

Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz



Come Sing Along!
On Raising Our Voices
Booklet



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Introduction

Alone in the shower, with our children in the car, or with strangers in a stadium – singing is everywhere. Singing is not just a way to pass the time. It also creates community, is a way to express identities, and conveys dissent and resistance during protests. The exhibition brings together 22 approaches to the subject of singing, focusing on new interpretations and adaptations as well as music as a collective practice. *Come Sing Along!* combines video and sound installations with participatory projects and visual works of art that enable visitors to experience the voice, singing, and community in multiple ways within an exhibition environment designed by Jakob Neulinger.

Tradition and Reinterpretation

The artists in the exhibition draw on national song culture, both folk and modern songs, addressing grief, deploying humor, and offering reinterpretations of old songs to express their diverse concerns. Maria Lassnig and Hubert Sielecki, for example, add autobiographical lyrics to an old Viennese ballad, while Johanna and Helmut Kandl show how Joseph Haydn's famous melody *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* [God Save Francis the Emperor], which has provided the basis of national anthems, is linked to love and folk songs. Mathilde ter Heijne in turn emphasizes the importance of traditional lamentations in coming to terms with traumatic experiences.

Song as Empowerment

For people who are not free to raise their voices or are not being heard, singing can be a powerful act of self-assertion. Thus, artists have used music as a way to react to the systematic oppression and disenfranchisement of minorities. Giving a voice to those that are underrepresented, they bring to the fore concerns that are ignored or silenced.

The destructive consequences of the colonial ambitions of many European nations, which are still being felt today – be it on the African or South American continents – form the point of departure for Sammy Baloji and Bartolina Xixa's works. While Baloji addresses the role of the Catholic Church, demonstrating how Christian choral traditions have been interwoven with indoctrination in the Congo, Xixa denounces the destruction of nature and exploitation of the indigenous pop-

ulation in her Argentinian homeland. Clément Cogitore's work in turn counteracts racist stereotypes with a reinterpretation of a French opera ballet that takes the form of a choreography, offering young migrant dancers a stage to make themselves and their concerns visible. Dejan Kaludjerović's opera-based video installation provides children from various nations with a voice.

The sound installation by artist Henk Schut in the annex space offers an immersive listening experience, situating the historical dimensions of a vocal work for the church within the context of anti-democratic processes that are currently underway.

Work and Protest

When collective singing is considered in the context of protests, the workers' movement and its struggle against the global consequences of capitalist exploitation take on a particular significance. Ines Doujak's new sculpture created especially for the exhibition and the workers' songs she has written point to the complex mechanisms of neoliberal dominance and its consequences. Mikhail Karikis and Uriel Orlow's video addresses the changing global economy by having a miners' choir perform at an old coal mine, standing in a formation that recalls a picket line.

Atmospheres of Community

Even though singing together in public spaces is less common today than it was 50 years ago, it can still be regularly witnessed at major events and political rallies as a community-building practice. At the invitation of the Lentos, Nikolaus Gansterer is addressing this subject in his work: in a stadium, at a demonstration, and at a concert, he takes precise notes of his perceptions, subsequently conveying the atmosphere of such moments in large-scale drawings. Nengi Omuku's paintings feature groups of people that she compares to the chorus of antique theater. In expressive, surrealist colors, she creates large-scale atmospheric images depicting, for example, the elections in her home country Nigeria.

Intimacy and Individuality

Yet not all of the artists in the exhibition focus on collective moments. Some works rather address intimate subjects that, through their emotionality, place humanity itself center stage. Singing here enables us to share in individual stories and perspectives.

For Michèle Pearson Clarke, singing becomes an expression of vulnerability. The process of learning to sing becomes a symbol of personal development in coming to terms with her own queer identity. Rory Pilgrim's work *The Undercurrent* focuses on the intimate experiences, the hopes and desires of young people and the homeless in the context of such global challenges as climate change. Finally, Chto Delat use an emotionally triggered internet user sitting in front of a screen as an example of manipulations by global corporations.

Come Sing Along!

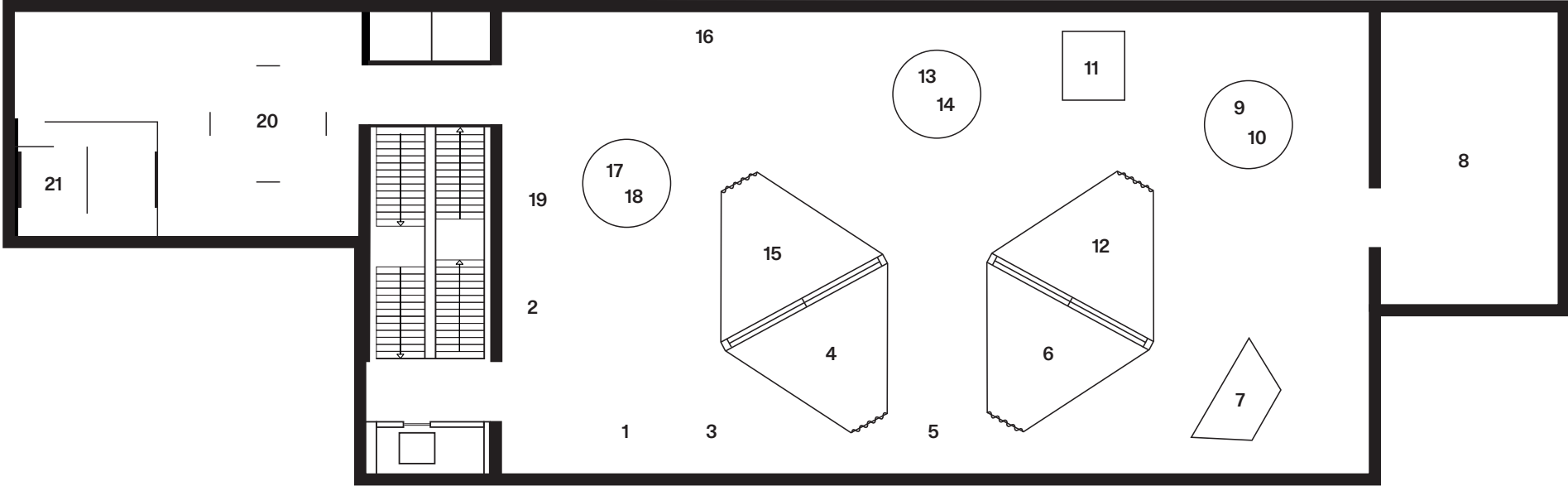
What would an exhibition about singing be without an opportunity for visitors to raise their own voices? In the newly created audio piece by artist and musician Ayumi Paul the voice appears as a medium of resistance, which any individual can experience with the help of brief voice and breathing exercises. Meanwhile, the karaoke installation by artist Christian Jankowski in the foyer of the Lentos offers more than 3,000 international songs to choose from. They enable visitors to experience the power of communal singing for themselves.

