Image fantôme

Opening Goethe-Institut Bucharest: *7*[th] *September, 18.00 h*
Pavilion 32, 32 Calea Dorobanți, Bucharest 030167
7.09.2021 - 30.09.2021

Opening Anca Poteraşu Gallery: *8*[th] *September, 18.00 h*
26 Popa Soare, Bucharest 023983
8.09.2021 - 18.10.2021

Artists: *Nadia Lichtig, Irina Botea Bucan and Jon Dean, Larisa Crunţeanu, Stoyan Dechev, Orit Ishay, Radu Jude, Iosif Király, Anton Roland Laub, Astrid Rottman, Maya Schweizer, Decebal Scriba, Alexandru Solomon.*

The twin-exhibitions *Image fantôme* are catalyzed by Nadia Lichtig's artistic residency in Romania, at the invitation of the Goethe Institute Bucharest and Anca Poteraşu Gallery, focusing on collaborative artistic practices and dialogue.

The exhibitions explore the uncanny and the inexpressible, where fear, memory, forgetfulness become part of interdependent cultural and personal histories. Memory is an action that is to be performed, put in motion. In this sense, images are more than passive recorders of events: they belong to a wider universe of affects, as connected and reactive threads of individual and collective lives.

At Goethe-Institut Bucharest, Nadia Lichtig approaches the concept of fear and how it lingers on in encountered common spaces and times. In her site-specific installation anxiety is faced with the limitations of language, where the friction between imagery and text results in poetic resonance. Four nocturnal photographs from the series *Ghosttrap* are exhibited as posters, presented together with a video in which pre-collected stories of fears are retold. The images are loosely associated with the latter, showing places in which these frights might have originated, never clearly revealing all the components. The play within light and penumbra creates an atmosphere where what is invisible to the eye, the "optically unconscious" can be explored. The installation encourages within the viewer, mental images tethered to photographs, objects, places of memory.

Winding roads, these ghost images are unreliable indexes, yet powerful connectors to past events and/which within the practices of contemporary art relate to the archive as if it were a living entity/archive as a living entity/organism. The relation is further explored in the parallel exhibition at Anca Poteraşu Gallery, where Nadia Lichtig enters a dialogue with invited artists Irina Botea Bucan and Jon Dean, Larisa Crunţeanu, Stoyan Dechev, Orit Ishay, Radu Jude, Iosif Király, Anton

Roland Laub, Astrid Rottman, Maya Schweizer, Decebal Scriba and Alexandru Solomon, following-up on the idea of registering the invisible in places of memory and absence.

At times, *Image fantôme* stays silent - it is the space that marks the landscape of absence. It is the irreversible, irrecuperable from whence new histories will have been built, at the event horizon standing between oblivion, myths, and realities. The spectre of the three metre long cloud drawing of Stoyan Dechev oversees within the group exhibition the labyrinth of absences and *what if's*. In turn, the conceptual 70s works of Decebal Scriba relate to a history of art that has only recently started being uncovered in Romania. Furtive performative actions in Eastern Europe are part of a self-archiving artistic process through which the document becomes the subjective voice in the dark spot of memory, skipping through time in different meanings and other re-created/retrieved realities. Decebal Scriba's *The Gift* installation throws light upon the conceptual isolation of his work during the repressive Romanian communist regime in the 1970s, furthered in time by the unseen, unread history of art that he is a part of.

The absence, which is not nothingness, feeds the need of the mind for linearity, of stories that anchor the present. Larisa Crunțeanu's sound and print installation accentuates the presence of an ever-witness, who observes and reacts, displaces itself and others in order to occupy various perspectives and meanings. A space out of space rendered through the lament song performed by Larisa Crunțeanu is to be an isolating experience through an otherwise shared reflection on death, what comes next, what remains, what is forgotten.

If it were possible to imagine an opposite to the concept of absence, it would probably translate through the inability to forget at all, to the point of passive gazes and inactive memories. The phantom image is in this case, an effect of alternate perspectives and histories. In the age of digital media, it becomes an over-condensed nucleus of overlays and disparate contexts that tie in close together, becoming indistinguishable from one another, depersonalized. Iosif Király's *Reconstruction* series embodies the digital undercurrent behind virtual contemporary timekeeping, a cloud of persistent memories.

