

Ovidiu Anton

selected works



I collect wooden street barriers from construction sites and glue them to boards.

Out of these boards I make design classics like Le Corbusier's Tabouret Cabanon or Josef Hoffmann's Nesting Tables.

This poor material from the street, that one knows as signal-object which says *Stop!*, *Forbidden!*, *Not here!*, *Go there!*, ... is going to be transformed into a furniture piece for the private space and then seen as a design object with copyrights (Cassina, Wittmann, ...).

What happens if I - as an artist - collect this material from different cultural, economic and urban spaces and create another circuit or „migration“ of that (more or less) poor material with that gesture of modification?

What if these objects - the design classics - I'm building, are merging into the context of fine art?

I'm trying to reflect the value of that end-product and to question the legitimacy of an artistic subject creating that contextual object.



Tabouret Cabanon / Le Corbusier + Nesting Tables / Hoffmann, street barriers
 wood, glue
 installation ca. 150 x 150 cm
 2012



Photo: <http://cassina.com/en/collection/chairs/lc14-tabourets>

This series of Le Corbusier's Tabouret Cabanon is made out of leftovers from exhibition-displays of the Vienna Secession.

Each face of the box was part of either a pedestal or a wall or whatsoever was part of an installation in that institution the last few years. It carries its own individual history.

I made 18 pieces to re-enact Cassina's famous product-shot of these tabourets.

Cassina, the Italian manufacturing company for designer furniture, has the rights of Le Corbusier's Tabouret Cabanon (LC14 01), which is a box with the measures of 27 x 43 x 27 cm. These measurements are the two seat heights of the Modulor.

18 Tabourets Cabanon LC14 01 /
Series: Exhibition Leftovers Secession
 wood, screws, à 43 x 27 x 43 cm
 installation ca. 220 x 160 cm
 2015



I take a Euro-Pallet from a construction site and bring it to my studio. Then I dismantle this object. I cut off a third of each single part and built a smaller pallet - without standard dimensions. I return this new object to its old place and out of the leftovers (the cut off third) I produce four (patchworked) standard exhibition picture frames with documentation-photos and -sketches of the process inside.

Framework Conditions

3 digital prints and sketches

45 x 61 cm, wooden frames

2011



I collected 4 wooden fruit crates from Istanbul and brought them in my luggage by plane to Vienna, where I transformed them to picture frames. I was fascinated by the fact that almost all kind of garbage from the street is going to be collected by waste pickers and reused, recycled or reselled. Those wooden boxes are collected and mostly reselled as firewood to other street hawker, who use them f. ex. for fueling the grill to prepare their fish-sandwiches, that they sell on the street or for the fire, which they need to boil the water for the tea and so on.

It's a continuation of my series which deals with transforming material from public-, private- and institutional space. In that case I transform the value of that one-way cheap wooden fruit packaging from public space into precious picture frames, which are used as requisite or display for showing works in the exhibition space. I also send this material, which I collected in Istanbul, with the airplane to Vienna and then to Chicago; all these air miles as an ironic capitalistic gesture for the surplus value.

Framework Conditions from Istanbul to Vienna

Photography, wooden frame

35 x 45,5 cm

2013



The red-white construction barriers are common images within the transport system of the city; they keep passerbys and vehicles away from road works. Out of a large number of such barriers, with distinct signs of outdoor usage, the artist has integrated a tiered object within the entrance space. It presents a strong intervention within the territory of the art center <rotor>, a space which is usually committed to making access to contemporary art as open as possible. In contradiction to this, Ovidiu Anton's object introduces a significant obstacle that must be overcome, although, at the same time, revealing itself as a stand. This ambiguity results in the exclusion from the exhibition space whilst simultaneously providing an invitation to the consumption of art. However, isn't the tiered seating directed more towards the external space?

Text: Anton Lederer, 2014
Photos: Cristiana Moroz

53,31 m2 of Street Barriers
Installation
wood, screws
2014





I steal a timber sign used on a construction site on the street and change it's length and width. I cut it into parts and glue it in a different way to make a new one. It's standard dimensions are 406 x 10 cm. After my transformation the length and width are 265 x 14 cm. Finally I bring the piece back to the site I took it from and leave it there, just like it was nevergone.

**Veränderung der Länge und Breite eines Straßenabsperrrpfostens von
406x10 cm auf 265x14 cm**
Video, 4:34 min
2007



The problem with stray dogs in Bucharest started in the 1980s. Nicolae Ceausescu, the former dictator, demolished many houses to realise his ambitious large-scale housing projects. Many people were relocated into social housing and did not have space to keep their dogs any more.

