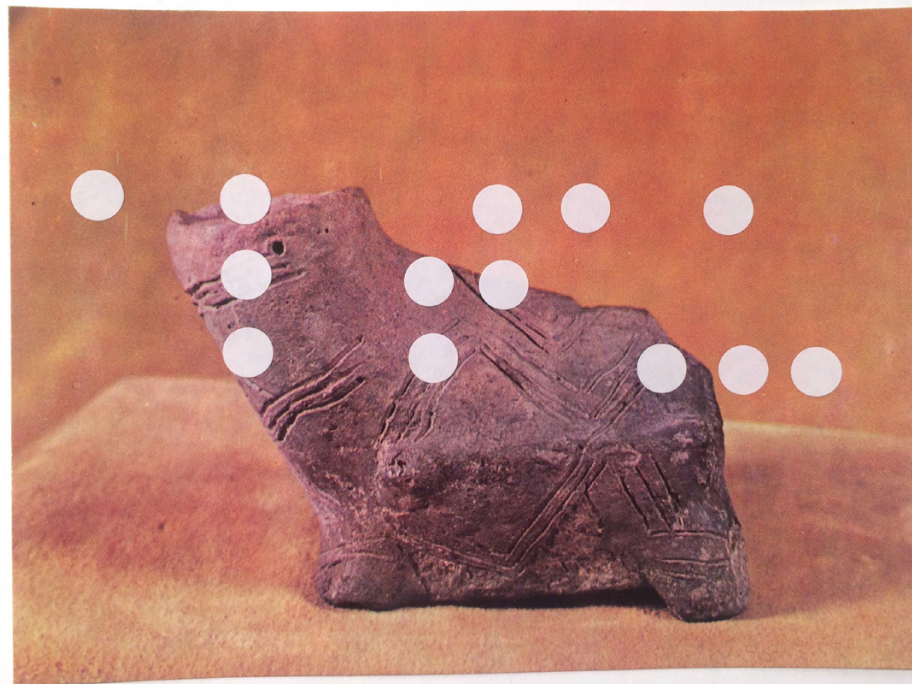


Untitled

series Exercises in Reading, #12

description postcards from the museum's depot, National Museum of Transylvanian History, site-specific, online <https://historia-hysteria.ro>, 2020

text It is the dissociation of time into past, present, future which creates the need for language and writing, also for museums. If you lose language you lose time as a conceptual tool and you fall back into seeing, as it is the mode of perception which runs parallel to memory. Perception however is mainly informed by seeing and only in the very short moment, when this relationship is inverted, you remember before seeing and memory comes as a déjà-vue. (...)



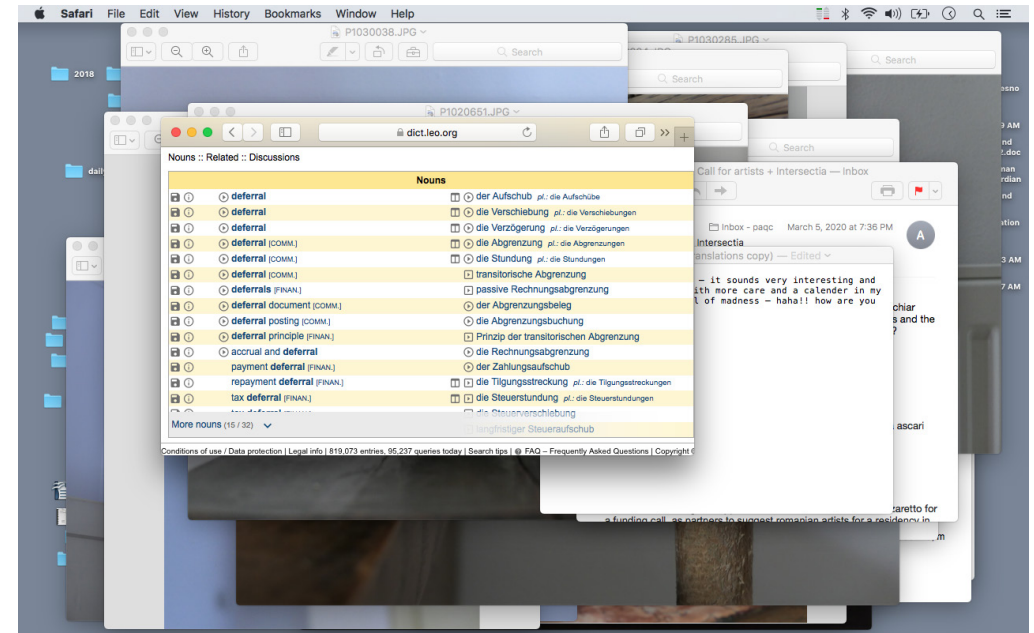
title deferrals
 –fragments from a conversation
 between March 6 and April 4, 2020

