

THE PILL®

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GERNOT WIELAND

L'œuvre de Gernot Wieland, qu'elle se manifeste sous la forme de films, de dessins, de photographies, d'installations ou de conférences-performances, aborde un certain nombre de questions universelles – langage, éducation, altérité, domination, contrôle, contextes sociaux, politique et psychiques – en mêlant la psychanalyse aux souvenirs d'enfance de l'artiste dans des récits racontés à la première personne. Gernot Wieland a élaboré les fondations d'un univers unique et profondément émouvant, traversé par les réminiscences de souvenirs dont on ne parvient à savoir s'ils sont les récits réels ou inventés par un narrateur parlant à la première personne, sans que jamais ne soit établie avec certitude qu'il puisse s'agir de l'artiste lui-même ou d'un alter ego fictif. La trame de son monde est tissée d'une poésie proférée par la voix lancinante d'un personnage kafkaïen déployant sous nos yeux des histoires d'enfance et des narrations absurdes à l'aide de personnages de pâte à modeler, de décors coloriés aux crayons de couleur, de diagrammes extravagants, d'esquisses faussement naïves et de passages filmés en Super-huit. La douceur et la componction se mêlent et laissent affleurer çà et là les scories affligées d'une inhumanité rampante, suintant des machines oppressives institutionnelles, des carcans éducatifs déviants, dépliant précautionneusement les névroses comme des origamis fragiles.

Ses films et tout ce qui en découle – dessins, photogrammes et photographies – irradient d'une clarté poignante, palpitent d'une beauté malingre où pulsent à l'unisson l'incongru et les sentiments étouffants. Si la psychanalyse freudienne et la figure de Kafka peuplent, tels des fantômes errants, cet univers où percolent les origines autrichiennes de Gernot Wieland, celui-ci est parvenu à inventer une forme narrative et filmique extraordinaire où le thérapeute, coincé dans ses propres souvenirs et associations, n'est plus capable d'écouter son patient, où les figures autoritaires des systèmes kafkaïens se sont dissoutes comme de l'encre dans le lait, pour reprendre le titre de l'un de ses films (*Ink in Milk* – 2018). L'intonation insaisissable de ses films happe le spectateur dans les méandres inextricables d'histoires fantasmagoriques tenues par une lucidité qui semble être portée par un étranger au monde qui en observerait – avec candeur et délicatesse – les fissures, les dislocations et la vulnérabilité.

Ses films ont reçu de très nombreux prix :

Aus-Blicke au Blicke, Filmfestival, Bochum, Allemagne ; le prix principal de la compétition allemande au 69e Festival international du court métrage, Oberhausen, Allemagne, tous en 2023 ; en 2022, le prix allemand du court métrage dans la catégorie des courts métrages expérimentaux d'une durée

maximale de 30 minutes et le prix du meilleur film au Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France et une mention honorable au Cannes Shorts Film Festival, Cannes, France ; en 2021, une mention spéciale à ARKIPEL - Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival, Indonésie ; en 2020, le prix du meilleur film, VIII Kinodot Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russie ; en 2019, le prix EMAF Media Art des critiques de cinéma allemands à l'EMAF - European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Allemagne et une mention spéciale au 36e festival du court métrage, Hambourg, Allemagne ; en 2017, il a remporté la 20e édition du MOSTYN Open, Llandudno, Pays de Galles.

Son film *The Perfect Square*, a été sélectionné pour la 74ème Berlinale - Berlin International Film Festival - Forum Expanded, Berlin, et au First Look 2024, Museum of the Moving Image, New York.

Ses œuvres ont été exposées à Argos Centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels ; Kindl - Centre of Contemporary Arts, Berlin ; Künstlerhaus Bremen ; Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles ; Kunstmuseum Bonn ; Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen ; Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg ; 3e Biennale internationale d'art contemporain d'Amérique du Sud, Buenos Aires ; Centre letton d'art contemporain, Riga ; Berlinische Galerie, Berlin ; Steirischer Herbst Festival/Kunsthau Graz, Graz et Hong-Gah Museum, Taipei ; Quartz Studio, Turin ; Centre d'art Pasquart, Biel ; Musée du château des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard ; Museo Berardo, Lisbonne.

