

lukas
zerbst
2026



follow
me
blindly

The machine ceaselessly swipes through Instagram, liking every post it encounters, regardless of its content. A continuous rhythm of labour emerges, translating the use of an interaction-driven platform into mechanical vehemence.

What has in recent years become a central form of information exchange and opinion-making appears here as a dubious game. The machine exposes the arbitrariness of everyday platform use and turns it into a haphazard labour process.

As a robotic clickworker, it makes clear that without human intention, the premise of a social forum is corrupted. What remains is labour: the generation of an online currency called “interactions”, a metric that helps determine the reach and visibility of accounts.

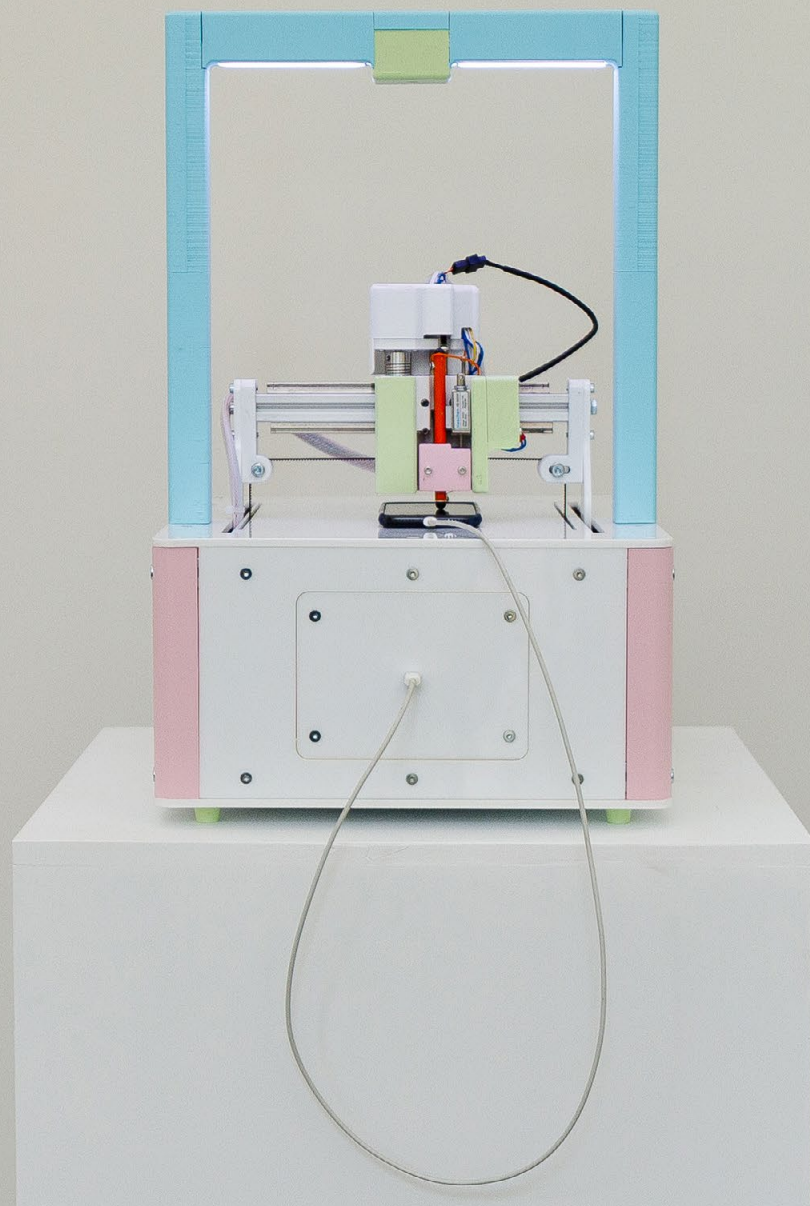
The machine encounters a

public sphere whose exchanges are increasingly organised by corporations, algorithmic sorting and quantified attention. Where quality is measured quantitatively, the high score replaces the argument.

Needs for recognition and feelings of inadequacy turn conspicuousness into a social virtue. Populism and the “right of the loudest” flourish on the same ground.

follow
me
blindly

video



← Follow me Blindly, 2025
Zebrstraat, Gent (BE)
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



feeding

kreuzberg pavillon
berlin



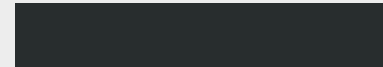
feeding

Couriers from common delivery services appear. They search for a specific destination, check their smartphones hesitantly — and finally do what they always do: they deliver. Only here, delivery becomes feeding.

The platform economy organises work as an accelerated, assessable and interchangeable service. Within this framework, couriers appear less as subjects than as interfaces between algorithmically generated demand and physical execution. Their activity is translated into metrics: speed, availability, rating. The body becomes a carrier of logistics: a mobile resource within an infrastructure of efficiency, scalability and control.

In Feeding, performers in the uniforms of familiar delivery services enter the exhibition space. Normally part of the urban public realm, they initially seem out of place here. Through cautious engagement, they ease the tension, gain the trust of individual guests, and conclude each encounter with an intimate gesture: they feed the audience.