On top of this, the officials introduced high fees for dog licenses and people couldn't afford them.

People simply abandoned their dogs on the street. The dogs started to live together in packs, gathering in numbers rapidly. The highest number reached around 200,000 strays.

At the beginning of the nineties the problem was out of control. Everywhere you went, you met the packs. The dogs became representative of Bucharest. Very soon, the municipality started to catch and kill them with strychnine. This caused much international protest in 1994.

Nowadays the problem is more or less under control: The dogs are no longer killed but instead are caught and castrated.

Romania has been a member of NATO since 2004. Everyone - the people and the politicians wanted to join. Not only for military reasons - the country expected foreign investment to increase on their entering into the alliance. Being a member brings a stability that foreign investors trust. Joining NATO could also be seen as an important step from dictatorship to democracy.

In April 2008, the 20th NATO Summit took place in Bucharest. Certain parts of the city were declared as zones of high security and were partly closed off from the public. The city was full of police. Some days before the Summit arrangements to clean the city were clearly visible: streets and parks were cleaned, fences and buildings were repainted, stray dogs were collected from the streets and taken somewhere else. This was done for the benefit of the foreign politicians, that they should feel safe in a modern, clean city.

There were no demonstrations like one may see at each other NATO-Summit. Nobody went out in the street to protest against war, against militarisation or capitalist exploitation. Mr. Bush and Mr. Putin were also in town. Nobody went out in the street to demonstrate against their aggressive politics.

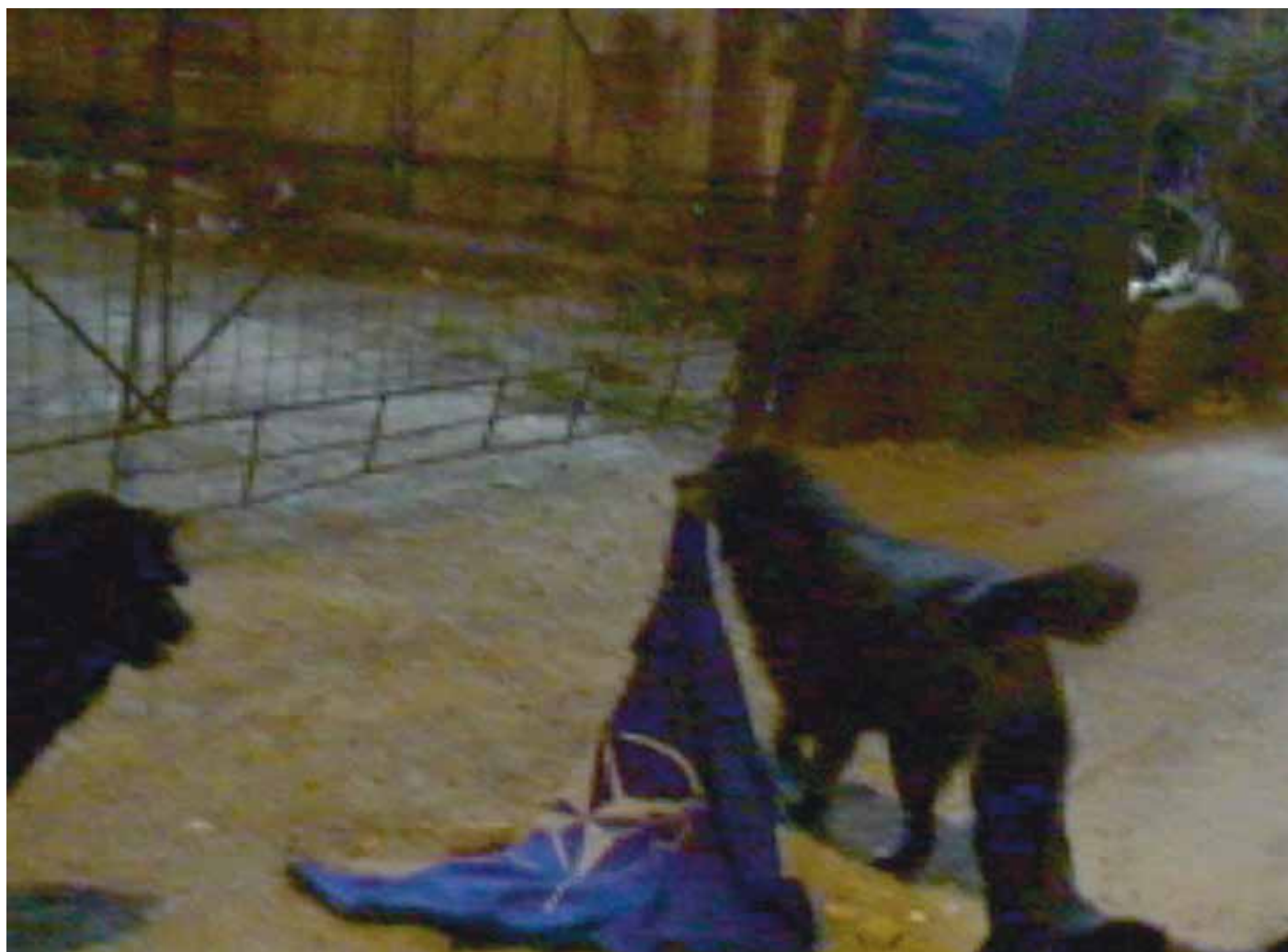
For the exhibition project *Archive In Residence Vienna-Bucharest* during this summit I found a pack of dogs in the city centre that I gave a stolen NATO flag. I prepared it with sausage-flavour beforehand. They immediately smelt and loved that dark blue piece of cloth with its white compass rose. The video shows the alpha-dog taking and ripping the flag in front of the other members of the pack. There's also a private security guy involved, who is usually there to protect the property. A real deep-political comedy!