Le **MAMC+ / Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Etienne** lui consacrera une exposition personnelle en 2025, accompagnée de la publication d'un livre coédité par le MAMC+, THE PILL et JBE Books.

Gernot Wieland est né en 1968 à Horn, en Autriche. Il vit à Berlin.

Gernot Wieland's work, whether in the form of films, drawings, photographs, installations or lecture-performances, approaches a number of universal questions - language, education, alterity, domination, control, social, political and psychic contexts - blending psychoanalysis with the artist's own childhood memories in narratives told in the first person. Gernot Wieland has built up the foundations of a unique and deeply emotional universe, criss-crossed by the reminiscences of memories that we can't quite decide whether they are the true tales or invented by a narrator speaking in the first person, without it being ever established with certainty whether this is the artist himself or a fictitious alter ego. The tapestry of his world is woven with a poetry uttered by the haunting voice of a Kafkaesque character, unfolding childhood stories and absurd narratives before our very eyes with the help of play-dough characters, crayon-colored scenery, extravagant diagrams, falsely naïve sketches and passages filmed in Super-eight. Gentleness and compunction mingle, revealing here and there the afflicted scoriae of rampant inhumanity, oozing from oppressive institutional machines, deviant educational carcans, gingerly unfolding neuroses like fragile origami.

His films and all the visual material that emerges from them - drawings, photograms and photographs - radiate a poignant clarity, throbbing with a sickly beauty where incongruity and embracing feelings pulsate in unison. If Freudian psychoanalysis and the figure of Kafka inhabit, like wandering ghosts, this universe where Gernot Wieland's Austrian origins percolate, he has succeeded in inventing an extraordinary narrative and filmic form where the therapist, trapped in his own memories and associations, is no longer able to listen to his patient, where the authoritarian figures of Kafkaesque systems have dissolved like ink in milk, to quote the title of one of his films (*Ink in Milk* - 2018). The elusive intonation of his films draws the viewer into the inextricable meanderings of phantasmagorical stories, held together by a lucidity that seems to be carried by a stranger to the world observing - with candor and delicacy - its cracks, dislocations and vulnerability.

His films have won numerous awards:

Aus-Blicke at the Blicke, Filmfestival, Bochum, Germany; the main prize in the German competition at the 69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, Germany, all in 2023; in 2022, the German Short Film Prize in the category of experimental shorts lasting up to 30 minutes and the Best Film Award at the Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux in Paris, France and an honorable mention at the Cannes Shorts Film Festival, Cannes, France ; in 2021, Special Mention at ARKIPEL - Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival, Indonesia; in 2020, Best

Film Award, VIII Kinodot Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia. Petersburg, Russia; in 2019, the EMAF Media Art Award from German film critics at the EMAF - European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Germany and a special mention at the 36th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, Germany; in 2017, he won the 20th MOSTYN Open, Llandudno, Wales.

His film, *The Perfect Square*, was selected for the 74th Berlinale - Berlin International Film Festival - Forum Expanded, Berlin, and at First Look 2024, Museum of the Moving Image, New York.

His work has been exhibited at Argos Centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels; Kindl - Centre of Contemporary Arts, Berlin; Künstlerhaus Bremen; Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles; Kunstmuseum Bonn; Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen; Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg; 3rd International Biennial of Contemporary Art of South America, Buenos Aires; Latvian Center for Contemporary Art, Riga; Berlinische Galerie, Berlin; Steirischer Herbst Festival/Kunsthaus Graz, Graz and Hong-Gah Museum, Taipei; Quartz Studio, Turin; Centre d'art Pasquart, Biel; Musée du château des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard; Museo Berardo, Lisbon.