Feeding — an act between care, intimacy and dependency — becomes a ritual counter-image to alienated platform labour. The performers do not deliver what has been ordered, but what is missing: attention, closeness, physicality. The iconography of the app economy — logos, bags, helmets — is transformed into a different message: this work is not virtual. It is physical, precarious, existential. And it affects us all.



feeding

video



← Feeding, 2024
Kreuzberg Pavillon, Berlin
Photos by Joe Clark



sealing
the
fate

kunsthau
dahlem

2025



sealing the fate

Built as the state studio for the Nazi-era sculptor Arno Breker, today's Kunsthaus Dahlem is an example of National Socialist representational architecture: monumental concrete structures, high ceilings and austere lines produce an intimidating, imposing effect.

For the exhibition of finalists for the Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Scholarship, Sealing the Fate was installed as a deliberate manipulation of the interior: the four monumental doors open and close in pairs in slow, synchronised movements.



← Sealing the Fate, 2025
Kunsthaus Dahlem, Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



← Sealing the Fate, 2025
Kunsthaus Dahlem, Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



← Sealing the Fate, 2025
Kunsthau Dahlem, Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



← Sealing the Fate, 2025
Kunsthau Dahlem, Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst

The monumental doors of the former state studio are especially striking: functional instruments that organise passage, exclusion and spatial control.

Through this manipulation, they begin to act autonomously: their movement no longer serves passage or its refusal, but confronts visitors with the architecture itself. The space is forced to perform itself. The titular moment of the doors slamming shut — often used in film as a metaphor for a sealed fate — is de-dramatised and turned into a loop.

Authority appears not as a singular act of violence, but as a persistent, automated gesture. The historically charged architecture is not illustrated or commented upon, but destabilised by its own movement.



sealing
the
fate



lift

At the Museümlí, a ghost accompanies every exhibition: a heavy-duty crane permanently mounted to the ceiling is part of the architecture, yet too conspicuous to disappear into it. An elephant in the White Cube, imposing itself and boasting of the loads it could lift.

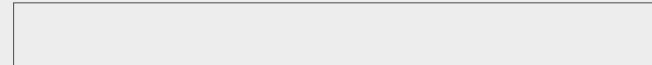
For Lift, the crane in the former generator shed of Buchs Municipal Utilities is motorised. With a metallic clatter, it moves autonomously over the heads of the visitors and slowly lowers its iron finger. Beneath it lies a pile of dumbbells. But instead of heavy sports equipment, the crane finds feather-

light fabric replicas: colourful plush dumbbells, which it hesitantly reaches for.

Two promises of power collide: the crane as a prosthesis that multiplies human capabilities, and the dumbbell as a device intended to strengthen the human being itself. Performance objects in search of performing bodies. Yet Lift is a demonstration of strength that fails. The heavy hook lifts nothing — and even if it did, a plush dumbbell would hardly prove its strength.

Thus the work tips into the comical and the tender. Competitiveness,

strength, pressure to perform and resilience appear as rehearsed gestures of a masculinity that here encounters a toy. Unimpressed by the crane's force, the dumbbells roll aside, tumble from the platform and leave the apparatus behind: large, loud, strained — and suddenly astonishingly soft.



lift



video



↑
Lift, 2024,
Museüml, Buchs (CH)
Photos by Lukas Zerbst

My practice began with the performing body. Today, I am interested in choreographies that are already in place before anyone acts consciously. Spaces, technology and social roles organise behaviour before it appears as individual action. My works do not confront such orders head-on. They overperform them: a function is carried out so precisely that it begins to betray itself.

I work with what a place already offers: infrastructure, interiors, routines and expectations. I add only what is needed for an existing logic to tip. At first, my works often appear to belong to the existing operation: as repairs, maintenance, damage, technical solutions or functional misunderstandings. Only gradually does it become apparent that the place, through them, begins to speak differently about itself.

Technology plays a central role, but

never as a mere demonstration of what is technically possible. Devices, motors and automated processes become performers in an overly correct world. They fulfil expectations so precisely that it becomes apparent just how absurd, brutal or comical these expectations can be. The machine is rarely neutral in my works. It acts as if it knows exactly what to do – and often obeys too well in the process.

I ask how people live, work, reside, act and become visible under given conditions. Bureaucracies, institutions, platforms and architectures appear not as abstract systems, but as concrete situations: a 'like' becomes work, a delivery a physical encounter, a door a choreography of power, a knock an uncertain question of belonging.

Dance theatre left me with an eye for situations in which body, space and action depend on one another. Today, I am less interested in the body as a

means of expression than in the body addressed by systems of order: working, observing, using, adapting or being excluded.

Through my family's experience of migration, arrival also meant learning to read rules before they were spoken. Adaptation thus appeared both as a way of belonging and as a form of disappearance. Repair, appropriation, camouflage and repurposing are therefore not merely formal strategies for me, but also social experiences.

Much of my work emerges from a close engagement with institutions. I see them not merely as exhibition spaces, but as counterparts with their own expectations, routines and self-images. One collaboration was once aptly described as a "therapy session with the institution." This captures my practice well: not because the institution is to be healed, but because in my work it is made to speak about its own symptoms.

My works do not attack systems from the outside. They nest inside them, use their tools and follow their rules with suspicious precision. Power appears not as a grand drama, but as routine. I am not interested in the state of emergency, but in the uncanniness of normal operations.



home
sweet
home

städtische galerie
bremen

2023

Home Sweet Home transforms the largest exhibition space of the Städtische Galerie Bremen into bookable accommodation for the duration of an exhibition. The space is offered via Airbnb and can be rented for a maximum of three nights. It is available between 6 pm and 10 am, outside the gallery's regular opening hours.

