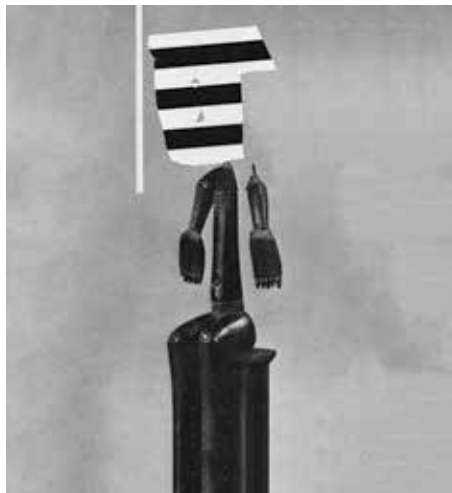


Aykan Safoğlu  
Carlos Kong  
Sky Hopinka  
Alexandra Juhasz  
Rosalyn D'Mello  
Alba Zari  
Chiara Bardelli Nonino  
Zineb Sedira  
Sarah Zürcher





a means for refiguring its traces. Indeed, Orupabo's figures do appear in "midair," but simultaneously most of them gaze immediately back at the spectator, making anyone looking passively at them as mere shapes or forms lose balance. Judith Butler once described the way of "speaking back" that the lawyer Mari Matsuda has established as a concept for racialized people to resist



Eric Magassa, *Black Magic* series, 2019. Pigment print on acid-free cotton paper. Courtesy: the artist.

the impersonation of condemnation. (Butler, *Excitable Speech* 1997) In the same way, Orupabo's figures refuse the gaze that forces their shapes into specific impersonations, or historical roles. In her montage of the visuality of such roles, she looks back upon historical forms of representation, by instigating new ways of taking shape in relation to others, while still floating. Installed next to Magassa's reel of ghosts that, too, look back at their lost history, while moving the density of warm, empowering tunes of a collective struggle across geographical contexts and times, these figures and tunes take hold of the air and take *FLIGHT* far away from the restraints that still govern normative modes of representing contemporary art today.

**Frida Sandström** is a writer, critic, and a contributing editor at *Paletten* art journal (SE). She is a PhD fellow in modern culture in the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen (DK).

### Rosana Paulino: The Liability of Threads

Kunstverein Braunschweig, 3. 12. 2022 – 19. 2. 2023

by Ana Hupe

Kunstverein Braunschweig was founded in 1832, almost two hundred years ago, and the exhibition *The Liability of Threads* is the first time a Brazilian artist has exhibited there. Rosana Paulino does not open this door alone, though. She is accompanied by many Black women, civilians or deities, half plants, half butterflies. The ones that guard the entrance of the exhibition carry roots instead of feet. The drawings are part of the series *Jatobás* (2022). *Jatobá* is a tree of great longevity from the Brazilian Atlantic Forest that can live up to 450 years. Experienced and wise, they face the three drawings from the series *Senhora das Plantas* (Lady of the Plants, 2022), also exhibited in the first room. This series, made with the same technique as *Jatobás*,

watercolor and pencil, shows apprenticing plant-women bearing the artist's own face (this strategy of self-representation will be seen in other works present in the exhibition as well). The dialogue between plant-ladies and tree-madams reminds us of Paulino's relationship with the new generation of artists in Brazil, who see her as a master. Important themes in the art world today, such as representativeness, ancestry, Afro-diaspora, scientific racism, and interspecies relations, have been guiding the work of Rosana Paulino — who recently participated in the 2022 Venice Biennale — since the 1990s.

The pomegranates carried by two ladies of the plants are inspired by the tree in the backyard of the artist's studio, on the outskirts of the city of São Paulo, according to the curator of the show, Nuno de Brito Rocha. The third young lady holds in her hands leaves from the dracaena trisfasciata plant, popularly known in Brazil as the Sword of St. George or Sword of Oya. Oya is the orisha of the winds in the Yoruba pantheon. The Yoruba culture honors and protects the forces of nature (contrary to the coloniality of power that affirms the sovereignty of humans over nature) and has great influence on Brazilian culture. The *Jatobás* and *Senhora das Plantas* series are images that contribute to healing the effects of colonialism by building a delicate and positive imaginary of Black people.