The **MAMC+ / Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Etienne (France)** will devote a solo exhibition to his work in 2025, accompanied by the publication of a book co-edited by THE PILL and published by JBE Books. Gernot Wieland was born in Horn, Austria, in 1968. He now lives in Berlin.

GERNOT WIELAND

b. 1968, Horn.

Lives and works in Berlin.

Education

1997 University of Fine Arts, Berlin, DE

1996 Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, AT

Solo Exhibitions

2025 (Upcoming) MAMC+ / Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Saint-Etienne, FR

2024 *You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts*, Künstler:innenhaus Bremen, DE

2023 *Square, Circle, Square*, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, BE

Halb Nackt, Belmacz, London, UK

2022 *Turtleneck Phantasies*, Kindl – Centre for Contemporary Art – M 1 VideoSpace, Berlin, DE

2021 *...like ink in milk*, Quartz Studio, Turin, IT
Virtual Video Space – Berlinische Galerie, Museum of Modern Art, Berlin, DE

2020 Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, AT
Diebstahl und Gesänge, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, CH
12x12, IBB Video Space at Berlinische Galerie, Museum of Modern Art, Berlin, DE
Videoart at Midnight, Berlin, DE

2019 *media annex(e)*, Argos, Brussels, BE
Vdrome, London, UK
Belmacz, London, UK

2016 *„Hello, my name is...“ ... and ... “Yes, I’m fine.”*, Maumaus/Lumiar Cité, Lisbon, PT

Group Exhibitions

2023 Nexus of Absentias, Rapid Eye Movement, Bangkok, TH
Nouveaux Phonogrammes, Castello di Rivoli, Torino, IT
Héros-Limite, La Générale, Paris, FR
Glued and Screwed organized by wysiwyg, Filmhuis Den Haag, NL
Argos TV47, ARGOS, Brussels, BE

2022 The Palliative Turn, Künstlerhaus Bremen, Bremen, DE
Everyone who doesn't want to come is invited, AllArtNow, Stockholm, SE
Ecrani i artit, ART HOUSE, Shkodra, AL
Ecopoetics of Generic World, Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles, USA

2021 Transference, BIENALSUR, 3rd Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de America del Sur, Buenos Aires, AR
Videonale.scope, NRW – Filmforum, Cologne, DE
Privat – öffentlich, Kallmann-Museum, Ismaningen, DE

2020 Zoo Cosmos, Casa Conti /Ange Leccia Art Center, Oletta, FR
ANIMA – Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition, Hong-Gah Museum, Taipei, TW
On Heavy Rotation, Callirrhoë, Athens, GR
Argos TV19, ARGOS, Brussels, BE
MEMORY, Kunstmuseum Olten, CH
Risentimento / Ressentiment, Merano Arte, Merano, IT

2019 Traumphase 9, Hilbert Raum, Berlin, DE
Medie Annex(e), ARGOS, Brussels, BE
Ten Slotte 4, Het Bos, Antwerp, BE
Pelle d'oca, Villa Vertua Masolo, Nova Milanese, IT
Bruegeling, Herberg Rustique, Brussels, BE
B, Belmacz, London, UK
Symposium on Humour and Absurdity, Nida Art Colony, LIT
36th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, DE
EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DE

IFFR – International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL
2018 Zeitspuren, The Power of Now, Centre d'art Pasquart, Biel/Bienne, CH
Shame, Künstlerhaus Bremen, DE
Monitoring – Exhibition for Time Based Media Art, Kasseler Kunstverein, Kassel, DE
The Ashtray Show West, Belmacz, London, UK
res-o-nant, Contribution to a Sound Installation, Jewish Museum Berlin, DE
Ideal-Types, HE.RO, Amsterdam, ND