series Exercises in Reading, #11

 online <http://www.intersectia.org>, 2020

mail April 4, 2020
 dear emanuela,

 last week we spent some nights thinking about
 the images you've sent of the tiny interventions
 we left behind in your house last summer. we
 circle around the minuscule moments in which the
 meaning remains graspable only in its movement
 between words; and weave a commentary on just
 this very moment in time.
 hope you are fine, how do you resist?



title The Use Value of Melancholy

series Annotations, #6

description postcards, Casa Tranzit, Cluj, site-specific, 2019

context In melancholy a person grieves for a loss that isn't fully comprehended nor identified. Precisely this ambivalence seems to entail its emancipatory potential as the desire for power needs to be countered by the desire for resistance, thereby keeping power unreachable and in suspense. May the use value of melancholy of the left therefore rest in the deconstruction and dissolution of power?



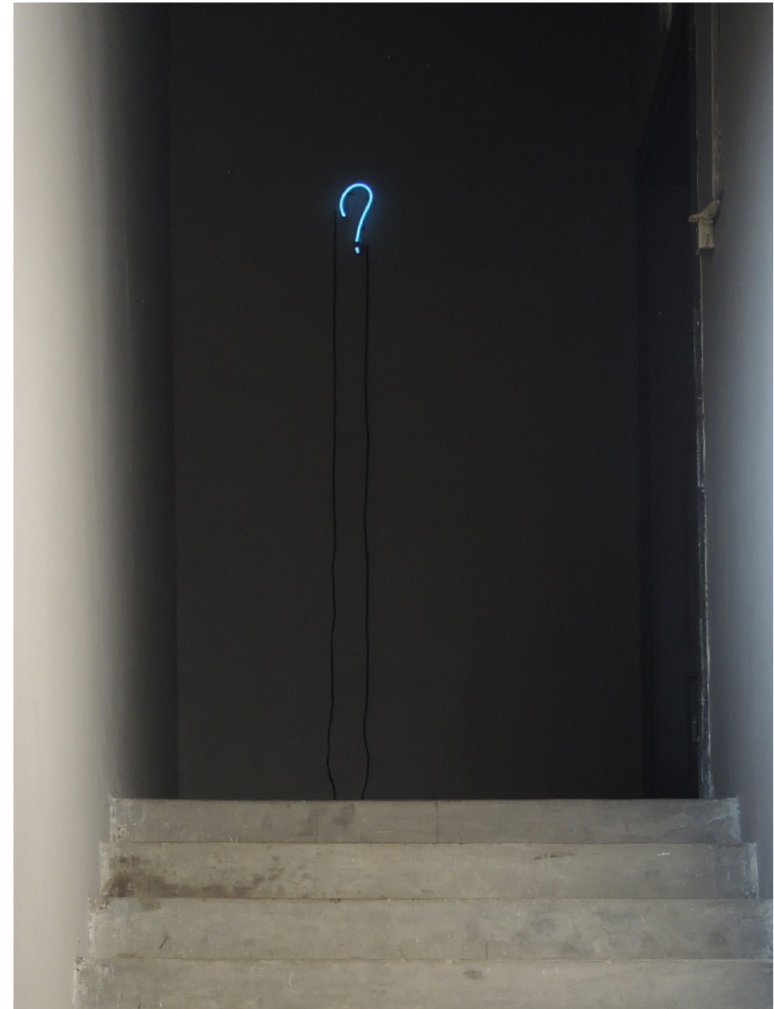
title Știm ce vrem
 Tudjuk mit akarunk
 (Do) we know what we want

series Exercises in Reading, #10

description neon sign, Casa Tranzit, Cluj, site-specific, 2019

context The difference between an expression of affirmation and that of doubt lies upon a sign that does not belong to any particular language. A question mark designates the deterritorialization within a sentence when opening it up to the possibility of its contrary.

