



VORWORT

Die Ausstellung FACELESS widmet sich den Strategien, die wir MedienbenutzerInnen entwickeln, um in der (virtuellen) Welt „gesichtslos“ zu werden. Sie behandelt dieses relativ neue Phänomen medialer Alltagskultur und zeigt, wie es in bildender Kunst, Mode, Fotografie, Werbung und Tanz aufgegriffen wird. Dieser interdisziplinäre Zugang des Künstlers und Kurators Bogomir Doringer ist in Zusammenarbeit mit Brigitte Felderer ist wie zugeschnitten auf das MuseumsQuartier Wien, in dem die unterschiedlichen Kunsträume der Hoch- und Subkultur jeden Tag aufs Neue in den Dialog treten.

Dialogisch ist auch FACELESS aufgebaut, ist die Schau doch in zwei Teile geteilt, die eng miteinander verknüpft sind: FACELESS part I (4.7. bis 1.9.) zeigt auf, wo und wie wir von der Gesichtslosigkeit umgeben sind, und spiegelt die Tendenz wider, sich diesem Phänomen künstlerisch zu nähern. FACELESS part II (28.9. bis Ende November) wagt einen Blick in die mediale Zukunft und fragt: Was kommt danach?

Kuratorenführungen, Artists Talks, ein Kinderworkshop und eine Performance sowie ein Filmscreening beim frame[ojut] festival im MQ Hof bieten dem/der BesucherIn die Gelegenheit, sich aktiv in diesen Dialog einzubringen. Mit dabei sind auch zahlreiche KünstlerInnen, die als Artists-in-Residence des quartier21/MQ nach Wien eingeladen werden.

Mit den StudentInnen der Abteilung für Bühnen- und Kostümgestaltung sowie Film- und Ausstellungsarchitektur der Universität Mozarteum Salzburg arbeiten wir schon zum zweiten Mal zusammen. Unter der Leitung von Professor Henrik Ahr haben sie erneut für eine spezifische Ausstellungsarchitektur gesorgt, die mit unserem barocken Ausstellungsräum dialogisiert.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihren Besuch!

Christian Strasser
Direktor MuseumsQuartier Wien

Herzlichen Dank an

alle beteiligten KünstlerInnen und Künstler
Brigitte Felderer und Bogomir Doringer
Botschafter Martin Eichtinger, Bundesministerium für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten Botschaftsrat Roelof Buffinga und Suzanne De Bekker, Botschaft des Königreichs der Niederlande Daniel Gerer, Bund Europäischer Jugend/Junge Europäische Föderalisten (BEJ/JEF)
Henrik Ahr, Thilo Ullrich und Martin Hickmann, Universität Mozarteum Salzburg Gerhard Roithner, Roswel Spedition GmbH Junsuke Yamasaki
Matthias Tarasiewicz, Artistic Bokeh Martina Theininger, frame[ojut] alle Partner und Sponsoren

das quartier21/MQ Team Elisabeth Hajek, Ulrike Fallmann und Margit Mössmer

FACELESS

Die Ausstellung FACELESS geht von der grundsätzlichen Bedeutung aus, die Gesichter in unserer mediendefinierten Kultur einnehmen. Viele Gesichter sind vertraut und bekannt, wir erkennen sie wieder, verbinden mit ihnen Biographien, Skandale und Geschichten. Obwohl wir es bloß mit medialen Oberflächen zu tun haben, meinen wir doch, Einblick in eine Persönlichkeit zu gewinnen, ein ganzes Leben mitzuverfolgen. Von Gesichtszügen schließen wir auf charakterliche Eigenschaften, auf unverwechselbare Identitäten. Doch letztendlich spiegeln die dargebotenen Physiognomien nur unsere eigenen persönlichen Vorstellungen von Glück, Anerkennung, Aufmerksamkeit oder Erfolg wider.

Als übermächtige Ideale, als makellose Modelle geben die geschönten Vor-Bilder Maßstäbe vor, die unerrechbar bleiben und dennoch herausfordern. Die Vorgaben erscheinen übermächtig und uneinholbar. Der Vergleich macht uns unsicher, er bestimmt den Umgang mit uns selbst und nicht zuletzt unser Konsumverhalten, unsere Wünsche und Ängste.