With every booking, the function of the space shifts. What appears during the day as an installation within an institutional frame becomes a temporary apartment at night. Furniture, bed, curtains, towels and everyday objects remain the same, yet their status shifts. The work is inhabited, used, rated and paid for. The exhibition space becomes a temporary private interior.

The work thus intervenes in a central order of the art institution: the separation between a public cultural venue and private use. Under building

regulations, the space remains part of a gallery; yet through the platform, it is made available as accommodation. The booking creates exclusive access to a place that is public during the day. The appeal of the offer lies precisely in this shift: being in the museum at night, becoming part of a work, inhabiting art – and all without an audience.

Airbnb is not merely a booking platform, but part of the work. The platform translates space into images, price, availability, house rules, reviews and promises of experience. It turns a place into a bookable experience and use into an economic event. Home Sweet Home builds on a trend in which living space is increasingly organised as a temporary resource, an investment and a form of experience. The boundary between hospitality, privatisation and exploitation is deliberately blurred.

The intervention succeeds precisely when it is used. Every booking confirms

the logic it renders visible. The space is monetised, the institution partially privatised, the audience divided into guests and customers. At the same time, the overnight stays finance further performances that take place on Sundays within the apartment. The work thus produces precisely the economic movement it examines.

Home Sweet Home transforms the art institution into a site of temporary appropriation. The exhibition space loses its clear function and is suspended between gallery, apartment, stage, service and platform offering. What happens there remains ambivalent: a subversive intervention in the institution's exclusivity, a use of its infrastructure, a rental of art – and a precise illustration of how even public spaces can be translated into marketable experiences as a matter of course.

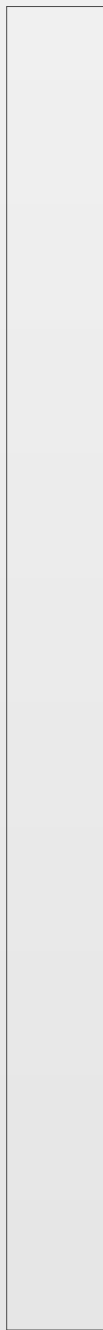
home
sweet
home

video





↑
Home Sweet Home, 2023
Städt. Galerie Bremen, DE
Photos by Franziska von den Driesch



die aus
gewanderten
begegnen ihrer
zurück
gebliebenen
familie

**the emigrants meet
the family they left
behind*

Mechanical knocking devices are mounted on the back of an exhibition wall. At irregular intervals, they emit rhythmic signals. Visitors are invited to respond. The knockers react: they echo what they hear, alter the rhythm – or fall silent. In this way, a vulnerable yet hopeful attempt at contact emerges.

Knocking has long been a form of secret exchange: a language many understand intuitively, but no one speaks fluently. In certain historical contexts, it became a survival strategy – for instance, as a culturally coded sign of recognition. A familiar example is the rhythmic signal “shave and a haircut – two bits”, which in Western contexts points to shared cultural familiarity.

Such signals function as a shibboleth – a test of belonging. Those who do not share this cultural knowledge remain outside. It is within this ambivalence

that the melancholic depth of the work unfolds: knocking as a gesture of establishing contact – but also as a potentially exclusionary code. The desire to be understood always carries the risk of rejection.

Through this work, Lukas Zerbst reflects on his own family history. His parents’ decision to leave Poland in 1989 continues to shape his relationship with those left behind to this day:

“There is a latent closeness between me and my relatives that has never quite disappeared – and yet is permeated by many unspoken hurts. Our relationship is not hostile, but permanently unreconciled.”

die aus
gewanderten
begegnen ihrer
zurück
gebliebenen
familie



↑
Die Ausgewanderten begegnen ihrer zurückgebliebenen Familie, 2025
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Betty Einhaus



pics or
it didn't
happen

kunstmuseum
st. gallen, ch

2021



The phrase “Pics or it didn’t happen” comes from early internet culture, where images were demanded as proof for events claimed online. What initially sounded like mocking doubt has long since become a social condition: what can be shown is real. The event itself is no longer enough. It must be capable of being captured in an image.

In Pics or it didn’t happen, this logic of proof becomes a performative task. A group of people move together through an exhibition or a bustling event, filming the evening. They search for the best shot, the decisive frame, the image that will later stand in for the experience. Their movements are slowed, focused, almost predatory. As if on the prowl, they follow not the event itself, but its potential usability as a recording.

← Pics or it didn’t happen, 2021
Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (CH)
Photos by Mani Frohsinn

Following Hito Steyerl's description of the museum as a site where visibility is produced, the audience, too, can be understood as part of this production. It sees, selects, combines, evaluates, documents. *Pics or it didn't happen* continues this mode of production using the medium of the mobile phone camera. The exhibition is not merely visited, but transformed into raw material.

What emerges is not neutral documentation, but a choreography of retrospective reality. What is experienced is subordinated to what can later be documented, posted or remembered. The shared event disintegrates into perspectives, frames and files. The footage from the individual cameras is shown side by side as a panoramic film. The filmmakers themselves remain invisible within it.

At the same time, the work points to a present in which every social situation is potentially accompanied by mobile phone cameras. Anyone present can at

any moment become the background, a piece of evidence or the unwitting subject of someone else's post. The camera is no longer the exception, but the background noise of being together. With it comes a new form of social caution: the quiet fear of not just being seen, but of being published.