 We produced this site-specific piece for Casa Tranzit, a self-organized multi-lingual art, theater and cultural center in Cluj, which retains its autonomy as one of the oldest Romanian independent spaces since the late 1990-ies. Even here the principle of doubt might not offer solutions; however it might function as a means of dreams and flight.

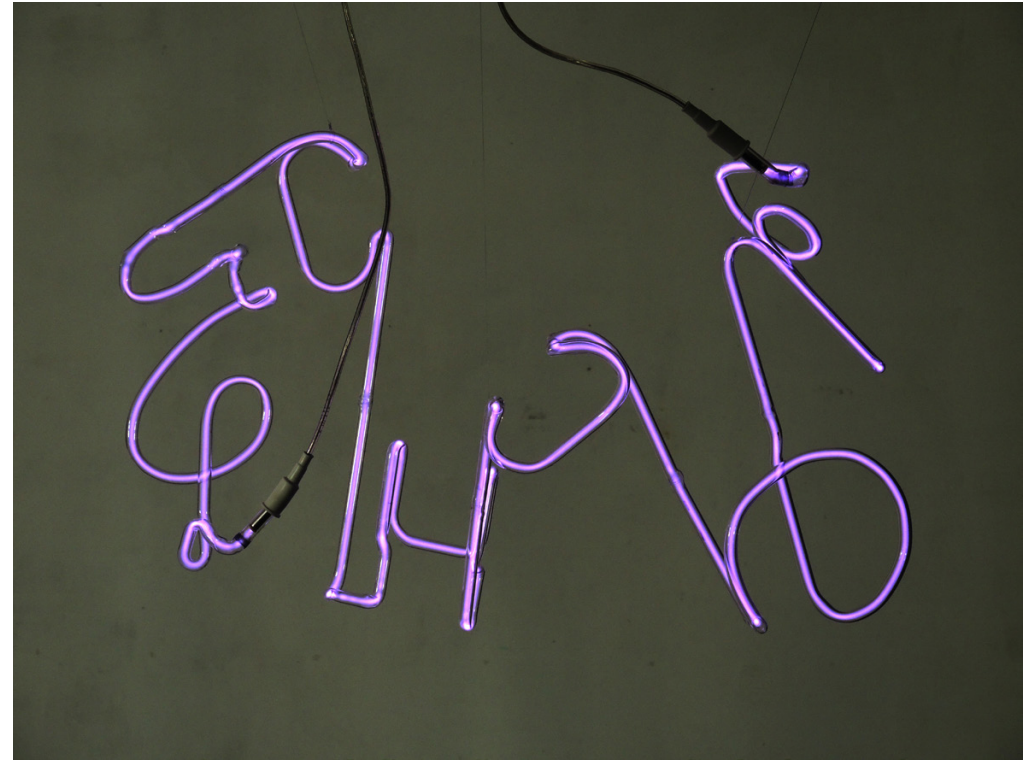


Still untitled

series Exercises in Reading, #9

description neon sign, 2019

context Parts and fragments of letters are newly composed into a neon sign and counter the expectation of making sense. In the attempt of deciphering, an abstract meaning of nonsense making remains inscribed and gives a form to our idea of dis-understanding.



o.T. (Heines Antwort an Fallersleben: Deutschland, wir weben dein Leichentuch,/Wir weben hinein den dreifachen Fluch..., aus: Heinrich Heine, Die schlesischen Weber, in: Vorwärts!, herausgegeben von Karl Marx, Paris, 1844. Stoff aus Baumwolle, der traditionelles Leinengewebe imitiert und aus Resten zusammengenäht ist, die bei der Herstellung von Tracht übrigbleiben.)

Untitled (Heine's answer to Fallersleben: Thy shroud, O Germany, now weave we,/ A threefold curse we're weaving for thee..., from: Heinrich Heine, The Silesian Weavers, in: Vorwärts!, edited by Karl Marx, Paris, 1844, translation by Edgar Alfred Bowring, in: The Poems of Heine, 1859). Cotton fabric that imitates linen and that is stoated from offcuts that are left over after the production of folk garment.)