More Afro-diasporic symbols are present in the installation *Casulos* (Cocoons, 2001) in room four. The 806 small cocoons, each less than 10 centimeters long and made of white thread, populate the walls and rounded white pilasters of the Villa Salve Hospes architecture in Braunschweig,



Rosana Paulino, detail from: *Casulos* (Cocoons), 2001. Exhibition view at Kunstverein Braunschweig 2022. Courtesy: the artist and Kunstverein Braunschweig. Photo: Marek Kruszewski.

inspired by Renaissance Venetian mansions. The cocoons carry some of the artist's childhood memories. One of them contains a cowrie shell, used in one of the Yoruba oracles. The divination is done by consulting sixteen cowrie shells, interpreted by a priestess or priest, who asks questions to the deities while tossing the shells onto a prepared table. Inside another cocoon, we see Our Lady, a Catholic symbol. A third one shows Snow White, and next to it we discern a piece of



Rosana Paulino, *The Liability of Threads*, 2022. Exhibition view at Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2022–23. Courtesy: the artist and Kunstverein Braunschweig. Photo: Marek Kruszewski.

the artist's own hair and a white doll. As a child, Paulino did not know any Black dolls, and the only cartoon princess she could identify with was Snow White, because of her Black hair. These individual memories are images present in the collective unconscious of the African diaspora people, whose oppressions have been increasingly elaborated in art spaces. Besides representation, ancestry is also a theme in the exhibition. The video *Das Avós* (Of Grandmothers, 2019) shows the performer Charlene Bicalho, dressed in white, carefully observing (and sewing with red thread) images of Black people found in different historical archives in Brazil. Printed on transparent fabric, the figures gain visibility only when they are glued to the performer's body. The erasure of memory is a strategy of the colonial program that has never been interrupted. In the video, Paulino claims the right to know who were the grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents of Black people, dealing with a collective ancestral search.

Images have always been tools of power and have produced damage, dehumanizing the Black body. In *The Liability of Threads*, the artist Rosana Paulino leaves her cocoon to critically and affectively gestate another present, where the soul fits the scientific description of a plant cell, as seen in the drawing *Divisão Celular I* (Cellular Division I, 2001) — bridging magic and science together and therefore augmenting our speculative capacities.

**Ana Hupe**, born 1983 in Rio de Janeiro (BR), is a visual artist based in Berlin (DE) and works as an art history researcher at Burg Giebichenstein Kunsthochschule Halle (DE). Her artistic research is dedicated to building counter-memories of colonial archives by interweaving lesser-known histories of resistance in installations with multidirectional narratives.

### Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid: Dissident Histories

Loža Gallery, Koper, 25. 11. 2022 – 28. 2. 2023

by Francesca Lazzarini

The first major exhibition in Slovenia presenting the work by Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories*, acts as a point of condensation and radiation of multiple entanglements. Entanglement: this term emerged in my mind whilst



Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid, *Dissident Histories*. Exhibition view at Loža Gallery, Koper, 2022–23. Photo: Jaka Jeraša / Obalne Galerije Piran, 2023.

visiting the show and stayed with me in the following days, reassembling and expanding in its meanings. Entanglement as being tangled up and entrapped, as interconnecting and interweaving, as involvement and bond.

The broad selection of works presented in the show — including videos, posters, texts, installations, and a slide show — results from a long-standing artistic partnership involving Gržinić and Šmid since the early 1980s. At the intersection of art practice and activism, their collaboration has been devoted to exploring the political potential of experimental video against dominant systems of subjugation.

Conceived as a reactivation of their work, rather than a retrospective, the exhibition and many of the included projects serve as a zone of connection between struggles in different times and places, from Dada actions against the rise of Nazism in the 1920s up to present forms of opposition to financialized capitalism. The video *Three Sisters* — one of the earlier works presented in the show, dating back to 1992 — constitutes an example. Laid on the background of a transposition of Anton Chekhov's play, the juxtaposition of various elements — documentary and film footage, historical postcards, the reenactment of advertisements and fictional characters — creates a short circuit of solidarity in relation to different crises, like the fall of communism, the

war in Croatia, anti-Semite persecutions, or the AIDS pandemic in Africa in the 1980s.