Floor Plan

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Lentos Foyer: Christian Jankowski



Anton Kolig

* 1886 in Neutitschein, CZ; † 1950 in Nötsch, AT

The Becoming (Women's Choir), 1946

Oil on Canvas



The painting *The Becoming* by the Austrian expressionist Anton Kolig is the exhibition's point of departure.

The study for a detail from 1946 represents a section of the overall composition for the iron curtain of the Salzburg Festival Hall. A group of singing women who symbolize “becoming” are depicted in the area to the lower left. Employing broad, expressive brushstrokes, the artist has created a choir of singers, capturing their animated, ecstatic making of music.

The artist, who has placed himself in the picture as a small figure with

a skull, directs the scene. The image of the choir serves as a symbol for the creative process. The painting is characterized by intense colors, a typical feature of Kolig's late work. Due to the artist's sudden death in 1950, the composition was never to be executed.

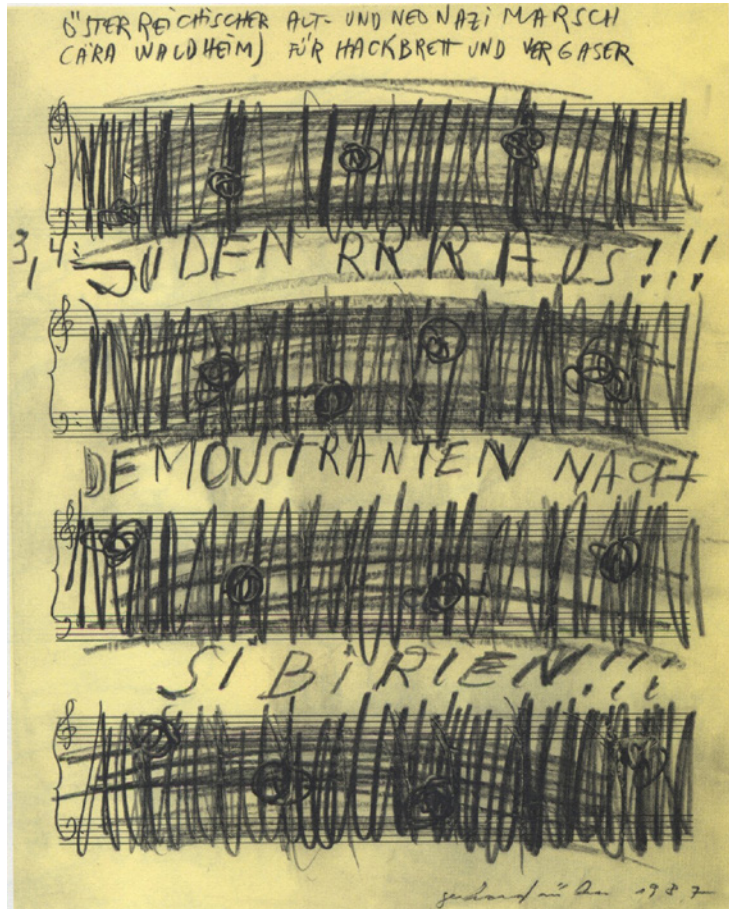
The work is part of the Lentos painting collection and forms a transition from the presentation of the permanent collection to the exhibition *Come Sing Along!*.

Gerhard Rühm

* 1930 in Vienna, AT; lives in Cologne, DE and Vienna, AT

Three Graphics from the Series *Visuelle Musik* 1986/87

Pencil Drawings on Sheets of Music



The exhibition is showing three drawings from Gerhard Rühm's *Visuelle Musik* [Visual Music], in which he transcends the conventional genres of literature, music, and visual art. The works that the Vienna-born artist has been developing since the 1970s experiment with the visual representation of music. The latter is rendered in abstract gestures on individual, blank sheets of staff paper in the form of graphic notations as well as, in some cases, text. The series comprises instances of both the spontaneously expressive and strictly conceptual. Rather than relying on the mediating authority of the performer, *Visual Music* endeavors to succeed solely on its own terms. Its objective is to awaken musical associations in the minds of the viewer.

Over the years, Gerhard Rühm's *Visual Music* has adopted a variety of forms, leading him to divide it into categories, ranging from *Lesemusik* [Reading Music] – gestural drawings on staff paper – to *Leselieder* [Reading Songs], sheets similar to the ones in the present exhibition, which have been expanded to include textual elements.

For more than fifty years, Gerhard Rühm, a co-founder of the Wiener Gruppe [Vienna Group], has devoted himself to the phenomena of language and its various means of expression. The artist, author, and composer regards it as material with phonetic, musical, conceptual, visual, and symbolic elements, the boundaries of which require testing and expansion.

Nengi Omuku

* 1987 in Delta, NG; lives in Lagos, NG

Star Gazers, 2021

The Symphony, 2023

Oil on Sanyan



The expressive paintings of Nigerian artist Nengi Omuku explore concepts of collective identity, community, and belonging.

In her work *The Symphony*, Omuku makes reference to the 2023 parliamentary elections in Nigeria, which have been interpreted as a turning point in the West African country's democratic stability. The artist describes the scene she has depicted as a moment full of optimism when change seemed possible to her. The faceless figures, with ballot papers in their hands, convey a sense of hope as they observe the voting process. Like members of an orchestra, they raise their voices together for fair, transparent elections. The restless background suggests that this shared dream could, nevertheless, be in danger of not coming true.