Turning a critical eye towards means of creating and retaining history, Anton Roland Laub and Orit Ishay approach image through its inherent political discourse. Beyond individual and collective wills, memory can be either suppressed or encouraged, subverted through apparent harmless practices of archiving, documenting and production. While Anton Roland Laub focuses on images of memory-sites connected to the Romanian 1989 Revolution and the capacity of objects to retain the affect of events, Orit Ishay displays evidences of propaganda and re-written histories. Remembrance starts as something deeply personal, that infuses and flows, traverses a space between the individual and the collective, echoing back to stories retold. The group show alternates

between points of self-reflection and the ability to transmit, share, even as threads of the stories unravel in the unreliable mechanism of time-keeping.

Nadia Lichtig's intervention within the Anca Poteraşu gallery space returns to the emotional encounter with these explorations of *Image fantôme* – either absences, or false witnesses, resounding echoes of the past or reinvented ones. The artist's sound installation that accompanies large-canvas drawings, speaks to the living archive – what if any kind of language is an insurmountable limit in dealing with past trauma? How does one commit to memory? Both architect Astrid Rottman and Nadia Lichtig connect in the show on the documentation of Matiatas Carp's *Black Book* on the events of the January 1941 pogrom. Through giving a body to the archive, both Lichtig and Rottman are interested in the tear that appears between trauma and the urgency to acknowledge, remember, see. We are left in the exhibition space with times out of joint, and a new kind of fantom image, a stumbling stone that is in need to connect with spaces lived on to remember the places left past.

Text by Cristina Stoenescu

Anca Poteraşu Gallery will feature an ongoing schedule of film-screenings throughout the months of September and October, engaging the public in an in-depth conversation on the concept of *Image Fantôme.* The selected films deal with various kinds of conversation within the spaces of memory and archive, furthering different interpretations of the communicating exhibitions, leaning into questions regarding identity and the role of photography and film as quintessential media of memory.

Screening schedule Anca Poterasu Gallery

Each film will be screened in a loop for a specific period of the exhibition. Every Saturday, the screening will begin at 4 PM. Follow the exhibition online for more information on each screening.

Radu Jude, *Uppercase Print* (2020)	8 – 24 September 2021
Maya Schweizer *Voices and Shells* (2020)	25 September – 1 October 2021
Alexandru Solomon, *Clara B.* (2006)	2 – 8 October 2021
Irina Botea Bucan & Jon Dean *Stone.Paper.Skin* (2017)	9 – 17 October 2021

NADIA LICHTIG lives and works in Munich, Berlin (Germany) and Montpellier (France). She is professor at the Montpellier Academy of Art since 2009 (www.moco.art). Lichtig studied at the Paris Academy of Art (ENSBA) and subsequently assisted the artist Mike Kelley in Los Angeles. Nadia Lichtig's work give expression to her thematic focus, which is dealing with the inadequacies of language, and the categories of thought associated with it. Her

series usually start with sound pieces that then become performances, concerts, and exhibition pieces. Lichtig's work defies the categorical classification of an art form and includes diverse media: photography, sound, text as well as olfactory compositions and painting. Her recent exhibitions include: Drift, Art And Dark Matter, Agnes Etherington Art Center, Kingston (Canada), 2021, Dust, Plates of the Present, Centre Pompidou, Paris (France), 2021, Sensory Orders, Center for Contemporary Art Laznia,Gdansk (Poland) , 2021, Staying with the Trouble in Painting, Building Canebière, Marseille (France), 2021.
Read more about the artist

Over the past twenty years **IRINA BOTEA BUCAN** has been engaged in an art practice that uses multiple media to inspect socio-political dynamics and the possibility of transformation. Irina Botea Bucan's most recent films focus on strategies to undermine such dominant socio-political discourses and to create the framework where minor, unknown, or forgotten histories rise to the surface, forming an unsuspected force field of ideas. Irina Botea Bucan lives in Romania and England. Since 2013 the artist has been working closely with **JON DEAN**, sharing his experience in the field of community-based participatory arts and adult learning for over 30 years. Jon Dean also creates independent (cross-platform/film) art work that symbiotically relates to his community arts-focused methodology.
Read more about the artists