Stray Dogs Love Flags

Video, 5:18 min

2008





This video consists 46 different shots having approximately the same framing. It's me sprinting through the frame in the urban space of any city.

The dialectic of editing is based on the genre of pursuit in film or parcour-videos. I tried to create ephemeral continuity in time and space but one can recognize the varying way of being dressed and the obvious change of filming locations in the suit of shots that are connected just by the edit with each other.

It Doesn't Matter Where

Video, 2:53 min

2009



I steal a package of cumin out of a store, open it, count the seeds, close it again and put the package after back on the shelf with the number of coun

Compter 100g de Cumin
Video, 7:49 min
2009





In his most recent video „Street Cat Deluxe“, which was created during an extended stay in Istanbul. The offscreen monologues are spoken by six people from different backgrounds living in Istanbul. Anton alienates the interviews by associating each with a different cat. Thus the narrativeworks formally by instructions of the artist, but in its content through their own viewpoints and perspectives Anton shows street cats talking about problems of gentrification in the Turkish metropolis: there is something alienating about this humanization, and it also allows the work to utilize the irritation arising from unusually linked video and audio tracks.

L'homme en révolte - this is the central theme of the young artist of Rumanian descent. And yet he is not interested in the emphatic gesture of resistance for its own sake, but in its symbolic depiction, its anchoring in continually permutating life-worlds and conditions, which charge it with energy. The work involves a dialectic tension between places and non-places, between social norms and transgressions, between damnation and salvation. Sauve qui peut (la vie)!

The film was produced just prior to the riots at Istanbul's Taksim Gezi Park, that was determined to be replaced by a shopping mall in May 2013.