Omuku compares the protagonists of her paintings to the chorus in Greek theater, which conventionally observed and sometimes commented on the

events. The artist's figures remain faceless, however, in order to emphasize an expression of collective corporeality. Such is also the case in the painting *Star Gazers*, in which an abstracted group of people look at an expressive form. Omuku was inspired by the bamboo bushes of her homeland, construing them in the painting as an energetic, perhaps even spiritual force.

The artist, who studied in London, uses a western Nigerian silk, called sanyan, for her paintings, which lends her works a distinctive materiality and physicality. For Omuku, the merging of this traditional pre-colonial textile with oil paint, connoting a European convention, becomes a metaphor for living between two cultures, yet her works still remain firmly situated within her Nigerian milieu.

The Lentos is presenting the artist's work for the first time in Austria.

Mikhail Karikis and Uriel Orlow

* 1975 in Thessaloniki, GR; lives in London, GB

* 1973 in Zurich, CH; lives in Lisbon, PT

Sounds from Beneath, 2011–12

Video, 6' 47"



In the work *Sounds from Beneath*, a desolate, disused coal mine in East Kent (GB) is brought back to life through song. The focus of the video is a choral piece, for which the artist Mikhail Karikis invited a miners' choir to recall and reinterpret the underground sounds of their mine.

The men of the "Snowdown Colliery Welfare Male Voice Choir" use their voices to imitate the sounds of banging hammers, blaring alarms, and reverberating explosions that had once pervaded their daily working lives. The formation in which the singers stand evokes workers on a picket line, con-

veying a strong sense of a community united in work and song. Their performance transforms the barren surroundings into an amphitheater. In the video created together with the artist Uriel Orlow, nature itself becomes a protagonist in its own right, slowly reclaiming land scarred by decades of coal mining, a reference to the slow transformation that the global economy is undergoing in the wake of climate change.

Mikhail Karikis is working in the media of video, audio, and performance. Many of his projects are the result of long-term collaborations with a variety of people and social groups.

Ines Doujak

* 1959 in Klagenfurt, AT; lives in Vienna, AT

Walking Cemetery, 2024

Styrodur, Steel, Polyester, Fabric, Booklet, Songs



A figure stands tall in the exhibition space, wearing overalls on which the words “CLASS HATRED” are repeated, like a brand logo. The class hatred in question is that of the rich directed at the poor and the “poor-bashing” (Jean Swanson) by billionaires like Jeff Bezos. Headphones dangle from the figure’s pockets, from which songs in various languages can be heard describing the current circumstances of workers and their associated struggles. They are about the prices dictated by supermarkets (*Schmelzofen* [Furnace]) or the death of hope (*Nosotros/Wir* [Nosotros/We]) and the fate of the female workers (*Women Workers*). A new song created for the exhibition relates directly to the sculpture depicting an old woman about to eat a child. Taking the form of a rebetiko, a type of Greek song originating from the subculture of society’s poorest, it revolves around the history of cannibalism as a colonial narrative.

Whenever indigenous peoples were to be disenfranchised and dehumanized, they were frequently declared to be “cannibals.” Most recently, the American right under Donald Trump has prominently stoked fears of cannibalism in order to fuel hatred of refugees. Trump claims that the Biden administration is opening the borders to psychopaths and regularly draws comparisons to the fictional cannibal Hannibal Lecter. Elon Musk, in turn, has spoken of “hordes of cannibals” in connection to Haitian migrants. In Ines Doujak’s work, however, the reference to stories of cannibalism is not only about concrete events. Her female cannibal is also an allegory for cultural and material appropriation, in which traditions of other cultures are ingested and its members are grinded down by debilitating labor, for example in mines or on large construction sites, in order to ensure the continued existence of a dominant culture.

Bartolina Xixa

* 2017 in Jujuy, AR; lives in Jujuy, AR

Ramita Seca, La colonialidad permanente, 2017

Video, 5' 07"



A toxic, fuming garbage dump in the middle of the Argentine Andean region of Quebrada de Humahuaca serves as the setting for Bartolina Xixa's work *Ramita Seca, La colonialidad permanente* [Dry Branch, The Permanent Coloniality]. The drag queen and fictional character was created by Maximiliano Mamani in 2017. She serves to draw attention and offer resistance to the consequences of Spanish colonization for the indigenous population, which continue even today. Her name is a reference to the Bolivian revolutionary leader Bartolina Sisa Vargas (ca. 1750–82), who led uprisings of her people against the Spanish occupiers before she was captured, tortured, and brutally murdered by them. For her performance, Xixa utilizes the indigenous Andean culture's traditional attire and jewelry, as worn by women of the Quechua and Aymara peoples. In doing so, the artist is highlighting her own cultural roots, employing them as an opportunity to assertively confront continuing colonial

structures. Xixa's movements between worn-out mattresses, garbage bags, and broken plastic toys are expressive, her choreography developing to the sound of a vidala by folk singer Aldana Bello, referencing a traditional form of poetry from the Andean region that is sung and danced to the accompaniment of drums. The lyrics denounce the impact of Spanish colonization and culture of the white settlers, including environmental destruction and the discrimination, persecution, and exploitation of the indigenous population. The video ends with a text, which reads:

"We are a large metabolism that digests economic consumerism and expels its shit on the peripheries of our world. We are the waste this hygienic and aseptic world does not want to see. We are the ones who pay the ecological debt of those who squander us and transact in power."

Sammy Baloji

* 1978 in Lubumashi, CG; lives in Brussels, BE

Tales of the Copper Cross Garden: Episode I, 2017

Video 42', Photography



The installation by Congolese artist Sammy Baloji consists of two parts. The video stages copper production as a choreography of Black workers' bodies laboriously processing the coveted raw material into a commodity for the global market. Baloji uses the depiction of the process to consider the historical involvement of the Catholic Church in the colonial exploitation of the Congolese population. The imagery is accompanied by choral songs from the colonial era that were composed by the Congolese musician and politician Joseph Kiwele. His compositions were based on the tradition of Catholic church music while simultaneously attempting to appeal to Congolese musical tastes. Baloji, who himself grew up in the mining region of Katanga, has also incorporated elements of his own biography into the video. The work is complemented by quotes from the philosopher Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, who in his writings questioned the central notions underpinning the Eurocentric

history of Africa and the racist concepts that served to justify its colonization.