	Plot, New York, USA		
	OGR, Torino, IT		
2017	Survival Kit 9, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, Riga, LT		
	The Museum of Modern Comedy in Art – A Proposal, Projects Art Centre, Dublin, IR		
	MOSTYN Open 20, Llandudno, Wales		
	9th Norwegian Sculpture Biennial, Vigeland Museum, Oslo, NO		
	Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, DE		
	con_text, Lettrétage, Berlin, DE		
2016	Body Luggage – Migration of Gestures, Kunsthau Graz, Graz, AT		
	Histoires de l’Île des Bienheureux, Musée du chateau des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard, FR		
	Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, DE		
	Random Walks, Konsthall 44 Møn, Askeby, DK		
	Puppet Slam – Objects Do Things, CCA – Center for Contemporary Art, Warsaw, PO		
	TED Talk for TEDxGhent, Ghent, BE		
2015	Midsummer Night Scream, De Appel arts centre, Amsterdam, NL		
	No Bad Days, Konstmuseum Kalmar, Kalmar, SE		
	Where the place begins, Neue Berliner Räume at Kunsthau Dahlem, Berlin, DE		
	The reluctant narrator, Museo Berardo, Lisbon, PT		
2014	Figures of Conjunction, Kunstverein Nürnberg, Nürnberg, DE		
	A Lecture on a Lecture, Centre PasqArt, Biel Bienne, CH		
2013	Pecha Kucha: The Bet, Kunst-Werke – Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, DE		
	Anyone for Cricket?, Kunstverein Horn, Horn, AT		
	71 Werke, 71 Arbeiten, Kunstmuseum des Kanton Thurgaus, Warth, CH		
	The legend of the shelves, Autocenter, Berlin, DE		
	,...dreamed...’, Ve.Sch, Verein für Raum und		
	Form in der bildenden Kunst, Wien, AU		
2012	Nach Bonn – Eine Montage, Kunstverein Bonn, DE		
	An exhibition of a Study on Knowledge, Forum Stadtpark, Graz, AU		
	Boredom, Essays and Observations, Berlin, DE		
	Jahresgaben, Kunstverein Bonn, Bonn, DE		
	Montag ist erst übermorgen, xhibit, Wien, AU		
	HOTAVANTGARDEHOT, Oslo10, Basel, CH		
	Common history and its Private Stories, Sofia City Art Gallery, Sofia, BG		
2011	Video_Dumbo, an exhibition of contemporary video art, New York, USA		
	Wilhelm Reich/Ayn Rand, Essays and Observations, Berlin, DE		
	Il pensiero autobiografico, Kaleidoscope Space, Milano, IT		
	Notre vallée, Musée du chateau des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard, FR		
2010	Time is what keeps the light from reaching us, Bluecoat Gallery, The Liverpool Biennial (with David Jacques and Carla Åhlander), Liverpool, UK		
	Éclats, CEAAC – Centre européen d’actions artistiques contemporaines, Strasbourg, FR		
	Derridas Katze ... que donc je suis (à suivre), Kunstraum Kreuzberg, Berlin, DE		
	All the rest is literature, House of Contamination, Artissima, Torino, IT		
	Gradual Change!, Nordin Gallery, Stockholm, SE		
	Love&Space, Salon Populaire, Berlin, DE		
2009	EASTinternational at Transmission Gallery, Glasgow; Baltic, Newcastle; Contemporary Art Norwich, Norwich, UK		
	Collaboration, Autocenter, Berlin, DE		
	ABC_ DEF, Art Berlin Contemporary, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, DE		
	Zeigen, an audio tour through Berlin, Temporäre Kunsthalle, Berlin, DE		