Text: Thomas Miessgang, 2013

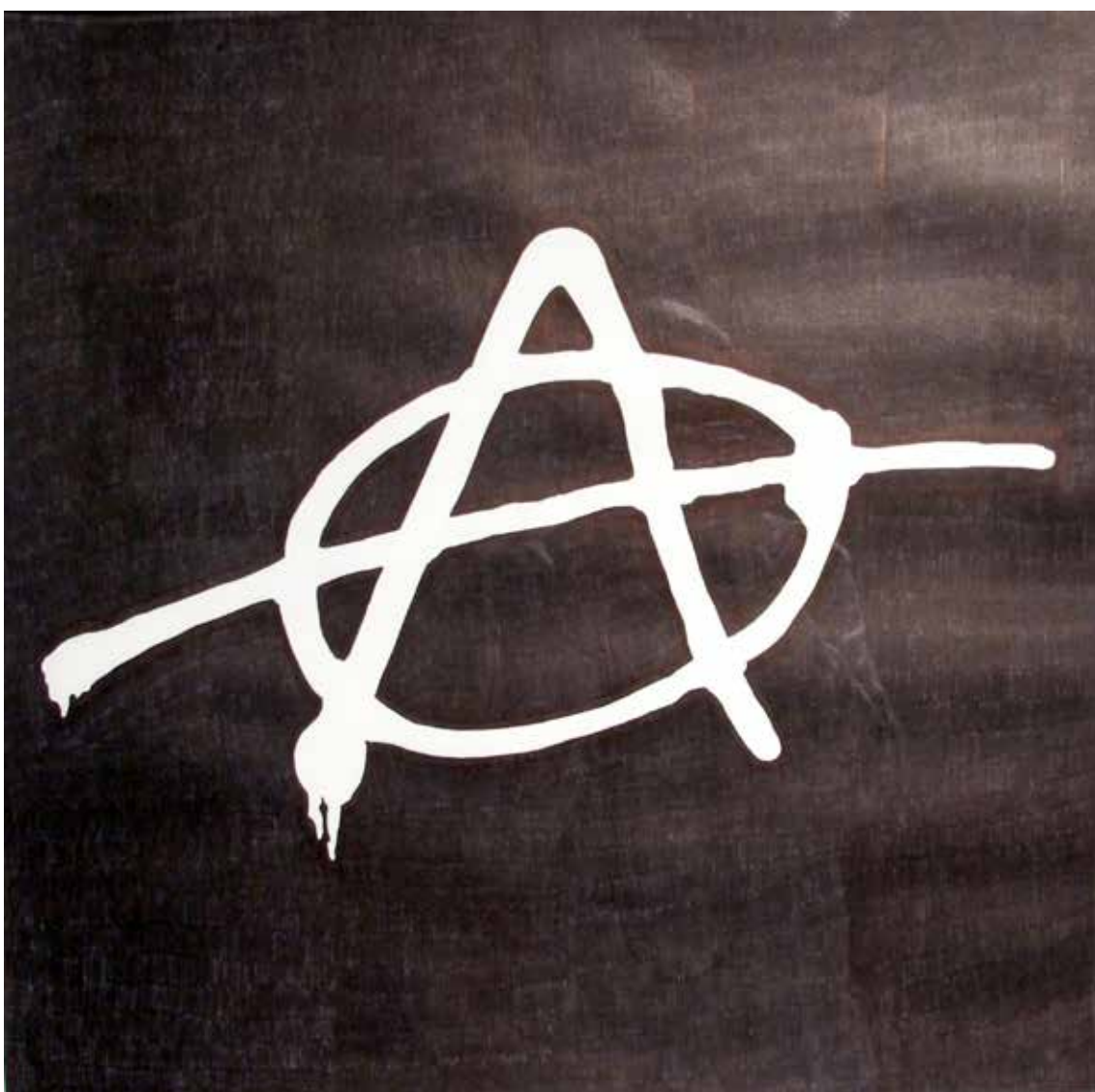
Street Cat Deluxe

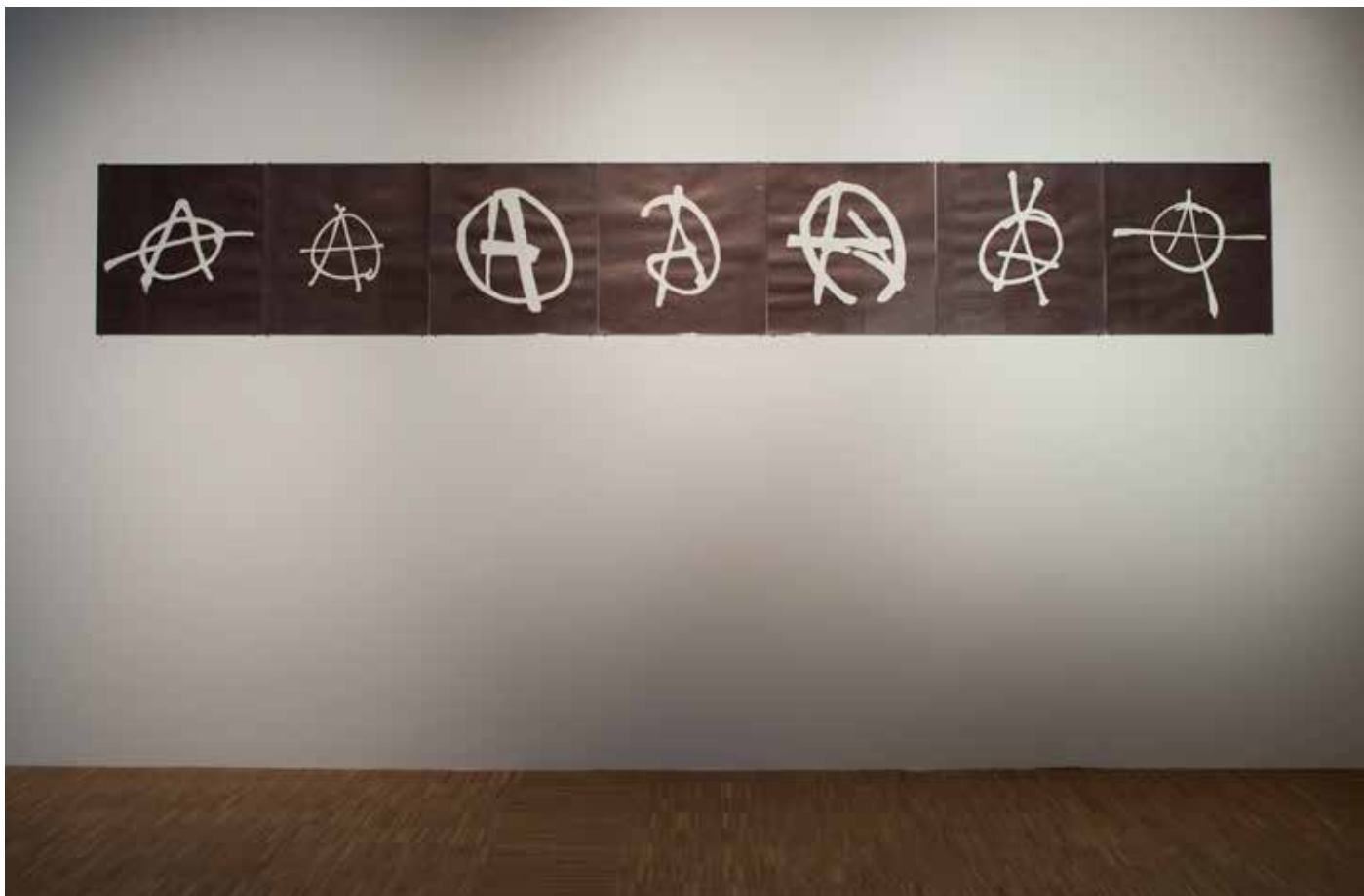
HD video

Turkish and English, engl. subtitles

37:30 mins

2013





Exhibition View
Sub Fuckin Versive, Tabacco 001 Cultural Centre, Ljubljana, 2014
 Photo by Andraz Gregoric

I have a huge collection of anarchy-symbols, which I photograph on every place where I am traveling and living. It is a collection in progress.

Once I started to make reproductions of those photographed circle-A symbols. I see each single A on a facade as a temporary monument in the public space.

After I draw the outlines on a (50 x 50 cm) paper, I colour the space around the calligraphic sign with black ball-pens. The circle-A symbol remains white. By reproducing it like that and showing it in institutional white cubes, I create another value of that short-life-monument which I find on the street.

The pattern of my labour-time is very much visible on each of those paper surfaces. It is an ongoing work, which number of drawings changes the title (4 drawings = 1m²).

1,75 m² of Anarchy (status in June 2014)

ballpen on paper

7 parts à 50 x 50 cm

ongoing work

2014



Exhibition View at *Sub Fuckin Versive*,
Tabacco 001 Cultural Centre, Ljubljana, 2014

sub fuckin versive

ball-pen on paper, 52 x 100 cm, framed
2014

précaire

ball-pen on paper, 50 x 65 cm
2011

very contemporary art

ball-pen on paper, 50 x 65 cm
2012

précaire

very
contemporary
art



I deal with many contexts of urban displays. I investigate how far political movements go with manifesting their interests publically by using political graffiti and how far I, as an outsider, can intervene artistically.

I'm very much interested in handwritten (without stencil) political slogans in public space. They are anonymous manifestations of different political views – most of them against authorities – placed on very visible and well frequented urban spots to be seen by as many passers-by as possible.

I photograph many of these slogans and project the picture on a paper. Then I trace the outlines of every single letter of the writing and start producing a negative of the projected picture by colouring the whole paper with highlighters in neon colours. The characters remain white – not coloured.

For me this act is a reversal of the original process. The gesture of placing such a graffito on a building has to be done very fast. By writing the slogan illegally on a wall, the person has to be unobserved. My gesture of reproducing such a graffito on paper with the fact that it takes me that long to come to a result and it's destination will be replaced from the street to the exhibition space, underlines the gesture of producing a negative, that should be seen in the sense of taking a message out of it's context.