The work's second component is a large-scale black-and-white photograph of the Catholic boys' "Singers of the Copper Cross" choir. Copper crosses hang from the singers' necks that resemble St. Andrew's crosses in shape but do not actually have a Christian origin. The intersecting copper bars, also known as Katanga crosses, had in fact been in use since the 13th century, before the arrival of the Portuguese, as a means of payment and as a talisman. Here they are a metaphor for the synthesis of African and Christian symbolism imposed by the colonial powers in an endeavor to exert influence on the Congolese population.

Sammy Baloji's installation conjures a complex narrative concerning the colonial structures that were deeply embedded within Congolese society for decades and that continue to have an impact today.

Henk Schut

* 1957 in Amsterdam, NL; lives in Amsterdam, NL

The Singing Parliament, 2018/24

7-Channel-Soundinstallation, 30'



With his work *The Singing Parliament*, Dutch artist Henk Schut has created an immersive sound installation in the annex space at Lentos. Through the power of the human voice, the work addresses such issues as the opportunities provided by free expression and its role in today's democracies.

Each of the five loudspeakers reproduces a voice from the polyphonic song *Deus venerunt gentes*. The ecclesiastical vocal work by the British composer William Byrd is manifested here as a vocal sculpture occupying the exhibition space, which can be experienced differently depending on the visitor's own location within the space.

Byrd, one of the Renaissance's most important composers, wrote the piece around 1580, when the Roman Catholic faith was being further repressed in favor of the Anglican Church under Queen Elizabeth I. The song is based on a psalm, which was interpreted at the time to be a direct protest against martyred Catholics who were

being burned at the stake for their faith. Byrd, himself a devout Catholic, enjoyed the English Queen's respect for his compositions, but with this piece was placing himself at risk of persecution.

The sounds of fighter jets flying overhead repeatedly interrupt the contemplative singing in the installation. They remind us that democratic rights, often taken for granted, are constantly under threat in the face of global crises. *The Singing Parliament* was produced in response to Schut's long-term preoccupation with questions of how art can influence social and political circumstances. The work updates the historical events surrounding William Byrd, who used the power of music in expressing his protest. As processes that undermine democracy increase in today's society, one question becomes even more urgent: whose voice is being heard?

Chto Delat

Founded 2003/04 in St. Petersburg, RU; live and work in Exile, a. o. in Germany

One Night in a Social Network: An Opera-Farce, 2019

Video, 29' 57"



The opera farce in four acts and an epilogue by Chto Delat addresses how social networks and those skilled in using them play with our emotions. The five main characters are four emoji emotions that have become real, namely LOL¹, surprise, anger, and sadness, as well as an internet troll. While the emoji emotions directly reflect the impact of content on a user and play with his symbolic heart, the troll adopts the function of commentator, singing about the sad fate of the internet user who is becoming a puppet. The bored troll concurrently contributes new content to the newsfeed in the form of a paper cylinder. With the assistance of the emoji emotions, the user continuously scrolls, reacting in an increasingly emotional manner to the latest news. While images of kittens, a sunset, and a baby photo are initially visible, the newsfeed gradually begins to fill up with reports about the murder of

the Russian dissident journalist Arkady Babchenko in Ukraine on May 29, 2018. At first, the user reacts with restrained anger and a love emoji to the news that “a fighter for the truth” has died. But in the second act which concerns online hate and violence and the sadness and depression that it provokes, the newsfeed fills up with more violent images. Over time, more videos emerge in which Babchenko expresses his opposition to the Putin regime in increasingly harsh terms, finally expressing his desire to enter Moscow on a NATO tank. The user’s emotions turn against the journalist and anger becomes the prevailing emotion until he ultimately showers a Putin video with hearts. On receiving a surprising message about Babchenko in the epilogue, he begins scrolling more rapidly, emotions running high until the final collapse.

1 Laughing Out Loud

Bruce Yonemoto

* 1946 in San Jose, US; lives in Los Angeles, US

Sounds Like the Sound of Music, 2005

Video, 4' 14"



US artist Bruce Yonemoto has produced, in this work, a reinterpretation of the iconic opening scene of the 1965 musical film *The Sound of Music*. In the original scene, actor Julie Andrews stands on a hill in the Austrian Alps near Salzburg, singing the famous theme song. Yonemoto has shifted the scene to the Peruvian Andes, replacing the Salzburg idyll with its impressive Inca ruins. Instead of Julie Andrews, viewers see a young Andean resident singing a version of the song translated into Quechua – the Incas’ indigenous language.

The act of singing plays a central role in Yonemoto’s work, emphasizing the persistence of indigenous languages that endure despite the influence of

Western powers. In using Quechua, the artist is able to create yet another pop-cultural reference, namely to the still popular space saga *Star Wars*. Director George Lucas had his alien character Jabba the Hutt – an icon of “orientalized” evil – speak in a language derived from the Inca dialect. Yonemoto uses the reference to illuminate the complex relationships between post-colonial identities, cultural imperialism, and the continuing presence of indigenous cultures today. By shifting the setting and translating the lyrics into an indigenous language, the film succeeds in raising important questions concerning representation and cultural heritage.

Ayumi Paul

* 1980 in Giessen, DE; lives in Kyoto, JP and Athens, GR

Salt Songs, 2022

Salt, Water on Paper

Sounding Seed, 2024

Audio, 11'



The artist and trained musician Ayumi Paul has created an audio piece for the exhibition in which, employing her interdisciplinary approach, she addresses the show's content. The work, part of the series *Sounding Seeds*, invites visitors to join the artist on an acoustic journey, during which she explores the variety of ways in which sound and song have shaped our world. Paul regards the voice as a medium of resistance. Using examples from history, she narrates the power it contains. With the assistance of brief vocal and breathing exercises, the artist guides visitors in exploring the possibilities of their own voices.