LARISA CRUNȚEANU The artist's practice as performer, video artist and sound collector moves from reality to fiction in an endless conversation with the viewer. Larisa Crunțeanu's works create contexts in which facts and memories are reactivated, encouraging a shared effort and the emergence of new practices. Many of her projects reflect on the notion of collaboration and the ideas existing behind objects and stories. Her works were shown in important institutions such as the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest, SAVVY Berlin, Zacheta Project Room Warsaw, RKI Berlin, Museu de Arte Brasieira – MAB FAAP, São Paulo.
Read more about the artist

STOYAN DECHEV lives and works in Bucharest, Romania and Sofia, Bulgaria. He holds a License, M.A. and Ph.D. from the National Art Academy Sofia in Sculpture. His projects combine sculpture, drawing, installation, animation and video. In an attempt to understand and react to contemporary events, his work often encompasses archeology, history and science subject matters. His works are included in public and private collections among which we mention: The Leder Art Collection Florida US, Sofia Art Gallery, Bulgaria; Mosan Museum of Art, Republic of Korea; M-tel Sofia, Bulgaria; St. Ciril and Metodies Foundation, Sofia, Bulgaria; Museum of National Academy of Art, Sofia, Bulgaria. During 2021 he is participating at the *Cité internationale des arts* and his sculptural work *Event Horizon* (2019) is part of the Frieze Sculpture London 2021 edition curated by Clare Lilley.
Read more about the artist

ORIT ISHAY examines reality through images taken from her surroundings, whether direct photographs or processed images, either by working alone or collaborating with communities. Living and working in Tel Aviv, she is an active artist in stills and video photography, and photography lecturer. During 2018, she was the artist-in-residence in Bucharest, in the programme Plantelor 58 developed by ARAC in collaboration with Anca Poterasu Gallery. Orit Ishay's works are included in various museum and private collections among which we mention MUMOK Museum of Modern Art, Vienna; MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art Krakow; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; America-Israel Cultural Foundation, Tel Aviv; CCA Tel Aviv Video Archive; The Video Archive of the Israeli Center for Digital Art, Holon.
Read more about the artist

RADU JUDE is a Romanian film director and screenwriter. He studied filmmaking in Bucharest. In 2006, he made the short film *The Tube with a Hat*, winner of more than 50 international awards. Jude's feature debut *The Happiest*

Girl in the World (2009) was selected for more than 50 international film festivals. In 2016, he made his debut as a theatre director with his stage adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage*. The international premiere of *The Dead Nation* (2017) marked his debut in documentary film. Radu Jude's acclaimed historical drama Aferim! (2015) premiered at the 65th Berlin International Film Festival where he won the Silver Bear award as 'Best Director'. Jude returned to the Berlin International Film Festival in 2020 with the film Uppercase Print. The film screened in the Forum section of the Berlinale as a world premiere. The film festival also featured his documentary film *Ieșsirea trenurilor din gară*, co-directed with Adrian Cioflâncă. Jude won the Golden Bear at the 2021 Berlin International Film Festival for *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn*.

IOSIF KIRÁLY is a Romanian visual artist, architect, and educator. His work investigates the relationship between perception, time, synchronicity and memory through photography, installation-art, drawing and more recently, video. He has initiated, coordinated, and, together with architects, visual artists, and anthropologists, participated in research projects related to the changes having occurred in post-communist Romania: D-Platform, RO-Archive, Triaj, Tinseltown. During the 1980s, Iosif Király became active in the mail art network, an international underground movement established by Fluxus. After 1989, he exhibited both individually and within the subREAL group.His works are part of numerous private and public collections such as: The National Contemporary Art Museum in Bucharest, Arteast Collection, Moderna galerija, Ljubljana; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Light Work, Syracuse, NY; Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; Neue Galerie Graz am Landsesmuseum Joanneum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Ars Aevi, Sarajevo; Colecția Benneton; Emprise Bank, Wichita, KS; Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena; Banca Europeană Centrală, Frankfurt; Hypo Bank, Frankfurt.
Read more about the artist

ASTRID ROTTMAN is a practicing architect, associate partner at NA architecture office. She teaches architectural design at The Interior Design Department at UAUIM Bucharest and as a Ph.D student she currently develops a research thesis about Holocaust memorial architecture. During her professional activity, her works have been awarded in different Romanian architecture expositions such as Architecture Biennial and Bucharest Annual of Architecture and also in some of the national architecture contests.