The tagger needs some seconds for placing his slogan on the wall. I work for the reproduction for some hours, because it takes me that long to use my method of colouring the sheet of paper. This presence of time is visible due to the non-monotonous drawing-style i use for colouring.

Series: **Political Graffiti / Paper**
Highlighter on paper, every 70 x 100 cm, 2010
Révolte
Nike la Police
Pouvoir au Peuple
Grève Continue

Révolte

NIKE LA POLICE

POUVOIR
AU PEUPLE
R

GRÈVE
CONTINUE



Installation view
Künstlerhaus Graz / Neue Galerie, 2010

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ovidiu Anton

1982 born in Timișoara (Romania)
2003-2004 School for Artistic Photography - Friedl Kubelka, Vienna
2008-2009 studies at École supérieure des beaux-arts, Marseille
2004-2010 studies at Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Performative Art and Sculpture, Monica Bonvicini

Solo Exhibitions:

2015 **New Positions**; Art Cologne [upcoming]
2014 **Sub Fuckin Versive**; Tabacco 001 Cultural Centre, Ljubljana
2013 **Sauve qui peut!**; Christine König Galerie, Wien
2011 **Weißer Wände?**; Galerie 5020, Salzburg
2010 **Diploma Exhibition**; Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Selected group-exhibitions:

2015 **A Set of Lines, A Stack of Paper**; Karst Projects, Plymouth/UK [upcoming]
Off-Biennale Budapest [upcoming]
Destination Wien 2015; Kunsthalle Vienna [upcoming]
subversiv - Raum für Alternativen; GrazMuseum; Graz
Year Exhibition Open Systems 2-01-04/14; WUK Projektraum; Vienna
The Enigma of the New and the Modern; MUMOK Cinema; Vienna
2014 **Territorien; Steirischer Herbst** / <rotor>, Graz
You Are Being Timed; ZAN Gallery, Paris
On Paper / curated by Sepp Auer; Christine König Galerie, Vienna
Wiener Postproduktion; MAK Forum, Vienna
Sessel, Stuhl, Hocker in der Kunst; Galerie Tracklhaus, Salzburg
White Cube, Open Mike / Parcours, (with Marusa Sagadin); Forum Stadtpark, Graz
2013 **DIS-PLAY-PRATER-STERN - Wie wir leben wollen**; Praterstern, Vienna
Chic Boutique Chic.ago; ADDS DONNA, Chicago
2012 **Sorry for not standing still**; pietmondriaan.com at Kunstvlaai; Amsterdam
Grüße aus Balkonien; The Smallest Gallery, Graz
the transit-issue; Parabol; curated by Christiane Meyer-Stoll; Vienna
To keep us in the dark ages of color; curated by Elsa König; Die Ausstellungsstraße
(NO) STANDING ANYTIME; Graz
Die Chic Boutique - Kunst mit Funktion; Die Ausstellungsstraße, Vienna
2011 **Le Choix de Paris**; Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris
Territories; Frappant E.V., Hamburg
Contemporaryarchive; Galerie Eugen Lendl, Graz
Wilde Zeichen, Kunsthalle Krems / Forum Frohner
Heute malen, morgen mehr; MOE, Vienna
2010 **Mit uns ist kein (National)Staat zu machen**; Kunstraum Niederösterreich; Vienna
2009 **minus20plus**; Kulturodrogerie, Vienna
Beautiful étranger - étrangeté autre; Galerie Montgrand, Marseille
2008 **Fünf Stühle sind auch eine Bank**; Galerie Kulturhof, Feldkirchen
Archive in Residence Vienna/Bucharest; VBKÖ, Vienna & Galeria UNA, Bucharest
2007 **Künstler auf Landpartie 2**; Unterolberndorf
2006 **Take Five; Tanzquartier**; Vienna
top to bottom, end to end; Westbahnhof, Vienna
2005 **Rückverortung des Sozialen**; VBKÖ; Vienna
2004 **IN-EX**, WUK

Prices, Residences:

2015 Residency at Oberliht in Chișinău (Republic of Moldova) [upcoming]
Residency in Nicosia (Cyprus) by European Mediterranean Art Association [upcoming]
2014 Artist in Residence / Ljubljana (Tabacco 001 Cultural Centre)
2013 Studio grant in Istanbul by Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
2011 Studio grant in Paris by Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
2010 Styrian Award for Fine Arts