The practice of Gržinić and Šmid is driven by a decolonial perspective firmly grounded in theory. Arguments by thinkers such as Alain Badiou, Jonathan Beller, and Achille Mbembe are summoned, for instance, in the video *Naked Freedom* (2010) to state that crises are not separate events, but rather part of one single major event called capitalism. Here, as in the whole exhibition, entanglement takes on the meaning of recognizing the interconnectedness of wars, conflicts, and other forms of subjugation happening all around the world, and making common cause against politics that ensnare subjectivities on a planetary scale. However, taking on a decolonial perspective does not mean adopting a generalized point of view. Gržinić and Šmid are strongly committed to analyzing their cultural background and its history: in the videos *Bilocation* (1990) and *Labyrinth* (1993) they address the dissolution of Yugoslavia and its violent implications, the video performance *HI-RES* (2006) centers on the catastrophic consequences of turbo-capitalism in Eastern Europe, and *Relations / 25 Years of the Lesbian Group ŠKUC-LL* (2012) is a video focusing on the feminist lesbian scene in Slovenia. Yet, the artists further develop their analyses in relation to other contexts and experiences, creating an entanglement of critical positions that nurture and support one another. This kind of interconnectedness is reinforced at the exhibition level, where images and words

travel from one work to another, activating connections and mutual amplification of meanings.

A peculiar entanglement also occurs between the documentary genre and fiction. Since the visual has become a fundamental component in the neoliberal management of truth, the artists recognize the need for counterstrategies and devise what they term “a new logic of performativity.” Choreographed in their videos are images, texts, and performing bodies in active and unexpected relationships, aimed at summoning affects, consciousness, and action toward political issues instead of representing them. The use of fiction — as highlighted in *Obsession* (2008) — activates theory as a world-making force, its first aim being to dismantle prevailing discourses that naturalize racism, inequality, and dispossession as accidental effects of democracy and global growth.

Entering into the visual and conceptual density of *Dissident Histories* can be challenging, as dealing with complexity and criticality always is, but how can we unravel the intricacy of our ensnarement if not by practicing entanglement ourselves?

**Francesca Lazzarini** is a curator and PhD researcher in the Advanced Practices program at the Visual Cultures Department of Goldsmiths, London (GB).

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### Günther Selichar: Schirmherrschaft

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Museum der Moderne Salzburg,  
26. 11. 2022 – 12. 3. 2023

Kunstsammlung Gera – Orangerie, 6. 4. –  
11. 6. 2023

von Jakob Thaller

Als Kind, als ganz kleines Kind, habe ich mich einmal – entgegen aller Warnung von erwachsener Seite (»Setz dich nicht so nah vor den Fernseher, du bekommst noch viereckige Augen!«) – herangetraut, unmittelbar an den Bildschirm. So nah, dass ich die einzelnen Pixel erkannt habe. Zum ersten Mal habe ich verstanden, dass das gar keine kleinen Menschen sind, die uns in einer Röhre Theater vorspielen. Auf der Bildschirmoberfläche sind Farben – Blau, Rot und Grün –, deren visuelle Autorität so gewaltig ist, dass man aus ihnen alles entstehen lassen kann. *Who's Afraid of Blue, Red and Green?* – *Super Panavision 70* (2020–2022) lautet nicht nur der Titel – ein Titel, den Günther Selichar schon öfters verwendet hat, eine Anspielung auf Barnett Newmans *Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue* (1966) – der pulverbeschichteten Lochpaneele an der Glasfassade des Museums der Moderne Salzburg, sondern auch die Frage, die sich seit Jahrzehnten durch sein Werk zieht. Selichar analysiert »die Wechselwirkungen zwischen medialer Maschine und Mensch« (Presstext), die Faszination, vielmehr noch die Macht, die der Fernseher auf mich als Kind ausgeübt hat, sodass ich wie in Trance auf ihn zugehen musste und seinen Bann stundenlang nicht verlassen wollte. Mittlerweile ist dieses Zeitalter der *Schirmherrschaft*, beschleunigt durch die Digitalisierung, längst in jeden Lebensbereich eingedrungen – wie sehr müssen wir uns wirklich davor fürchten?

Bereits in seiner frühen Arbeit *Suchbild. Find the difference* (1993–1994) beschäftigt sich Selichar mit der Bildmanipulation; zwei idyllische Landschaftsaufnahmen werden großformatig gegenübergestellt, wobei eine davon digital verändert wurde und sich dadurch Fragen zur Rezeption von Kunst und Natur stellen. Grundsätz-



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