The piece is accompanied by works from the series *Salt Songs*. The latter were created through an interplay of salt and water with Paul's voice and breath. In a meditative process, she sings about the salty water which

manifests itself as crystals on the paper over a period of two to three days. The crystalline structures convey how the vibrations of her voice, her memories, and intentions have become physically condensed in matter. Chance is likewise a co-creator. In her poetic works, Paul reflects on the origins of our planet and the eternal cycle of life. Billions of years ago, hot lava transported the chemical elements that constitute the salt we consume to the Earth's surface. In working with these ancient raw materials, the artist produces a resonance spanning billions of years, one which continues in her own body.

Both works are part of *The Singing Project*, which Ayumi Paul has been continuously developing since 2019. The Lentos is presenting the artist's work for the first time in Austria.

Dejan Kaludjerović

* 1972 in Belgrade, YU (today Serbia); lives in Vienna, AT

I Don't Know That Word... Yet, 2022/23

5-Channel-Videoinstallation, 53'



As part of his *Conversations* series, Dejan Kaludjerović has been interviewing children aged between 7 and 10 from differing socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds since 2013. In 2022/23, he developed a five-channel video and sound installation from the interviews, which can now be viewed and heard for the first time in Austria. It is based on an opera consisting of eight songs for four voices that Kaludjerović wrote with librettist Tanja Šljivar and composer Marija Balubdžić (premiered: Steirischer Herbst 2021). In the immersive installation comprising four screens and a projection, Kaludjerović attends to the responses of children from eight cities – Vladikavkaz, Belgrade, Baku, Tehran, Vienna, Jerusalem, Ljubljana, and Graz. Having adults render what children had said, the work

creates a distance. Yet, in a society shaped by adultism, which privileges the wishes and thoughts of adults over those of children, the words thus also gain more weight. The eight songs incorporate influences ranging from pop to rap, house to hymns, and also opera. *Fears, House, Freedom, Expressions, Hairdresser, Enemies, They, and Europe*, in German and English, address basic human anxieties, dreams, the future, hostility, as well as questions that have significantly informed the present, such as attitudes to foreigners. The artist has also dedicated a song to populist language and “the others”. Finally, the song *Hairdresser* concerns gender identities from a child’s perspective. The originality of the child’s worldview, seemingly absurd and funny, create new perspectives on familiar themes.

Noam Enbar

* 1978 in Tel Aviv, IL; lives in Tel Aviv, IL

Pana Ha'Geshem, 2016

Video, 17'



The video by Israeli artist and composer Noam Enbar shows a performance that was created together with refugees in the Israeli internment camp Holot. The camp, situated in the desert near the Egyptian border, which had been heavily criticized by human rights organizations, was used to house asylum seekers from Eritrea and Sudan from 2013 to 2018. The Israeli government were unable to deport such people to their home countries, but neither were they provided with any prospect of legal residency. Together with theater director Chen Alon and filmmaker Avi Mograbi, Enbar initiated theater, film, and music workshops with the people living there in precarious circumstances. During the collaboration lasting over a year, the structured, yet improvised

composition *Pana Ha'Geshem* [The Rain is Gone] was developed and performed in collaboration with workshop participants. The composition based on a famous Israeli peasant song associated with the kibbutz movement, was transformed into an expressive polyphonic piece. While the singers retained the original lyrics, they changed the melody and improvised in many places. The song narrates the communal cultivation of the land, the beginning of spring and the harvest season, as well as addressing love and togetherness. United by the power of song, the choir of disenfranchised voices rises up, creating a potent tool for developing resilience in the face of living in conditions marked by repression.

Mathilde ter Heijne

* 1969 in Strasbourg, FR; lives in Berlin, DE

Lament, Song for Transitions, 2014

Video, 16' 37"



Mathilde ter Heijne's work explores the ancient tradition of lamentation, a combination of singing and crying. Women all over the world perform this cultural ritual during life's transitional moments – at funerals, weddings, or when bidding farewell to loved ones. As an expression of suffering and grief, traditional lamentations are intended to aid people in processing personal pain and trauma.

The footage for *Lament, Song for Transitions* was recorded at a workshop organized by the artist during her stay in Finland in 2010, when she invited the singer Pirkko Fihlman to teach the almost forgotten tradition of Karelian lamentation. Ter Heijne has interwoven the recordings from the workshop with excerpts from Finland's very first ethnological film, *Häidenvietto Karjalan runomailia* [A Wedding in Karelia, the Land of Poetry], from 1921. The artist

consistently employs such stylistic devices as fades and abrupt edits for the transitions between sequences of imagery, generating ruptures that counteract the illusion of a linear historiography and create a visual allusion to the moments of transition inherent in life.

In her work, Mathilde ter Heijne combines contemporary and past voices in examining the role of women in the creating of cultural identity. She questions the patriarchal structures permeating our society while seeking alternative interconnections between the economy, spirituality, politics, and gender relations. In her installations, performances, and videos, the artist utilizes historical materials, such as archaeological artifacts and ethnographic studies, to make forgotten or ignored voices visible once more.

Clément Cogitore

* 1983 in Colmar, FR; lives in Paris, FR

Les Indes galantes, 2017

Video, 6'



Clément Cogitore's *Les Indes galantes* [The Elegant Indies] is a contemporary interpretation of the ballet opera of the same name by Jean-Philippe Rameau, an 18th century French composer. For his piece, Rameau was inspired by dances performed by Louisiana's indigenous population, incorporating their movements into his own composition. The opera recounts a search for love in distant, "exotic" locations, with India, as mentioned in the title, substituting for all non-European countries. Working with choreographers – Bintou Dembele, Igor Carouge and Brahim Rachiki – Cogitore selected the well-known scene *Danse des sauvages* [Dance of the Savages], in which a racist and stereotypical view of everything non-European is particularly evident. In the video, a group of young krump dancers occupy the stage of the Paris Opéra Bastille. Krump emerged in the USA during the 1990s as a reaction

to increasing police violence against African Americans. The dance style is characterized by such expressive, powerful movements as stomping, swinging the arms, and thrusting the chest, evolving as a means of emotional expression and non-violent resistance to repression and racially motivated violence. In Cogitore's reinterpretation, a place of elite high culture has been collectively seized by young dancers, a privileged space that would usually be closed to them. The dynamic stage production confronts the historical source's colonial perspective with personal experiences of racist discrimination that are articulated in the movements of the young people, providing them with visibility. While the original partition draws on the fiction of peaceful forests, the young people raise their voices and end up overpowering the colonial fiction.