ANTON ROLAND LAUB, born and brought up in Bucharest, studied at the Weißensee Art Academy and the Neue Schule für Fotografie, Berlin. In his artistic practice, Laub engages with subversive approaches in decoding reality constructions, proxy strategies and phantoms of power. His recent photo books *LAST CHRISTMAS (of Ceaușescu)* and *Mobile Churches*, both published by Kehrer Verlag, Heidelberg, address Romania's contemporary history as well as the legacy of Ceaușescu's dictatorship. He is a finalist of the New Discovery Award, International Photo Festival Les Rencontres d'Arles. Selected exhibitions include Photo Saint-Germain, Paris; FORMAT Photography Biennale, Derby; EMOP, Athens and Berlin; atelier35, Bucharest; Kaunas Photography Gallery, Kaunas. His work is represented in the book and media art collection of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, the Berlin Wall Memorial; the City Museum Bucharest; in the archive of Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles.
Read more about the artist

MAYA SCHWEIZER, born in Paris, studied art and art history in Aix-en-Provence, at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig (HGB) and at the University of the Arts (UdK) in Berlin, where she graduated as Meisterschülerin of Lothar Baumgarten in 2007. Maya Schweizer is an artist her practice operates at the interface between art and film, documentary and fiction. In her video works and installations, the artist utilises representations of seemingly everyday occurrences to liberate hidden narratives. She focuses mainly on the socially marginalized and on cracks in collective memory cultures.Schweizer works with different media, with a particular focus on experimental videos. She showed her films in numerous solo and group shows, among the Museum Villa Stuck (Munchen), SAVVY contemporary (Berlin), Les Rencontres Internationales (Paris and Berlin), Centre Georges Pompidou and in film programmes at KOW (Berlin), Mumok (Vienna), MASS MoCA (Massachusetts).

DECEBAL SCRIBA has been living in Fontainebleau-Avon since 1991. He is an artist approaching media such as photography, installation, performance and video art, with sustained activity in the sphere of conceptual art, in which he also integrates his preoccupation with drawing. Along with Nadina Scriba, he initiated the document video project House pARTy, editions I and II, between 1987 and 1988, in Bucharest. He has exhibited in Romania starting in 1974, participating in notable historical group exhibitions. During the communist regime, he participated in several projects abroad, between 1973 and 1988, which encouraged art by correspondence, or *mail-art*, such as Objeto de Interferencia, Sao Paulo (1985) or the ecological project Messagio Terra, Milan (1983). His works have been presented in important exhibitions in artspaces such as Kommunale Galerie Berlin (2021), CC Strombeek in the Framework of Europalia (2019), Ex-east – l'Espace Niemeyer (2019), Salonul de Proiecte, Bucharest (2019, 2017), Spinnerei Leipzig (2019), Anca Poterasu Gallery (2019, 2018), Kunsthalle Mulhouse (2019), Art Encounters Biennial, Timisoara (2017), Calina Gallery (2016),), tranzit.ro/bucuresti (2015), Victoria Art Center (2015).

In the early 1990s, **ALEXANDRU SOLOMON** emerged as a young director of photography and he started making documentaries aside from filming feature films. Solomon was among the first Romanian filmmakers who committed themselves to a then compromised genre; he became one of the leading political film-makers from Eastern Europe, active on the international documentary scene. Solomon's first long feature, The Great Communist Bank Robbery (2004), broadcast on Arte and on BBC's prestigious Storyville, was a multi-awarded film. The experimental films he made with acclaimed artist Geta Brătescu (like Cocktail Automatic) are part of the collections at MoMA and Getty Institute. In 2016 he published his monograph "Representations of Memory in Documentary Film". Alexandru Solomon is teaching at the University of Arts in Bucharest and is the president of the One World Romania Association.