Film Festivals

2025 13th Berlin Biennale, Berlin, DE
 2024 *The Perfect Square*, Villa Medici Film festival, Rome, IT
 2023 74th Berlinale – Berlin International Film Festival, Berlin, DE
 Hidden in plain sight, Jogja Fotografis Festival by wysiwyg, Yogyakarta, ID
 Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux, Paris, FR
 69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, DE
 Trembling Time, EMAF – 36th European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DE
 Go Short – 15th International Short Film Festival, Nijmegen, NL
 Diagonale '23, Festival of Austrian Film, Graz, AT
 36th Stuttgarter Filmwinter – Festival for Expanded Media, Stuttgart, DE
 2022 Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, FR
 Riddles, V-F-X festival of experimental audiovisual practices, SCCA, Center for Contemporary Arts, Ljubljana, SL
 Echoes from the Near Future, 38th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, DE
 The Thing is, EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DE
 2021 Fluid States. Solid Matter, Videonale 18, Festival for Video und Time-Based Art, Kunstmuseum Bonn, DE
 ARKIPEL, Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival, Jakarta, ID
 2020 The Law is a White Dog, TULCA Festival of Visual Arts 2020, Galway, IR
 11th Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival, Athens, GR
 Wait and See, IFFR – International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL
 VIII Kinodot, Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, RU
 15th IndieLisboa – International Independent Film Festival, Lisbon, PT

Unter uns, Bildproduktion im Mansfelder Land, Werkleitz Festival, Hettstedt, Halle, DE
 2019 Grand Hotel Abyss, steirischer herbst Festival, Graz, AT
 Gimli Film Festival, Gimli, CA
 36th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, DE
 EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DE
 IFFR – International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL
 2017 33rd International Short Film Festival, Hamburg, DE
 2016 Dobra, Festival de Cinema Experimental, Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, BR
 2015 Liberty Taken, A festival of arts in the city of Bombay, Bombay, IN
 2013 Videonale.14 – Festival for Contemporary Video Art, Kunstmuseum Bonn, DE
 2011 Wonders of progress, TIFF – Toronto International Film Festival, Toronto, CA
 Hard for the money, EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DE
 2010 Kasseler Dokumentar- und Filmfestival, Kassel, DE
 A few notes on life, Impakt Festival, Utrecht, NL

Awards & Residencies

2022 German Short Film Award in the category experimental short film up to 30 minutes
 Best Film Award at Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France
 2021 Artist in Residence, Paliano, Italy, by Kultur Niederösterreich
 Artist in Residence, International Saari Residence, Kone Foundation, Hietamäki, FL
 Special Mention, ARKIPEL – Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival
 Artistic Research Grant from Berlin City Administration for Culture
 2020 Best Film Award, VIII Kinodot Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia
 Artistic Research Grant from Berlin City Administration for Culture

- 2019 EMAF Media Art Award of the German
Film Critics at EMAF – European Media Art
Festival, Osnabrück
Special Mention, 36th Short Film Festival,
Hamburg, Germany
Artist in Residence, Institute for Urban Research,
Malmö University, Sweden
- 2018 Artist in Residence, Crip747, Turin, Italy
Artist in Residence, Superdeals, Brussels,
Belgium
- 2017 Winner of the 20th edition of the MOSTYN
Open
Short list for German Short Film Award
Artistic Research Grant from Berlin City
Administration for Culture
- 2016 Lecture on Writing Art in Digital Space at
Society for Artistic Research conference, Den
Haag, Netherlands
- 2013 State scholarship for Video and Media, BKA,
Arts Division of the Federal Chancellery of
Austria
Artist in Residence, ECAV en collaboration avec
la Fondation Château Mercier, Sierre, Sierra
Leone
- 2009 Artist in Residence, Rome, Italy, BKA, Arts
Division of the Federal Chancellery of Austria

Filmography

Family Constellation with a Fox, 2025

You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts, 2024

The Perfect Square, 2024

Turtleneck Phantasies, 2022

Bird in Italian is Uccello, 2021

Ink in Milk, 2018

Thievery and Songs, 2016

«Hello, my name is...»...and...»Yes, I'm fine.», 2016

Portrait of Karl Marx as a young god, 2011

The Perfect Square

Screenings

74th Berlinale - Berlin International Film Festival - Forum Expanded, Berlin, Germany