series Exercises in Reading, #6

description 630×310cm, 2018

context In his lifetime, August Heinrich Hoffmann (a.k.a. von Fallersleben) was widely known for his pseudo-ethnic, nationalistic and anti-Semitic writings. Today, Hoffmann is well remembered for his 'Deutschlandlied', which he wrote in 1841. It became Germany's first national anthem in 1922 during the Weimar Republic on Haydn's melody of 'Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser', which was the Austro-Hungarian anthem until 1918. Solely the first strophe, in which Germany's geopolitical dimensions are wrongly outlined, was sang during the National Socialist regime until 1945, always followed by the today banned Horst-Wessel-Song. For lack thereof, the 'Deutschlandlied' was reappointed West-Germany's national anthem already in 1952. However, since 1990 exclusively its third strophe is designated as such and is therefore protected against disparage. The second strophe, which praises German women, wine, and music, is only rarely mentioned, or played.



title In jeder Wiederholung steckt eine winzige Aufregung, endlich zu verstehen, was es bedeutet. (Eine Schule ist eine Schule ist ein Kloster ist eine Kaserne ist eine Fabrik ist eine Schule.)

In every repetition lies the tiny excitement to understand what it means. (A school is a school is a cloister is a casern is a factory is a school.)

series Calender Studies, #5
Practicing Hearing, #6

description sound of our school bell at 8:00, 8:45, 9:30, 9:45, 10:30, 11:15, 11:40, 12:25, 13:10, 13:15, 14:00, 14:45, 15:00, 15:45, 16:30, 16:45 and 17:30 o'clock from Mondays to Fridays, Museum Schloss Corvey, Höxter, site-specific, 2018

context All institutions of power share control over time. The cloister, the castle, the casern, the factory, the nation state, the school, they all have developed their specific access to people's time, legitimizing their subjectification and repression.

Even though the progression of time is irrevocable, power has the capacity to define and control its course. Power can turn time backwards and conceal its becoming by ahistorically claiming that "Things had always been like this."



title It's about time.

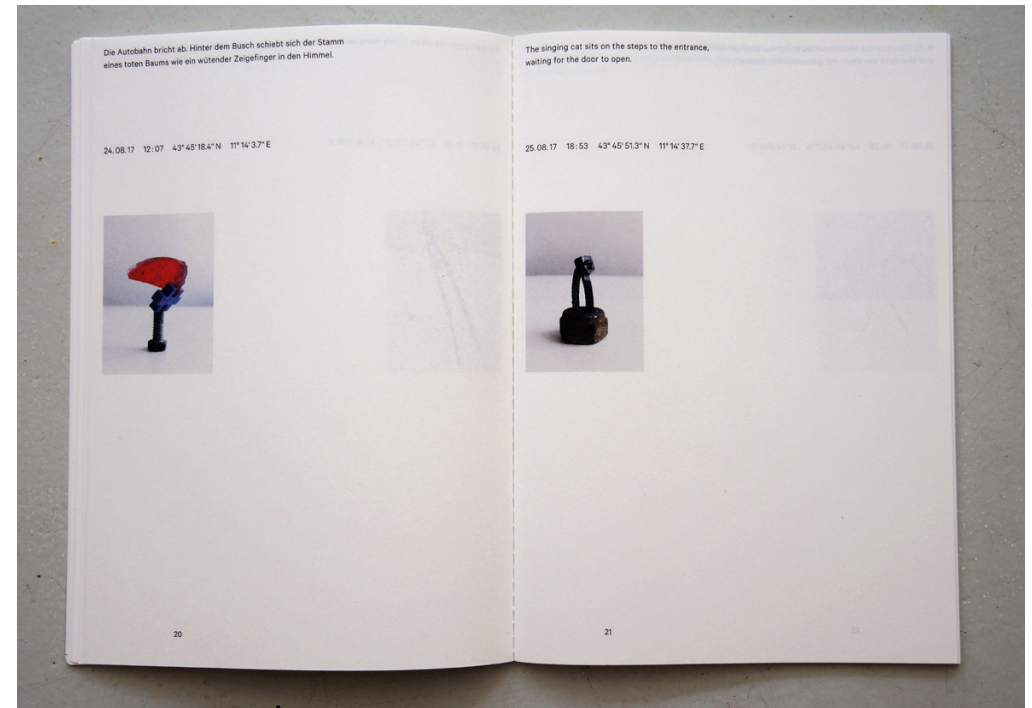
series Exercises in Reading, #7
Calender Studies, #5
Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #15

description publication, ed. Villa Romana, argo books,
Berlin, 2018

context The publication "It's about time." reflects on language and translation as documentary practices. Its title refers to both an idiosyncratic system of defining time as well as to the English figure of speech which implies that something should happen soon or should have happened already.