Nikolaus Gansterer

* 1974 in Klosterneuburg, AT; lives in Vienna, AT

Contingent Agencies (voices), 2024

Pencil, pastel colors and colored pencil on paper



What generates atmospheres or ambiences? And how can they be captured? The Austrian artist Nikolaus Gansterer has been addressing these questions since 2019 as part of a research project. *Contingent Agencies* examines, in particular, how various forces contribute to an overall atmosphere. Thus wind, rain, light, certain animals, people and other factors, are examined individually in differing places around the world and on various occasions. As part of the current exhibition, the Lentos invited the artist to address the agency of the voice. In response, Gansterer examined a work by Anton Bruckner performed for the Bruckner anniversary year, as well as a match involving the Linz football club LASK, a young boy's vocal exercises with a speech therapist, the chants at a demonstration, *Ursonate* by Dada artist Kurt Schwitters (performed by the South African artist William Kentridge),

the primates in the Schönbrunn monkey house, and a voice rising during orgasm on a summer night in a Viennese courtyard.

Gansterer's drawings and texts not only document what was heard and how it sounded, but also provide insights into the perceptions of the artist seeking to convey his own sensory impressions and feelings. At a time when we are almost unable to experience anything without the urge to record it, the project explores the possibilities of drawing, a medium that is as old as humanity itself. Even though cell phones hold the promise that nothing will ever be lost, we are frequently disappointed when we replay a recording on our phone. *Contingent Agencies (voices)* demonstrates that it is possible to convey a sense of the agency of a voice using the means of drawing.

Helmut and Johanna Kandl

* 1953 in Laa a.d. Thaya, AT; lives in Vienna, AT and Berlin, DE

* 1954 in Vienna, AT; lives in Vienna, AT and Berlin, DE

Ohrwurm, 2014/20

Video, 12' 36"



Frequently, song lyrics and melodies would seem to be so closely interwoven that we can hardly imagine any other combination. In reality however, most songs have been exposed to many influences and one melody has often been combined with various lyrics. *Ohrwurm* [Earworm] by Helmut and Johanna Kandl examines such changes using the example of a famous melody by Joseph Haydn. The video begins with fans in a stadium singing the German national anthem. The lyrics were written in 1841 as the *Lied der Deutschen* [Song of the Germans] by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben. In doing so, however, he explicitly used the melody of the song *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* [God save Francis the Emperor], which Haydn had composed in 1797. Sung in the various languages of the monarchy, the melody served as the Austria-Hungary anthem until 1918. From 1922 onwards it became the German national anthem, the third verse, *Unity and Justice and Freedom*, is still being sung today.

The video goes on to feature different variations of the melody. The Burgenland-Croatian love song *Vjutro rano se ja vstanem* [I Rise Early in the Morning] also begins with the same melody and it is assumed that Haydn was inspired by the love song. The subject matter and cultural context differ fundamentally however when, in one case, it is nations that are being sung about and national pride stoked, while in the other a young man is speaking of his early morning encounter with a beautiful young woman. When the young woman finally raises her voice, melancholically telling of her engagement to a rich man she does not love, imploring God in heaven to send her a poor man she can love, anti-capitalist tones also begin to emerge. It is then no wonder that a queer Berlin punk band accepted the Kandls' proposal to produce a version of the song for them.

Maria Lassnig and Hubert Sielecki

* 1919 in Kappel am Krappfeld, AT; † 2014 in Vienna, AT

* 1946 in Rosenbach, AT; lives in Vienna, AT

Maria Lassnig Kantate, 1992

Video, 8'



Together with Hubert Sielecki, Maria Lassnig produced an eight-minute film in which, in 14 sung episodes, she provides insights into her life as an artist. It is the last video work by the Austrian artist, who, in addition to her paintings, also created an extensive body of work in film from the 1970s onwards.

As in many of her paintings, the focus of *Maria Lassnig Kantate* [The Ballad of Maria Lassnig] is the artist herself. Wearing different costumes, she restages her biography verse by verse: from her birth in Carinthia to her studies in Vienna, her sojourns in Paris and New York, and her return to Austria, where she became the first woman in a German-speaking country to be appointed a professor of painting. Hand-drawn imagery in the background illustrates or ironically disrupts the sung

content. The repeating melody is easy on the ear and was adapted from an old Viennese serving maid's song, a folk song in the tradition of ballads, in which such subjects as homesickness, disappointment in love, farewells, and a life filled with hard work were sung about humorously in wistful tones. Hubert Sielecki, who headed the Studio for Experimental Animation Film at the University of Applied Arts Vienna from 1982 to 2012, accompanied Lassnig's singing with his flute and a hurdy-gurdy.

The Austrian filmmaker Martina Kudláček stated in the publication *Maria Lassnig. Film Works*: "Lassnig rewrites the song verses and story in a tragicomic manner, telling of a life that was self-determined and the freedom she found in art. It is a song of liberation!"