Ironically, the performative contribution of those filming — the hunt for proof — remains undocumented in the image itself. *Pics or it didn't happen* thus reveals a society that constantly documents itself, yet knows less and less where experience ends and exploitability begins.

pics or
it didn't
happen

video



field
report

villa serpentara
& casa baldi
olevano romano, it

2022

Field Report was conceived for the Italian village of Olevano Romano and connects Casa Baldi and Villa Serpentara, two German artists' residences in the area, through light signals. A computer programme translates the signals into messages: the conversation can be read from the houses; from the village, it remains a Morse code-like flicker above the valley.

What looks like a poetic long-distance connection between two buildings is in fact a conversation between two chatbots. They respond to one another with follow-up questions, encouragement and empathetic replies. Even then, the work used a vocabulary of machine-based care that has since become the interface of an entire industry: understanding, assistance, closeness, productivity, trust.

Meanwhile, technology conglomerates are competing to establish such conversational systems as everyday infrastructure. Chatbots write emails, organise knowledge, summarise relationships, offer advice, simulate familiarity. They are not merely tools of communication, but systems that themselves emerge from

communication: from data, feedback, corrections, evaluations and the expectations of those who speak to them. Every conversation thus enters a double relation: it serves the human being — and at the same time improves the product that responds.

Against this backdrop, Field Report appears less as a technical curiosity than as an early model of a present in which conversations increasingly run via infrastructures owned by a handful of corporations. Communication is not merely conveyed, but exploited, optimised, framed. Proximity appears as a service. Responsiveness becomes a market promise.

Field Report shifts this logic back into an almost archaic medium. Light, direction, distance, rhythm: a form of communication that remains visible and eludes the sleek invisibility of digital networks. Especially in a present in which internet access can be politically controlled, throttled or shut down, alternative channels gain new significance. Open-source projects such as Meshtastic or radio networks based on LoRa demonstrate that communication is conceivable

beyond mobile networks, platforms and centralised servers. Against this backdrop, Field Report, despite its high-tech premise, appears as an attempt at a corporate-independent connection: no feed, no interface, no cloud — only a dedicated channel between two places.

The work thus asks not only whether machines can speak like humans. It asks who owns the channels through which we speak — and what becomes of a conversation when it is simultaneously contact, training, product and promise.

field
report

video



↑
Field Report, 2022
Villa Serpentara, Olevano Romano (IT)
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



sprungturm

niedersächsische
landesvertretung in
berlin

2025—2026

Sprungturm was developed for the Lower Saxony State Representation in Berlin and occupies a vacant plinth in the building's outdoor area. A gilded figure from the Herrenhausen Gardens previously stood on this spot. Rather than replacing the removed figure with a new one, Lukas Zerbst extends the plinth itself. Made of foam, wood and fabric, an appendage grows out of the plinth, curves towards a nearby fence and remains pressed against it. What begins as a leap ends as a failed movement.

The surrounding golden figures allude to a Baroque system of representation in which mythology, physical ideals and courtly staging intertwine. At the same time, they are not self-contained, autonomous originals, but products of early serial production. In workshops such as that of Johan Larson in The Hague, arms, legs, heads and torsos were cast separately, combined and

reused. The figures are thus not only representations of ancient ideals, but also the results of repetition, exchange, repair and pragmatic adaptation.

Against this backdrop, Sprungturm appears less as a contrast to the historical figures than as their contemporary shift. This sculpture, too, is composite, prosthetic and visibly constructed. The plinth is given a body part that does not quite belong to it and yet emerges from it. Whilst the Baroque figures stabilise damaged ideals on their pedestals, Sprungturm reveals a structure that itself comes under strain. It is not a figure that fails, but the very structure that usually supports, elevates and makes figures visible.

In doing so, the work touches on current debates about monuments, representation and public visibility, without proposing a further heroic framework. At a time when pedestals

are being reinterpreted, emptied, toppled or contested, Sprungturm turns its gaze to the platform itself: Who is elevated? Who remains below? Which bodies are deemed worthy of remembrance? And which structures decide what may appear at all?

The failed leap is not merely a punchline. It describes a state between departure and blockage, between the desire for movement and limitation. Sprungturm tells of an infrastructure that is losing its own stability – and of a moment in which not only figures, but also the conditions of their visibility become questionable.

sprungturm





Sprungturm, 2025—2026
Niedersächsische Landesvertretung Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst





müder garten

**tired garden*

akademie der künste
berlin

2024



In the grass garden of the Academy of Arts, a misshapen, damaged fountain structure lies in the drained basin. Scattered around it are window grilles, work materials and half-finished structures, as if a construction project had been interrupted.

The garden is designed as a place of calm: shielded from the city's bustle, strictly ordered, serene, manageable. Paving stones, the pond and planting areas follow an order that organises relaxation itself. The idyll is administered.

In The Tired Garden, this order is tipped into a state of overload. The body at the centre does not appear confidently positioned, but rather unfinished, amateurish, half-damaged and strangely powerless. It reveals an attempt to find a form at all. In this failure, it begins to resonate with states of exhaustion: as something that is left behind, remains unfinished, and appears unable to bear a load.