Based on a dialogical method between the two of us, text, sculptures and structure are the outcome of an experiment. We created a calendar of movements of our bodies through space, a spatio-temporal system of mapping time with found objects in public space and concomitant thoughts and perceptions in notes and sketchbooks.

These encounters create relations of bodies, which, by interacting with each other on the basis of contingency, generate sense and meaning as a form of dis-understanding. By dis-understanding we imagine a knowledge, which is not based on predefined notions and signs, but a knowledge which seems to spontaneously emerge without relying on preset meanings. Dis-understanding enables a sense making on the basis of forgetting.



title A Series of Microhistorcal Failings:
Sun Going Down

series Calendar Studies, #4
Annotations, #5

description postcards, 2018 (ongoing)

context Given the abundance of photographic cameras, the sunset is one of the most popular motives circulating on social media. Sunsets are also a classical romanticist motive as it colorfully and melancholically marks the end of each day. Heinrich Heine already ironically notes. "This is an old, old story. / Young lady, dry your eyes! / The sun that sets before ye, / Behind your back shall rise!"

Even though being such a generic motive, the photographed sunsets still denote concrete subject positionings, confined by our bodies in space and time. In this, the series of sunsets constitutes also a pictorial dialogue about our own perspectives and situatedness. It turns into an idiosyncratic calendar, tracing the movements of our bodies at very specific moments: when the sun goes down, and another day is to come, beyond any eschatological promises.



IMG_2020-04-04_19:49:24

Untitled

series Exercises in Reading, #6

description neon sign, Villa Romana, Florence,
site-specific, 2017

context The small semantic deferral on the plaque outside
the German artist residency Villa Romana, shifts its
name to other associations and thoughts.

Situated on the affluent Southern outskirts of Florence, the Villa Romana is set amidst big gardens and huge villas. Care work, house work and gardening is precariously done by Romanian-speaking migrant workers.

Romania as a name was introduced in the mid-19th century to underline the newly formed nation state's desire to affiliate itself to the western part of Europe. The name refers to the city of Rome and thereby underlines Romania's claim to its alleged Latin origins. However, here this claim is reiterated on the street directly leading to Rome.



title In front of my window the cypress gently moves with every little breath of air.

series Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #9

description fabric sewn together from offcuts from the production of so-called traditional Romanian garment, ca. 632 × 310 cm, 2017

context Thoroughly stitched together, the textile leftovers from the tailoring of the so-called traditional costumes form a giant, but soft and light sheet of semi-translucent gauze. Hanging in the wide space of the former synagogue, it decisively marks and reshapes the room, even though, at the same time, it articulates and marks every current of air, no matter how tiny.

Cluj is the capital of Transylvania, a region which is an integral part of the Romanian nation state since 1918. Hungarian, Romanian and German populations are considered local in this region. Today, the production of traditional costumes still thrives. Even though Jewish and Romani populations have lived in this region for centuries, they don't seem to have any traditional costume representing them, as if their invisibility is translated into an imagined nakedness.



title Strada fara nume;
partea 1: Someșul Mic
partea 2: Luni, 16:27-16:54, 10.04.17

Névtelen utca;
1. rész: Kis-Szamos
2. rész: Hétfő, 16:27-16:54, 17.04.10.

Street without Name;
part 1: River Little Someș
part 2: Monday, 4:27-4:54 pm, 04/10/17

series Calender Studies, #3
Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #12

description sound loop (part 1), video loop (part 2),
Casa Tranzit, Cluj, site-specific, 2017

context Cluj is the second biggest city in Romania today. It is also called Kolozsvár in Hungarian language, Klausenburg in German, and Kloiznburg in Yiddish. In 1974, the name Napoca has been added to the city's official Romanian name in order to emphasize an alleged ethnic continuity since pre-Roman times.

Casa Tranzit is an independent cultural space in Cluj, which is run collectively since 1997. It inhabits the former synagogue Poalei Tzedek, which was in use until 1974. It is situated directly on the bank of the River Little Someș.



title Looking For A Shape Where There Is None
– Notes towards a film

series Exercises in Reading, #5
Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #11
Annotations, #3

description lecture performance, sound, video, ca. 30min

After the End of History: Archives, Phenomenology, Art (Post-)History – A Workshop organized by the Minerva Research Group 'The Nomos of Images' with Boris Groys and bellu&bellu, Kunsthistorisches Institut – Max-Planck-Institut, Florence, May 24th, 2017.