Otto Zitko

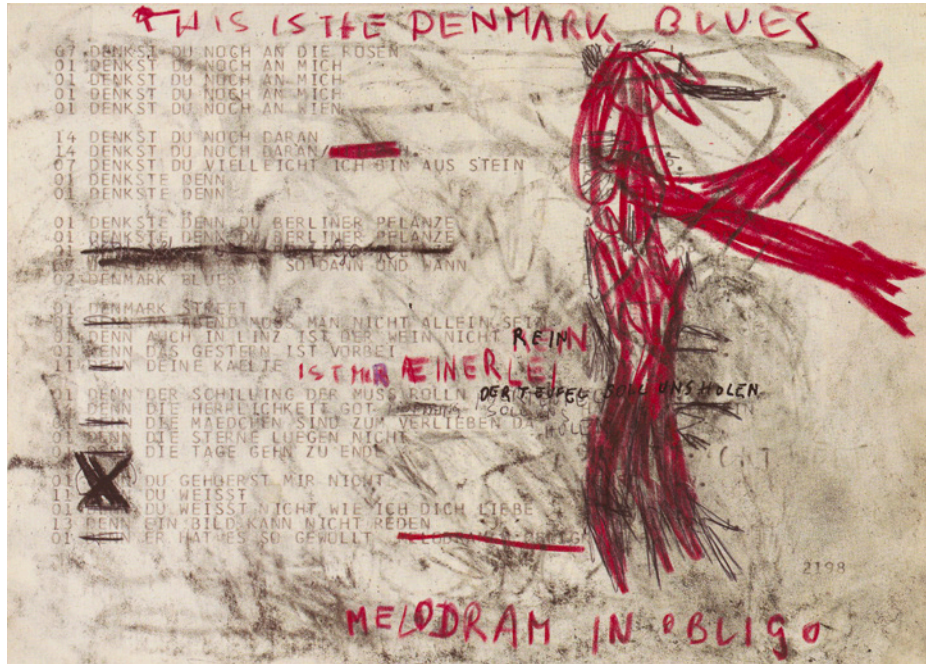
* 1959 in Linz, AT; lives in Vienna, AT

Liederbuch 1985–1987, 1987

Artist's Book

Sarah und Rosita (Liederbuch 1985–1987), 1992

Audio, 10' 25"



In an exhibition whose German title makes reference to a well-known, popular songbook, Otto Zitko's *Liederbuch 1985–1987* [Song Book 1985–1987] has, of course, to be included. It was published on the occasion of the artist's solo exhibition at Galerie Peter Pakesch in Vienna in 1987. As has frequently happened, the artist was inspired by external sources, that is, found objects, in this case alphabetical lists of song titles that were available to him as materials for drawings. Initially he only used the blank verso of the sheets, but later began to also rework the computer printouts of the song lists utilizing highlighting, deletions and additions – together with calligraphic marks and drawing, letting himself be inspired by the lyrics and emotions that the songs released in him.

A few years later, on the occasion of an exhibition that once again brought

together the group of artists around Galerie Peter Pakesch, Otto Zitko set the songbook to music. His approach, this time, was to let two people from his circle of friends – a mother (Rosita) and her daughter (Sarah) – speak the text of the book, a bassline accompanying the woman and child's voices, differing elements that the musician and artist Andreas Kunzmann then mixed. The mother and daughter are both deeply involved in speaking the same text which is repeated, like an echo, in varying pitches. The bass, on the other hand, played using only one string, sets a rhythmic pulse that carries the talk about love, longing, desire, and separation; an absurd whirlwind of emotions that speaks directly to the listener and draws them in.

The Lentos is showing the artist's publication in combination with the musical arrangement for the first time.

Michèle Pearson Clarke

* 1973, in Port-of-Spain, TT; lives in Toronto, CA

Quantum Choir, 2022

4-Channel-Videoinstallation, 12' 46"



Michèle Pearson Clarke's video installation *Quantum Choir* invites us to share in the intimate process of learning to sing and the joy of mastering a song. It addresses shame, but also the enjoyment that lies in overcoming it to do something that we find difficult. In delving on gestures and non-verbal expressions, *Quantum Choir* speaks of the difficulty of conveying emotions solely with words.

The work also addresses social perceptions: like the artist, the three other protagonists are masculine women. In this context, the voice plays an important part and the various vocal exercises that the viewer witnesses in the video installation demonstrate how masculinity or femininity are conveyed even by small, seemingly insignificant utterances and gestures.

When Clarke describes how conversations about masculinity touch on her own identity, reporting on the privileges of being perceived as a man while also talking about the prejudices against black men that also affect her, the artist situates the work within the framework of current discourses on queerness and intersectionality. As the visitors enter the installation, they are exposing themselves through their choices and, beyond consuming a vulnerability that is on offer, may become vulnerable themselves. The song that finally resounds at the end of the work is the challenging pop song *Queen of Denmark* by John Grant, in which the artist sometimes addresses himself while at others talking to a former lover. Like Clarke's work itself, the song performs vulnerability and shame, yet ultimately becomes empowering.

Rory Pilgrim

* 1988 in Bristol, GB; lives in Amsterdam, NL

The Undercurrent, 2019

Video, 50'



In an era of climate crisis, *The Undercurrent* asks how such an overwhelming problem can be addressed on a personal and private level. British artist Rory Pilgrim filmed the video in Boise (Idaho, USA) together with ten young climate activists who responded to an online call and who he provides with a voice in the work. While the climate crisis remains the most crucial issue, the activists also explore how it is linked to other aspects of their lives. Family, religion, friendship, and the fight for gender equality all play a role, as does the basic need for a place to call home. In addition, members of the local homeless community share their thoughts concerning notions of home and security, shared dialogue, and also nature, while also discussing their own personal experiences.

Produced over a period of two months, the work employs various stylistic devices in addressing our current

circumstances. The video's soundtrack, composed by Pilgrim together with singers from Boise, becomes an important component in enabling the artist to explore the emotional possibilities available to people in articulating such all-encompassing crises. *The Undercurrent* does not consider itself to be an objective documentary, but rather claims, in its status as a work of art, to be contributing to the fight against global climate change.

Rory Pilgrim's multimedia oeuvre situates itself between activist, feminist, and socially engaged art. In an era of increasing interaction with technology, their works explore new forms of dialogue. They combine activism, spirituality, and music with questions of how we establish communities locally and globally, not only within the world itself but also the digital realm.

Christian Jankowski

* 1953 in Göttingen, DE; lives in Berlin, DE

The Day We Met, 2003

Karaoke Installation with 4 Videos and 3,000 Songs, Karaoke Machine

23' 54"



The invitation contained in the title of the exhibition *Come Sing Along!* is likewise present in the installation by German artist Christian Jankowski. *The Day We Met* encourages visitors to choose their favorite from a selection of more than 3,000 international songs and become part of the work of art themselves by using the karaoke system.