↑
Müder Garten, 2024
Akademie der Künste, Berlin
Photos by Lukas Zerbst

The work touches on a present in which exhaustion no longer arises only from external pressure, but from the demand to continually operate oneself as a project. Prohibition and external discipline are replaced by initiative, motivation and the promise of being able to carry on indefinitely. What is decisive here is not merely that work is exhausting, but that it no longer finds a clear conclusion. Completion itself becomes uncertain: one works into the open, without beginning and end remaining reliably distinguishable.

In the tired garden, the interventions manipulate the use of the space without occupying it entirely. Window grilles, materials and temporary installations intervene in the layout, yet remain fragmentary. They appear like works lacking the strength to fully infiltrate the architecture – and which, precisely for that reason, become visible only partially, belatedly or from certain angles.

Exhaustion rarely manifests itself clearly. Burnout, depression and other psychological strains do not necessarily appear as visible damage. In the grass garden, too, much is only clearly discernible from the interior. Anyone standing in the garden and looking inwards sees, above all, mirrored surfaces – and themselves reflected in them.

This reflection fundamentally shifts the work. The window grilles no longer provide reliable protection; instead, the mirrored surface seems



to deflect the gaze away from its damage. Anyone trying to look inside is first thrown back upon themselves. The protective structure remains in place, but it appears only indirectly, delayed, behind a surface that conceals more than it reveals. Thus a spatial counterpart to psychological exhaustion emerges: something is there, but it does not reveal itself immediately. One recognises symptoms, surfaces, forms of defence — and yet remains, at first, caught in one's own image.

Müder Garten relates body and space not symbolically, but through perception itself. The work reveals itself through location, line of sight, reflection and one's own physical position in the garden. It remains deliberately incomplete in its legibility: as an interrupted building site, as a fragmented intervention, as a spatial condition that does not end — but remains in place and continues to work.

müder
garten

video





flensen

wochenmarkt an der
grossen kirche in
bremerhaven



flensen

Flensen transfers a sculptural object from the Müder Garten series to the weekly market in Bremerhaven-Mitte.

Among everyday goods, it is cut into pieces and sold by the kilo.

The sculpture, previously associated with exhaustion, overwhelm and psychological strain, enters a new order of utilisation here. It is portioned, weighed, labelled and put into circulation. What appeared in the garden as a tired, damaged form becomes a resource at the market. The exhausted body is further processed.

The title refers to flensing in historical whaling: the removal of a whale's blubber to extract oil. A body is cut apart in order to extract energy, light, lubricant and economic value from it. Flensing transfers this logic to the artwork – and to the subject who, under the conditions of achievement society, turns themselves into raw material.

At the weekly market, the artist appears as a seller of his own work. The gesture is direct and uncomfortably concrete: cutting, weighing, offering, selling. Grams and kilos replace aura, uniqueness and symbolic distance. The artwork is removed from the protected sphere of the exhibition and transferred into an economy in which value must be measurable, negotiable and transportable.

The cutting is not mere destruction, but a staging of self-exploitation and self-valorisation. The sculpture is damaged so that it can circulate. Its dissolution

does not end the work, but makes it marketable. From the overburdened form emerges a series of fragments that disappear into shopping bags and leave the market.

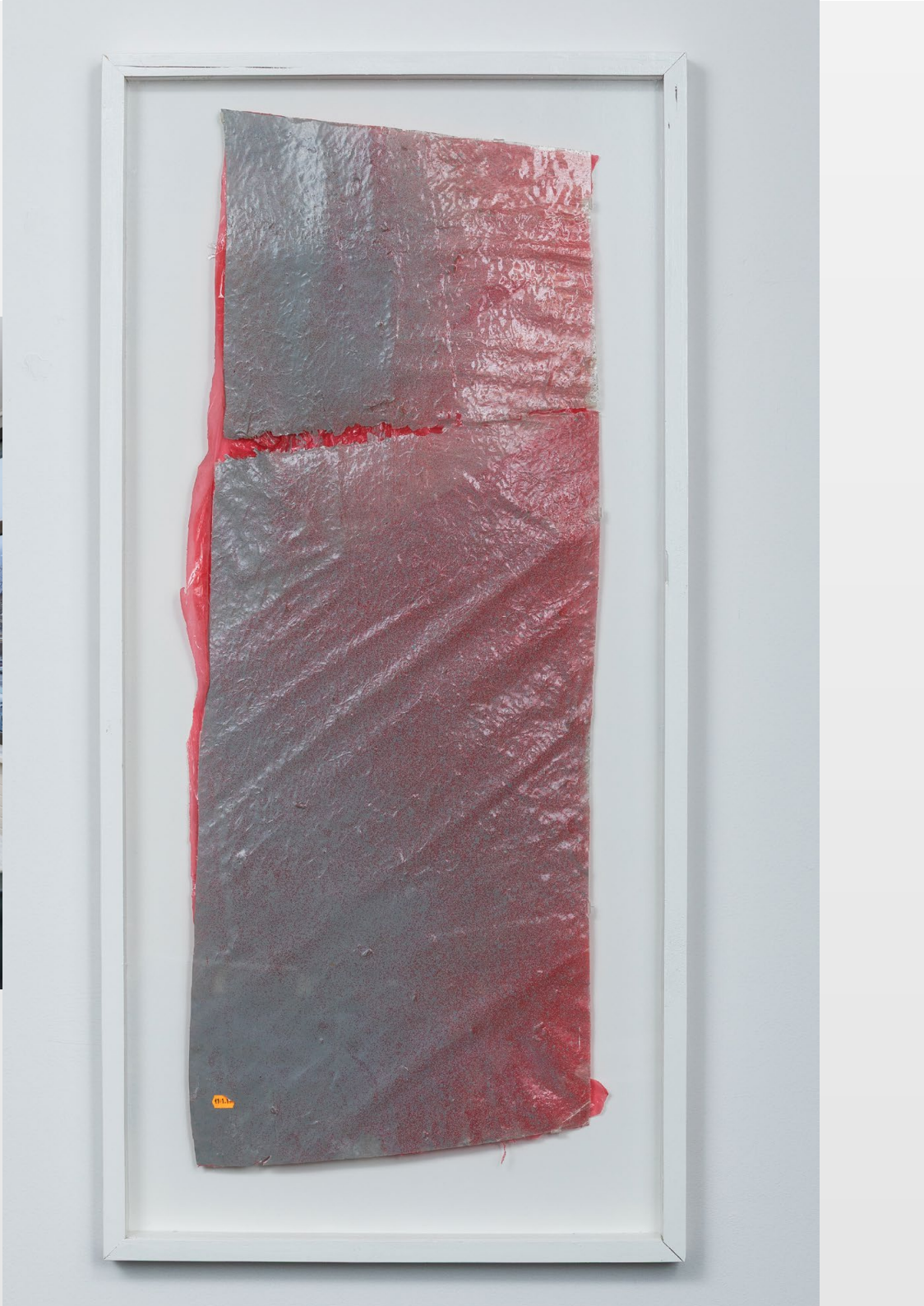
Flensen presents artistic work as an economy of survival. What remained in Müder Garten as an interrupted building site, a damaged body and a spatial state of exhaustion is further processed at the weekly market. The work becomes a commodity, the artist a trader, exhaustion an offer. What is sold is not merely a piece of art, but a piece of the very conditions under which art is created: pressure, visibility, self-promotion and the willingness to keep cutting one's own work apart. The weary form finds no conclusion; it continues to circulate as a fragment.