Die medialen Fratzen relativieren nicht allein die Selbstwahrnehmung, konfrontieren uns nicht nur mit unvergleichlichen Spiegelbildern, verführen zu übersteigerter Selbstkontrolle. Längst sind sie zu Spuren geraten, die im großen Netz unauslöschlich geworden sind. Verewigt im Buch der Gesichter bleibt man auffindbar, identifiziert und wird letztendlich nicht nur an Projektionen und Wunschvorstellungen aller Art sondern in aller Konsequenz an erlaubte wie heimliche Kontrollinstanzen preisgegeben. Man taucht auf und nie mehr ab.

Und so zeigt diese Ausstellung die unterschiedlichen Strategien und Projekte der Auflehnung und Selbstermächtigung gegenüber diesen übermächtigen uneinholbaren Vorgaben. Sie zeigt, daß nicht alle Grenzgänger, sprich kritische KünstlerInnen und Künstler ihre höchstpersönlichen subversiven Methoden entwickeln, um sich zu entziehen. Selbst die Populärkultur reagiert längst auf die Flut der Gesichter, darauf, daß wir ewig wiederkennbar sein sollen.

Gesichter verschwinden nicht, doch verborgen sie sich hinter Maskierungen, werden bis zur Unkenntlichkeit manipuliert, ja mitunter entstellt. Daher läßt sich diese Ausstellung, lassen sich die gesichtslosen Gesichter, auch lesen als eine ironische, zornige und vor allem berechtigte Kritik an dieser unserer Medienwirklichkeit.

Brigitte Felderer
Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien

FOREWORD

The exhibition FACELESS is dedicated to the strategies that we develop as media users to become "faceless" in the (virtual) world. It explores this fairly recent phenomenon of everyday media culture and shows how it manifests in visual art, fashion, photography, advertising, and dance. The interdisciplinary approach taken by artist and curator Bogomir Doringer in collaboration with Brigitte Felderer is a perfect fit for the MuseumsQuartier Wien, where the various genres of high and subculture enter into dialogue with each other in fresh new ways every day.

FACELESS is dialogically structured as well, in that it is divided into two closely related parts: FACELESS part I (July 4 to September 1) demonstrates where and how we are surrounded by facelessness and reflects the tendency to approach the theme through art. FACELESS part II (September 28 to the end of November) ventures a look at the media future and asks what will come next.

Curator tours, artist talks, a children's workshop, a performance, and a film screening at the frame[ojut] festival in the Main MQ Courtyard offer visitors an opportunity to actively take part in this dialogue. Participants include numerous artists invited to Vienna as quartier21/MQ Artists-in-Residence.

Plus, for the second time we are collaborating with students from the Department for Stage and Costume Design, Film, and Exhibition Architecture at Mozarteum University in Salzburg. Under the guidance of Professor Henrik Ahr, the students have once again developed an exhibition-specific architecture to create an effective dialogue between our Baroque exhibition space and the theme of the show.

We look forward to your visit!

Christian Strasser
Director, MuseumsQuartier Wien

Thanks to

all the participating artists
Brigitte Felderer and Bogomir Doringer
Ambassador Martin Eichtinger,
Federal Ministry for European
and International Affairs
Ambassador Roelof Buffinga and Suzanne
De Bekker, Royal Netherlands Embassy
Daniel Gerer, Union of European Youth/
Young European Federalists
Henrik Ahr, Thilo Ullrich, and Martin
Hickmann, Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg
Gerhard Roithner, Roswel Spedition GmbH
Junsuke Yamasaki
Matthias Tarasiewicz, Artistic Bokeh
Martina Theininger, frame[ojut]
all our partners and sponsors

the quartier21/MQ team Elisabeth Hajek,
Ulrike Fallmann, and Margit Mössmer

FACELESS

FACELESS is an exhibition exploring the basic role that faces play in our media-defined culture. Many faces are familiar and known to us; we recognize them, associate biographies, scandals, and stories with them. Even though we are only confronted with media surfaces, we think we are gaining an insight into a personality and are able to witness an entire life. We deduce character traits from facial features, infer unmistakable identities. But in the end, the physiognomies we encounter only reflect our own personal concept of happiness, recognition, attention, and success.

The sugarcoated appearance of flawless models defines overbearing ideals that remain unattainable and yet constantly challenge us. The standards seem more powerful than we are and impossible to live up to. The comparison makes us insecure, defines how we deal with ourselves, and influences our consumer behavior, our desires, and our fears.