context Based on video and sound material recorded during a research through the borderlands between Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and Romania, the lecture performance is built around the idea of creating sense through a montage of omissions and elisions. Excerpts of material interweave into a performed expanded cinematic lecture, in which the making of a film on memory, borders and hybrid identities is itself exposed and deconstructed.



title Wandering Dill –
Thoughts on Tastes

series Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #14

description dinner prepared for the residents of Divnogorye and the guests and participants of the workshop 'New Questions of Kraevedenie' organized by Mikhail Lylov in Natural, Architectural and Archaeological museum-reserve Divnogorye, as part of the workshop's final interim presentation, Divnogorye, Voronezh, Russia, June 9th, 2017

invitation Matei and Andrea, together with the help of Åsa, Elske, Artur, Xenia, Alicia, Elke and Misha, will prepare the traditional Romanian dish 'sarmale cu mamaliguta' tomorrow evening. All necessary ingredients have been gathered on the local market in Ostrogozhsk – mixed minced meat, onions, bread, and dill, cabbage, kvass and sour cream – this way tracing some of the paths that taste has taken when wandering among and across subjects, cultures, territories and times.



Untitled (On Translation)

series Practicing Hearing, #4
Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #8

description Miriam Makeba 'Where Can I Go?' (1963), 2016

documentation <https://vimeo.com/198127452>

text Written in the 1920's in Poland by the then famous singer Igor S. Korntheyer (1890-1941) and composer Oskar Strok (1893-1975) and widely performed in Yiddish theaters, the tango "Vi ahin zol ikh geyn?" later made its sad way through the ghettos, until accompanying the people deported and murdered in concentration and extermination camps. After the war, it was translated into a somewhat more hopeful tonality in the Displaced Person camps, from where it reached the United States. Here it was picked up by the African-American civil right movement and was reinterpreted by several singers. In 1963 Miriam Makeba recorded the song in the United States – due to her political activism, she had been forced into exile by the South African apartheid regime.



title 1. Die Menge aller Punkte einer Ebene, deren Summe ihrer Abstände zu zwei gegebenen Punkten konstant bleibt, nennt man eine Ellipse. In ihrer Form ist sie ein unvollkommener Kreis; 2. Ellipse bezeichnet einen Satz, der durch das Auslassen von Wörtern oder Satzteilen fragmentiert wird, dessen Sinn aber im Kontext weiterhin aufgehoben bleibt; 3. Innerhalb eines tonalen Harmonieverlaufs bedeutet Ellipse das Auslassen einer Konsonanz, an deren Stelle eine Pause oder eine Dissonanz folgt. (L'viv, Ivana Fedorova Straße 7, 09.10.2014, 16:56-17:00)

1. The locus of all points from the same plane for which the sum of their distances from two fixed points remains constant is called an ellipse; it is an imperfect circle; 2. An ellipse is a fragmented sentence in which one or more words get omitted, whose sense nonetheless is guarded solely by the context; 3. In the course of a tonal harmony an ellipse refers to the omission of a consonance, which instead is replaced by a pause or a dissonance. (L'viv, Ivana Fedorova Street 7, 10/09/2014, 4:56-5:00pm)

series Calendar Studies, #2
Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #5

description sound-installation, inkjet print, 290 × 168 cm, sound, 4:16 min, 2016

context Both picture and sound have been recorded at the same place and at the same time inside the ruin of the Golden Rose Synagogue in Lviv. The apparatuses (picture and sound recording devices) try to get as close as possible to the object of their investigation. However, the closer they come, it seems, the clearer they record above all the withdrawal of any possible legibility.



title Growing in Cracks

series Collection of Trials to Describe Reality, #13
Ecologies of the Margins. #2

description chapter, in: After Memory. Rethinking
Representations of World War II in Contemporary
Eastern European Literatures, ed. ZFL Berlin, De
Gruyter, Berlin, 2016 (2021)

context Coincidental memorials encountered on the sites
of former Jewish Ghettos in Vilnius, Minsk,
Warsaw, Krakow, Rzeszów, Lviv and
Ivano-Frankivsk.

text *Prunus cerasifera*, commonly named Cherry Plum,
is a small shrubby tree, which produces small,
plum-like fruits. It is one of the first trees to flower
in late-winter and early-spring. It is a frugal species,
easily adapting to very different grounds. It prefers
growing on uncultivated lands, especially on marginal
places, like forest edges, roadsides, wastelands and
on abandoned disturbed sites.