In a subsequent stage, the fragments cut out at the weekly market were framed within the roof-batten structure that had previously formed the skeleton of the sculpture, and exhibited in this way within the gallery context.

flensen



↑
Flensen, 2024
Wochenmarkt an der großen Kirche, Bremerhaven
Photos by Max Meyer





↑
Ausstellungsansichten
'Ein gutes Stück Flensen' (2025–2026) →
Galerie am Lindenplatz, LI
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



schutzschild

**protective shield*

galerie januar
bochum



schutzschild

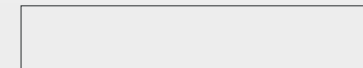
For the exhibition Kinderspiel, Lukas Zerbst developed a site-specific intervention at the threshold between Galerie Januar in Bochum and an adjacent nursery. A steel grille, originally intended to protect the gallery, was mounted on an open window. Zerbst bent several bars of the grille so that they curved inwards and protruded far into the room. As a result of this intervention, the window could no longer be closed; the boundary between the gallery and the outside space remained permanently open for the duration of the exhibition.

Schutzschild works with a simple yet significant contradiction: a structural element intended to shield the space becomes an invitation. The grille appears as though an invisible force from outside has acted upon the space – not destructively, but astonishingly cleanly, almost silently. It is precisely this that creates a disconcerting scene: the protected space no longer appears sovereign, but dependent on what it seeks to exclude.

The work raises the question of which notions of security are inscribed in architectural and institutional orders. The fact that the gallery's only window

grille was situated, of all places, on the side facing the nursery shifts the focus to the relationship between protection, control and projection. Who or what is considered a danger here? The children, the institution, the outside space, the unpredictable?

As the exhibition progressed, this opening was not merely asserted but utilised: together with children, temporary 'huts' – shelters, including for the spiders living there – were created in the gallery space. Thus, Schutzschild combines institutional critique with an educational question of care: protection appears not as lockdown, but as a negotiable relation between proximity, trust and openness.



schutzschild

video



↑
Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



↑
Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



↑
Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



↑
Éclipse, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



↑
Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



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Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst



↑
Ékleipsis, 2018
Kunstverein Hannover
Photos by Lukas Zerbst

The ambient lighting in an exhibition space is manipulated so that the existing lights switch off and on again in sequence. A shadow moves across the room, whilst loudspeakers amplify its movement acoustically. Size, speed and sound are generated by a random algorithm.

The White Cube has its own time of day. Inside, it always seems bright enough to view art, but rarely so bright that the conditions of this viewing themselves become noticeable. Lighting, walls, distance, signage and orientation form the quiet infrastructure in which art can appear as art. The White Cube claims neutrality by pushing the outside world, time, bodies and use into the background.

Ékleipsis takes its starting point precisely in this controlled present. The shadow emerges from the very system that normally guarantees visibility. The visual reliability of the space falls out of sync. What was just moments ago clearly addressable is, for a moment, obscured, swallowed up, or only partially legible.

Light promises evidence: that which is illuminated is meant to be recognisable, verifiable, present. The shadow in Ékleipsis works with the flip side of this promise. Darkness appears here as a technical disturbance in the exhibition

space's promise of truth. For brief moments, one can experience how visibility is arranged, distributed and produced.

The work itself possesses hardly any materiality of its own. It reveals itself by temporarily withdrawing something else. It is situated amongst the exhibited works, in the ceiling, in the sound, in the waiting, in the brief loss of orientation. Its presence is tied to the visitors' perception: to the moment when one follows a shadow, hears its approach, or first realises that the space has already changed.