The work was created in 2003 during Jankowski's stay in Seoul (South Korea), where he came into contact with Taijin Media, one of the largest producers of karaoke machines. The artist was given the opportunity of collaborating on some of the music videos that the company produces for the global karaoke market. Jankowski left it to the company's own scriptwriters to author various storylines for the five clips in which he was participating as an actor. The clips focus on love stories in which the artist embodies the stereotype of the "Western lover". Romantic walks

on the beach, marriage proposals, and spurned advances play just as much of a role as misunderstandings due to cultural differences. In the installation, the videos are played in random order to accompany the songs that are sung into the karaoke machine.

In his work, Jankowski examines modes of cultural transfer and the accompanying processes of translation. The installation involves exchanges between different countries as well as ones between pop culture and the established art world. Not only has Jankowski managed to ensure that the videos he produced reached millions of people in karaoke bars, his installation has also succeeded in bringing pop culture into museums around the world. Visitors themselves likewise participate in the ongoing cultural exchange by choosing from a selection of international pop songs.

Credits

Introduction Text: Sarah Jonas, Klaus Speidel

Anton Kolig

The Becoming (Women's Choir), 1946

Photo: Reinhard Haider

Text: Sarah Jonas

Gerhard Rühm

Untitled (from the Series Visual Music; Untitled (from the Series Visual Music; Austrian old and neo-Nazi March (Waldheim Era) for hammered Dulcimer and Carburetor)

Courtesy the Artist and Christine König Galerie, Vienna

Text: Sarah Jonas

Nengi Omuku

The Symphony, 2023

© The Artist and Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Text: Sarah Jonas

Mikhail Karikis and Uriel Orlow

Sounds from Beneath, 2011–12

A Project by Mikhail Karikis

Video by Mikhail Karikis & Uriel Orlow

Text: Sarah Jonas

Ines Doujak

Sing mit! Temporary Art Project in Vienna's Urban Space, 2019/20

Courtesy the Artist

Photo © eSeL.at – Lorenz Seidler/KÖR GmbH, 2019

Text: Klaus Speidel

Bartolina Xixa

Ramita Seca, La colonialidad permanente, 2017

© Maximiliano Mamani / Bartolina Xixa

Text: Sarah Jonas

Sammy Baloji

Tales of the Copper Cross Garden: Episode I Installation View Kunsthalle Mainz 2023

© Sammy Baloji

Photo: Norbert Miguletz

Text: Sarah Jonas

Henk Schut

The Singing Parliament, 2024

© Henk Schut

Photo: Lotte van Uittert

Singers: Anna Crookes, Eamonn Dougan, Robert Hollingworth, Nicholas Hurdall Smith, Clare Wilkinson

Sound Engineer: Jeremy Wells, Katharina Ambrose

Recording Editor: Robert Hollingworth, Katharina Ambrose

Recorded at the Music Department of the University of York, England

Sound Engine: Robin Koek

Technical Advice: Robert Bosch

Wooden Construction built by Jim du Pan

Production: A r t e r y

Text: Sarah Jonas

Chto Delat

One Night in a Social Network: An Opera-Farce, 2019

Courtesy the Artists and KOW Berlin

Text: Klaus Speidel

Bruce Yonemoto

Sounds Like the Sound of Music, 2005

© Bruce Yonemoto

Text: Sarah Jonas

Ayumi Paul

Salt Songs, 2022

© Ayumi Paul

Photo: Natalia Carstens

Text: Sarah Jonas

Dejan Kaludjerović

I Don't Know That Word... Yet!, Installation View Cultural Centre of Belgrade 2023

© Dejan Kaludjerović

Text: Klaus Speidel

Noam Enbar

Pana Ha'Geshem, 2016

© Noam Enbar

Text: Sarah Jonas

Mathilde ter Heijne

Lament, Song for Transitions, 2014

© Mathilde ter Heijne

Text: Sarah Jonas

Clément Cogitore

Les Indes galantes, 2017

Production: Opéra national de Paris - 3° scene / Les Films Pélleás

Choreography: Brahim Rachiki, Igor Carouge, Bintou Dembele

Courtesy of the Artist, Chantal Crousel Consulting, Paris (FR)

and Reinhard Hauff Gallery, Stuttgart (DE)

Text: Sarah Jonas

Nikolaus Gansterer

Contingent Agencies (Notation-20210512-1430-Vienna), 2021

© Bildrecht, Vienna 2024

Photo: Nikolaus Gansterer

Text: Klaus Speidel

Helmut and Johanna Kandl

Ohrwurm Oslip: During the recordings with Tamburica Uslop, Austria 2014

Camera: Helmut Kandl, Johanna Kandl, Arne Hector

Cut: Arne Hector

On behalf of the Esterházy Privatstiftung

© Helmut and Johanna Kandl

Text: Klaus Speidel

Maria Lassnig and Hubert Sielecki

Maria Lassnig Kantate, 1992

© Hubert Sielecki, Maria Lassnig Stiftung; Courtesy Sixpackfilm

Text: Sarah Jonas

Otto Zitko

Liederbuch 1985–1987, 1987

© Bildrecht, Vienna 2024

Photo: Reinhard Haider

Text: Hemma Schmutz

Michèle Pearson Clarke

Quantum Choir, Installation View 2023, Sobey Art Award Exhibition,
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, October 13, 2023 – March 3, 2024

© Michèle Pearson Clarke

Photo: NGC

Text: Klaus Speidel

Rory Pilgrim

The Undercurrent, 2019

© Rory Pilgrim, Courtesy the Artist, Maureen Paley, London

and andriessse~eyck gallery, Amsterdam

Text: Sarah Jonas

Christian Jankowski

The Day We Met, 2003, Installation View Videonale Bonn 2005

Courtesy the Artist

Text: Sarah Jonas

Imprint

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© Rory Pilgrim; Courtesy the Artist, Maureen Paley, London
and andriessse-eyck gallery, Amsterdam