The grotesque faces the media bombards us with not only affect our sense of self, not only confront us with unequal reflections, but also ensnare us in excessive self-control. They have long since left marks that are indelibly engraved in the almighty web. Eternalized in the book of faces, we become findable, identifiable. Ultimately, all our projections and desires are revealed, and worse yet are divulged to entities of control both legal and secret. We emerge and can never disappear from view again.

This exhibition explores the various strategies and projects of revolt and self-empowerment in the face of these overpowering standards that we can never satisfy. It shows that not only outsiders and critical artists are developing their very own subversive methods to escape: even popular culture long ago started to respond to the glut of faces, to the notion that we should forever be recognizable.

Faces do not disappear: they hide themselves behind masks, are manipulated beyond recognition, sometimes disfigured. This exhibition on faceless faces, then, can also be read as an ironic, angry, and above all justified criticism of our media reality.

Brigitte Felderer
University of Applied Arts Vienna



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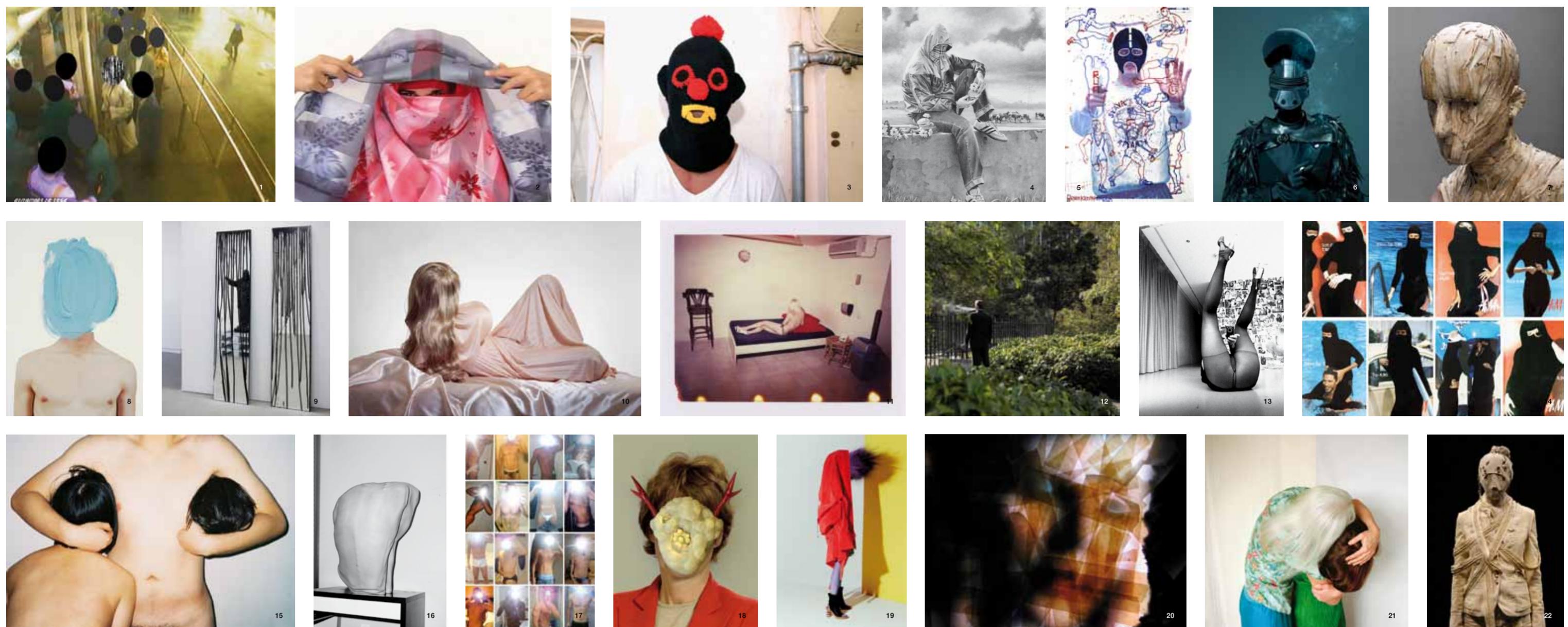
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FACELESS part I



INTRODUCTION

The premise of this exhibition is to explore the common occurrence of images of hidden faces in the creative arts. I first became acquainted with the notion of hidden faces a decade ago, while still in the fashion industry. Through my collections I experimented with covering models' faces in masks or hair, thus attempting to make a statement on the constant "overdose of beauty" and artificiality permeating contemporary society through the media. This suggested a possible return to masks as a solution for covering destabilized identities.