Ékleipsis momentarily strips the exhibition of its self-evidence. It does not add another object to the space that can be viewed permanently, but rather shifts the conditions under which everything else is viewed. The exhibition space thus appears as an apparatus that produces visibility – and as a place where this production can falter, flicker or darken.

ékleipsis

kunstverein
hannover

2018

video



auto- portrait

vietnam university
of fine arts
hanoi

2016

Autoportrait is a spatial installation in a drawing studio at the Vietnam University of Fine Arts in Hanoi. Four of the nine ceiling fans have been lowered to a height of between 1.50 and 1.80 metres. Their blades touch the paper on four easels, striking it and drawing horizontal lines of dust, abrasion and dirt. The easels are aligned with Lukas Zerbst, who stands in the centre of the room as a nude model.

The work re-enacts academic nude drawing, yet shifts the task of representation from the human gaze to the space itself. The drawing studio becomes an apparatus: fans, paper, easels, gravity, dust and rhythm take on the role of those drawing. Their movement is precise and yet limited. They can strike, brush, repeat, condense – but cannot capture a figure.

From this mechanical persistence emerges a series of superimposed lines that grow darker and more saturated over time. The attempt at representation remains bound to what the space itself can do. What is presented as a self-portrait arises less from resemblance than from an arrangement: a body presents itself, the space reacts, the machine repeats, the paper bears the traces.

The Vietnam University of Fine Arts traces its origins back to the École des Beaux-Arts de l'Indochine, founded in 1925, an art academy from the French

colonial era. The venue is thus itself part of a history of academic image production in which the body, the gaze, education and cultural translation are closely intertwined. Autoportrait situates itself within this tradition without fully mastering it. The European artist appears at the centre of the space, exposed as a model, yet dependent on a local educational system that receives, frames and at the same time fails to capture him.

The nudity of the body thereby acquires an additional tension. While life drawing is established as an academic exercise within the art academy, the public depiction of nudity in Vietnam remains culturally and institutionally sensitive. Autoportrait exploits this difference between a protected educational space and public visibility. The body is shown, but not glorified; it becomes the occasion for an apparatus that cannot capture it.

Thus, the installation asserts itself as a self-portrait precisely through its failure. No image reproduces the body. Instead, a portrait emerges from circumstances: from the space, its history, its technology, its sounds, and the position of an artist who is simultaneously model, stranger, object and disruption to this arrangement.





↑
Autoportrait, 2016
Vietnam University of Fine Arts, Hanoi
Photos by Lukas Zerbst

solo

2026	Ein gutes Stück Flensen, Galerie am Lindenplatz, Vaduz (FL) Unique Selling Point, Kunstverein Buchholz (DE) (upcoming)
2025	Szenenwechsel, Niedersächsische Landesvertretung
2024	GIGS, Kreuzberg Pavillon, Berlin, DE LIFT, Museüml, Buchs, CH All die guten Geschichten erzählen immer auch nur die, die sie sich leisten können, Artothek Hannover, DE
2023	Out of Body Experience, Städtische Galerie Bremen
2022	Wartung, Warte fuer Kunst Kassel, DE
2021	Kinderspiel, Galerie Januar, Bremen, DE Kontakt, Albert Hall, Worpswede, DE
2020	Space Invader, Kunstverein Hannover, DE
2018	Leaks / Kloster Bentlage, Rheine, DE
2017	Misunderstandings / workroomfour, Hanoi, VN

group

2026	Liminalität, Städt. Galerie VS, DE 0->1 Gallery, Den Haag, NL HandFest, Kiefer-Martis-Huus, Ruggel, LI Better Version of You, Jergon Space, Berlin, DE Das Einen, Visarte Liechtenstein, Vaduz, LI
2025	New Technology Art Award, Zebrastraat, Gent, BE Atelierhaus e.V., KUBUS Hannover, DE Brücke Museum & Kunsthau Dahlem, Berlin, DE 91. Herbstausstellung Kunstverein Hannover The Wrong Biennale, TRANSIENT INFO, PRT
2024	AdK Berlin, Stipendiatinnenausstellung IPMA Festival, Kaunas, LT
2023	LichtZeitLabor2, Kunsthalle FAUST, Hannover, DE gokArt, Kuenstlerhaeuser Worpswede, DE
2022	Beyond Code & Time Spazio Thetis Venezia, IT Zinnober Hannover, DE Spazi Aperti Accademia di Romania, Rom, IT Museo Civile d'Arte Olevano (mit Villa Massimo)
2021	89. Herbstausstellung, Kunstverein Hannover, DE
2020	I might be staring at infinity, Yarat, AZ Live Art Club, London, UK
2019	42. Bremer Foerderpreis fuer Bildende Kunst ~_(_)/~ / Weserburg, Bremen, DE template / F.A.Q., Bremen, DE
2018	ArtePrize 2018 / Delfina Foundation, London, GB European Media Arts Festival / Osnabrueck, DE ق.يرطال ع. On the Way / Ramallah, PSE 88. Herbstausstellung / Kunstverein Hannover, DE
2017	Offspaces / Nha San Collective, Hanoi, VN
2016	Flatlands / GAK Bremen, DE

