

## **The Arbitrary Nature of Words and Everyday Life**

**Ksenija Čerče, Marko Drpič, Ištvan Išt Huzjan, Isabella Kohlhuber, Franz Konrad, Gorazd Krnc, Damir Očko, Ferdinand Penker, Arjan Pregl, Hannes Priesch, Alf Poier, Ignazio Uriarte**

**You are kindly invited to attend the opening of the exhibition on 31 August 2017 at 7 p.m.**

**31 August–1 October 2017, Vodnik Homestead Gallery, Šiška, Ljubljana  
20 October–3 March 2018, Pavelhaus, Bad Radkersburg**

Since September 2015, the Vodnik Homestead Gallery in Šiška has been exhibiting visual art, which seeks to find common ground with letters, the written word, and narrative, as well as artworks inextricably entwining fine art and literature. We showcase illustrations, comics, visual poetry, and video poetry; we are interested in everything from typography and printing techniques to narration and its place in visual art.

The artworks selected for *The Arbitrary Nature of Words and Everyday Life* exhibition explore the processes and forms involved in creating meaning. The video by Damir Očko, *The Moon Shall Never Take My Voice*, subtly evokes the arbitrary way in which we understand silence and sound. The love story by Ištvan Išt Huzjan, created with the simplest means possible, yet more of a feast for the senses than a Hollywood spectacle, is likewise an exercise in subtlety. Gorazd Krnc, Ksenija Čerče, Alf Poier, and Ferdinand Penker authored the books of artists. For them, a book is more than just a medium to be used; the book medium is also reflected in the artwork with all its historical value. Ignazio Uriarte presents the history of the typewriter through beatboxing. With Hannes Priesch, an e-mail becomes the motif for a politically-charged painting, while Isabella Kohlhuber creates ephemeral writing from everyday materials. Marko Drpič's contribution to the exhibition transforms printing into a work of art, Franz Konrad erects a *dada-tent*, and Arjan Pregl transfers a Facebook wall into the exhibition space, both inviting visitors to actively participate.

The artwork presented by the exhibition seeks to explore and understand literary *topoi*, techniques for opening up new questions about randomness, the book form, e-mail conversations, brand names, phonetic transcriptions, and sounds made by word processors. All these phenomena explore issues related to the arbitrary nature of text. On one side, there's the signifier – the signified on the other. The artists, who contributed their work, exhibit and combine them, contextualizing them in a way that invariably leaves traces. Not only on their message, but also their effects.

Arbitrariness describes the way in which an entity is formed, as a random event or decision made by man, contrary to nature's creative power. This creates a space, which leaves equal room for responsibility and irresponsibility.

Art and life are in an equally arbitrary relationship. Sometimes they come together, fuse, then go their separate way; they are either in an almost erotic relationship, or else dead cold. One moment we start to think that they've never even met, the next we are convinced that art stands at the stormy pinnacle of existence.

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The present exhibition was inspired by the historical Avant-garde and their expressions and reactions to the madness of war, which were mainly expressed through words and collages. It seeks to become a hiatus for its spectators – a crack, lacuna, a momentary pause before a decision, judgement, action, or creation of meaning.

*The Arbitrary Nature of Words and Everyday Life* is an international exhibition organized in cooperation with the Pavelhaus, a gallery in Austrian Styria which has a long tradition of collaboration with neighbouring countries. The artwork, which comes from Austria, Croatia, Germany, and Slovenia, has been carefully selected by Petja Grafenauer from the Vodnik Homestead and David Kranzelbinder from the Pavelhaus, taking into account the history of cultural links joining Slovenia and Austria, especially the Trigon Festival and their rich heritage of conceptual art and visual poetry.

Petja Grafenauer and David Kranzelbinder

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#### **ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME:**

##### **TUE, 12 September 2017, 5 p.m.**

Guided tour of the exhibition, which explains the inception of the exhibition and the idea behind it, as well as the artworks and artists. The tour will be given by the co-curator of the exhibition, Petja Grafenauer

##### **SAT., 30 September 2017, 11.00 a.m. (6+)**

The Word Factory is a linguistic-art workshop where children discover the life of words and learn to make new ones. We will play with words, draw them, and make them from different materials. The workshop will be led by Vida Cerkvenik Bren and Jurij Bobič. The number of places at the workshop is limited. Please write and apply at: [petja.grafenauer@gmail.com](mailto:petja.grafenauer@gmail.com)

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Vodnik Homestead Gallery, Šiška  
Vodnikova cesta 65, 1000 Ljubljana

Open:

Tuesday–Friday: 12.00–18.00

Saturday and Sunday: 10.00–14.00

Closed on Mondays and holidays

Information:

Petja Grafenauer, Gallery Manager

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