Throughout my art studies and practice, I have been striving to bind together fashion and art – inspired by sociopolitical investigations. After noticing the like-minded interest in the subject matter, I began to collect a variety of faceless works to try and understand why they exist and what they are trying to communicate.

September 11 and its consequences came about in an important phase of my creative development and have had an impact on my interest in facelessness ever since. It would be fair to say that this event was one of the triggers that provoked this tendency in my work. The fear of terrorist attacks led to a change in security concepts and the installment of surveillance systems in public spaces – presented to us as for our own safety. As a result, we feel that our faces are becoming "compressed" and exposed. The only way for us to regain this lost privacy is through subversive media strategies or by reinventing privacy.

Following the events of 9/11, images of masked faces of terrorists became dominant in the media; repeated as a ghostly, unknown presence that reminds us of the unsafe time we live in. At the same time, throughout Europe people began to pursue a ban on burqas. Events like the murders of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands led to public discussions on the impact of Muslim culture – through Muslim minorities – on so-called "western values." I explored this metaphorically in my graduate work "Deranged," where the artwork and the viewer are simultaneously deranged by each other's presence.

In addition to the loss of privacy, the rules of modern technology demand that we are constantly visible. Social networks, initially developed as platforms for communication, came to define standards of everyday activity and lifestyle. They approach us with the promise of serving as tools for self-promotion, then increasingly invade our privacy with our express consent.

The unstable identity of the present begs for the return of power of the mask from ancient times, when it was used as a form of protection, disguise, performance, or just plain entertainment.

FACELESS is a two-part exhibition exploring a phenomenon present all around us: the fashion of "facelessness" that appeared in the creative arts at the beginning of this century and has remained popular since then. The exhibition reminds us of the impact that media-generated images can have on the creative arts and the ways in which they respond to public images, pop culture, and the mainstream in general.

Bogomir Doringer
Artist/Curator

MARINA ABRAMOVIC (SRB/USA)

*1946 in Belgrade
lives in New York
www.marinaabramovicinstitute.org

MARC BIJL (NED/GER)

*1970 in Leerdam
lives in Berlin
www.studiomarcbijl.com

THORSTEN BRINKMANN (GER)

*1971 in Herne
lives in Hamburg
www.thorstenbrinkmann.com

DORA BUDOR (CRO/USA)

*1983 in Zagreb
& MAJA CULE (CRO/USA)

*1984 in Rijeka
live in New York
www.doraandmaja.com

ONDREJ BRODY (CZE)

*1980 in Prague
& KRISTOFER PAETAU (FIN)

*1972 in Porvoo
live in Europe
www.brodypaetau.com

ASGER CARLSSEN (DEN/USA)

*1973 in Denmark
lives in New York
www.asgercarlsen.com

NEZAKET EKICI (TUR/GER)

*1970 in Kirschir
lives in Berlin and Stuttgart
www.ekici-art.de

SHAHRAM ENTEKHABI (IRI/GER)

*1963 in Berjerd
lives in Berlin
www.entekhabi.org

CARON GEARY aka FERAL is KINKY (GBR)

*in London
lives in London
www.feralskinky.com

DAVID HAINES (GBR/NED)

*1969 in Nottingham
lives in London and Amsterdam
www.davidhaines.org

REN HANG (CHN)

*1987 in Changchun
lives in Beijing
www.renhang.org

SABI VAN HEMERT (NED)

*1967 in Vlaardingen
lives in Rotterdam
www.sabivanhemert.nl

URSULA HÜBNER (AUT)

*1957 in Salzburg
lives in Vienna and Linz
www.ursulahuebner.com

DAMIER JOHNSON aka REBEL YUTHS (NGR/ITA)

*1983 in Aba
lives in Torino
www.facebook.com/rebelyuths

BRIAN KENNY (USA)

*1982 in Heidelberg
lives in New York
www.brian-kenny.com

UTE KLEIN (GER)

*1981 in Bonn
lives in London and Berlin
www.uteklein.com

NIENKE KLUNDER (USA)

*1975 in California
lives in London
www.nienkeklunder.com

LUCY MCRAE (AUS)

lives in Amsterdam and Sydney
& BART HESS (NED)

*1984 in Geldrop
lives in London
www.lucyandbart.blogspot.com

MANU LUKSCH (AUT/GBR)

*1970 in Austria
lives in London
www.manulucksch.com

ZACHARI LOGAN (CAN)