awards & nominations

2025	Finalist for Karl Schmidt-Rottluff Scholarship Shortlisted at Delfina Foundation
2023-24	Bremerhaven-Scholarship
2022	Stiftung Kunstfonds Junge Akademie Berlin (Villa Serpentara) Work Grant Ministry of Culture Niedersachsen Annual Grant, Ministry of Culture Niedersachsen Cité internationale des arts in Paris, FR
2020	42. Bremer Foerderpreis fuer Bildende Kunst, DE
2019	Preis des Kunstvereins Hannover / Villa Minimo
2018	GWK Foerderpreis Kunst 2018, Muenster, DE Nominated for ArtePrize 2017/18, Delfina Foundation in London, GB
2016	1. Prize of Fine Arts at University of the Arts Bremen for Mimikry, DE

publications

2022	AUF MONTAGE, November 2022, Editing: Lukas Zerbst Texts: Philipp Lange, Dr. Johannes Crueckeberg, Inka Schube, Lukas Zerbst, Aernout Mik, Reem Shadid Language: German, English, 96 Pages, Softcover Verlag Kettler Dortmund ISBN 978-3-98741-023-9
2019	LUKAS ZERBST GWK-FOERDERPREIS 2018, September 2019. Editing: GWK Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der westfaelischen Kulturarbeit Texts: Sabine Maria Schmidt, Radek Krolczyk, Lukas Zerbst Language: German, English, 104 Pages, Hardcover ISBN 978-3-86206-770-1
	~_(_)/~ Meisterschueler*innen der HfK Bremen, June 2019 Editing: Weserburg Museum fuer moderne Kunst Texts: i.a. Ingo Clauss, Lukas Zerbst Language: German ISBN 978-3-946059-13-4

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film screenings

2024	MANIFEST, Dance Film Festival, Puducherry, India
2023	Quiet @ Gloria Kino Heidelberg
2020	Winds / Hazira, Jerusalem, ISR Hive / Cité internationale des arts, Paris, FR
2017	Made in Vietnam / Cinema am Ostertor Bremen, DE Camera Ignota / Schwankhalle Bremen, DE
2016	Docfest / Goethe Institut Hanoi, VN

performances

2024	Feeding, Kreuzberg Pavillon, Berlin, DE Flensen, Wochenmarkt Bremerhaven-Mitte, DE
2022	Wartung, Warte fuer Kunst, Kassel, DE
2021	Pics or it didn't happen, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, CH
2020	Circle of Influence, Paris, FR
2018	Behind Closed Doors / Kaunas Artist House, LT Elektraktion / Holzwerk, Bremen, DE Void / Ramallah, PSE
2017	A Group of People / IN:ACT Festival, Hanoi, VN
2016	Selfie / University of Fine Arts, Hanoi, VN Per Zerbst / GAK, Bremen, DE
2015	Love is a Muscle / Theater Bremen, DE
2014	Wisdom Tease / Art Docks, Bremen, DE
2013	Antenndenzen / Schwankhalle, Bremen, DE Where is the Light? / HfK Bremen, DE
2012	Warten auf den Regen / Various Plays in DE In Verso / Galerie Flut, Bremen, DE

featured in theatre

2025	SatisfactionAction, Deutsche Oper Berlin & Beethovenfest Bonn
2019	Bombe Spricht / Munich, Jerusalem (kaet & bodytalk)
2018	Life is Pain / Hildesheim, DE (pure comedy)
2017	счастье / Laime / Glueck / Kaunas, LT (AURA) Facebook-AGB - The Musical / Bremen, DE Still Out There / Bremen, DE (kainkollektiv)
2016	AtomHeartMother / Leipzig, DE (bodytalk) America's Next President / Miami, FL (Octavio Campos)
2015	Tanzsylvanien / Berlin, DE (Sylvana Seddig) Liliom / Bremen DE
2014	Angulus Durus / Bremen, DE Broadcasting Eriwan / Bremen, DE
2013	Ossimisten Wessimisten / Torgau, DE (by bodytalk)
2012	Ich bin ein Antifant, Madame / Bremen, DE (bodytalk)

curation

2025	Studio für radikalen Pragmatismus, Hannover (DE)
2022	Les Ateliers Wonder (Bremen - Paris)
2017	Made in Vietnam (Cinema am Ostertor Bremen, DE)

education

2010	Digital Media, HfK Bremen
2012	Fine Art, Time-based-media class, Prof. Jean-Francois Guiton
2017	Erasmus+ at Vietnam University of Fine Arts, Hanoi
2018	Diploma with distinction
2019	Meisterschueler of Jenny Kropp (FORT) & Jean-Francois Guiton

teaching

2022 - 2024	Kunstwelten with AdK Berlin (art education for children)
	Mentor at HfK Bremen, DE
2021	Lecturer at Hochschule Hannover, DE Mentor at HfK Bremen, DE
2016 - 2019	Tutor Atelier fuer Zeitmedien HfK Bremen

juries

2024+	Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur, Niedersachsen
2022	Preis des Kunstvereins Hannover
2021	GWK Förderpreis Kunst 2020
2020	BBK Bremen, Cité internationale des arts
2017	25. Videokunstpries, Filmbüro Bremen, DE

volunteer work

- Advisory board member at Kunstverein Hannover
- Member of Kunstkommission of MWK Niedersachsen
- Founder of *Studio for Radical Pragmatism*, Hannover, DE
- Founding Member of Studio Total, Schaan, LI

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