*1980 in Saskatoon
lives in Saskatoon
www.zacharilogan.com

MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA (FRA)

founded in 1988
www.maisonmartinmargiela.com

SLAVA MOGUTIN (RUS/USA)

*1974 in Kemerovo
lives in New York
www.slavamogutin.com

VELJKO ONJIN (SRB)

*1978 in Pančevo
lives in Pančevo
www.veljkoonjin.com

BERND OPP (AUT)

*1980 in Innsbruck
lives in Vienna
www.berndopp.net

TANJA OSTOJIC (SRB/GER)

*1972 in Titovo Užice
lives in Berlin
www.van.at/see/tanja

GARETH PUGH (GBR)

*1981 in Sunderland
lives in Paris
www.garethpugh.net

EVA-MARIA RAAB (AUT)

*1983 in Hollabrunn
lives in Vienna and Paris
www.evamarieraab.com

ANA RAJCEVIC (SRB/GBR)

*in Belgrade
lives in London
www.anarajcevic.com

HAREM ROYAL (SRB)

*1975 in Belgrade
lives in Belgrade
www.haremroyal.com

TARRON RUIZ-AVILA (AUS)

*1983 in Brisbane
lives in Sydney
www.tarronruizavila.com

VIKTOR & ROLF (NED)

founded 1993 in Amsterdam
www.viktor-rolf.com

DAPHNE ROSENTHAL (NED/USA)

*1979 in Rotterdam
lives in Amsterdam and Los Angeles
www.daphnerosenthal.eu

MUSTAFÄ SABBAGH (JOR/ITA)

*1961 in Amman
lives in Ferrara
www.mustafasabbagh.com

OLIVIER DE SAGAZAN (FRA)

*1959 in Brazzaville
lives in Paris
www.nefdesfous.free.fr

DANIEL SANNWALD (GER/GBR) for WOODKID

*1979 in Kempten
lives in London and Munich
www.danielsannwald.com

FRANK SCHALLMAIER (NED)

*1977 in Venray
lives in Amsterdam

HESTER SCHEURWATER (NED)

*1971 in the Netherlands
lives in Rotterdam
www.hesterscheurwater.com

JAN STRADTMANN (GER)

*1976 in Lutherstadt Wittenberg
lives and works in Berlin
www.janstradtman.de

SERGEI SVIATCHENKO (UKR/DEN)

*1952 in Kharkov
lives in Denmark
www.sviatchenko.dk

JUN TAKAHASHI for UNDERCOVER (JAP)

founded in 1994 in Tokyo
www.undercoverism.com

MARC TURLAN (FRA)

*1969 in Rueil Malmaison
lives in Paris and Bougival

LEVI VAN VELUW (NED)

*1985 in Hoofddorp
lives in the Netherlands
www.levivanveluw.nl

PHILIPPE VOGELENZANG (NED)

*1982 in Harlem
& MAJID KARROUCH (NED)

* 1984 in Amsterdam
live in Amsterdam
www.vogelenzang-karrouch.blogspot.co.at

ADDIE WAGENKNECHT (USA)

*1981 in Portland
lives in New York and Austria
www.placesiveneverbeen.com

& STEFAN HECHENBERGER (AUT)

*1979 in Innsbruck
lives in Austria
www.stefanhechenberger.net

KATSUYA KAMO for JUNYA WATANABE COMME DES GARÇONS (JAP)

KATSUYA KAMO (JAP)

*1965 in Fukuoka
JUNYA WATANABE (JAP)

*1967 in Tokio

live and work in Tokio

www.comme-des-garcons.com

BERNHARD WILLHELM (GER/FRA)

*1972 in Ulm

lives in Paris

www.bernhard-willhelm.com

DATES

All events are free of charge

Exhibition Opening

July 3, 19:00

Participatory performance "Anonymity" by Artists-in-Residence Addie Wagenknecht (USA) & Stefan Hechenberger (AUT) in cooperation with Artistic Bokeh, part of the Artistic Technology Research project of the University of Applied Arts Vienna

Live dance music performance by FERAL is KINKY (GBR) supported with fashion in masks by Artist-in-Residence REBEL YUHS (NGR/ITA)

Duration

July 4 to September 1

Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday

13:00–19:00

Free admission

Last day of exhibition

September 1

SURVEILLANCE DOCUMENTATION

"Anonymity" by Artists-in-Residence

Addie Wagenknecht (USA) & Stefan Hechenberger (AUT)

July 4 to September 1