First Look 2024, Museum of the Moving Image, New York, USA

Turtleneck Phantasies

Awards

Main award of the German Competition at 69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, Germany

Aus-Blicke Award at Blicke, Filmfestival, Bochum, Germany

Main Award at 25th Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux, Paris, France

Screenings

2023 17th KFFK/Kurzfilmfestival Köln, Cologne, Germany
Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, France, Germany
Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, Germany
Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France
Hidden in plain sight, Jogja Fotografis Festival by wysiwyg, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux, Paris
69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, Germany
Nexus of Absentias, Rapid Eye Movement, Bangkok, Thailand
Trembling Time, EMAF – 36th European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Germany

2022 Kindl – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (solo show)

Bird in Italian is Uccello

Awards

Deutscher Kurzfilmpreis (Experimentalfilm bis 30 min), 2022

Best Film Award at Festival des Cinémas Différents de Paris, 2022

Screenings

2023 2nd Uppsala Short film Festival, Uppsala, Sweden
Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium (Solo Show)
Go Short – 15th International Short Film Festival, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Héros-Limite, La Générale, Paris, France
Diagonale '23, Festival of Austrian Film, Graz, Austria
Glued and Screwed organized by wysiwyg, Filmhuis Den Haag, The Netherlands
36th Stuttgarter Filmwinter – Festival for Expanded Media, Stuttgart, Germany
29. Internationale Kurzfilmwoche Regensburg, Regensburg, Germany
Argos TV47, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium
KURZ.FILM.TOUR. – Der Deutsche Kurzfilmpreis at Filmfestival Max Ophüls, Saarbrücken, Germany

2022 Festival des Cinémas Différents de Paris, France
Riddles, V-F-X festival of experimental audiovisual practices, SCCA, Center for Contemporary Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Echoes from the Near Future, 38th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, Germany
The Thing is, EMAF – European Media Art Festival No 35, Osnabrück, Germany
BIENALSUR, 3rd Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de America del Sur, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Ink in Milk

Awards

Special Mention, ARKIPEL – Jakarta International Documentary and Experimental Film Festival, 2021

Best Film Award, VIII Kinodot Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2020

EMAF Media Art Award der Deutschen Filmkritik, 2019

Special Mention, 36th International Short Film Festival Hamburg, 2019

Screenings

2023 Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium (Solo Show)

- Ecrani i artit, ART HOUSE, Shkodra, Albania
 Everyone who doesn't want to come is invited, AllArtNow, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2021 ...like ink in milk, Quartz Studio, Turin, Italy, (solo)
 Privat – öffentlich, Kallmann-Museum, Ismaningen, Germany
 Videonale, Festival for Video und Time-Based Art, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany
- 2020 Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, Austria (solo)
 Diebstahl und Gesänge, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Switzerland, 2020
 The Law is a White Dog, TULCA Festival of Visual Arts, Galway, Ireland
 Unter uns – Bildproduktion im Mansfelder Land, Werkleitz Festival, Hettstedt, Halle, Germany
 Wait and See, IFFR - International Film Festival, Rotterdam, Netherlands
 VIII Kinodot Experimental Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia
 Videoart at Midnight, Berlin, Germany
 15th IndieLisboa - International Independent Film Festival, Lisbon, Portugal
 media annex(e), Argos, Brussels, Belgium
- 2019 36th International Short Film Festival Hamburg, Germany
 Gimli Film Festival, Gimli, Canada
 European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Germany
 Belmacz, London, UK (solo)
- 2018 Monitoring – Exhibition for Time-Based Media Art, Kasseler Kunstverein, Kassel, Germany
 Shame, Künstlerhaus Bremen, Germany

Thievery and Songs

Awards

Winner of the 20th edition of the MOSTYN Open

Screenings

- 2022 BIENALSUR, 3rd Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de America del Sur, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2020 Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg, Austria
 Diebstahl und Gesänge, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Switzerland (solo)
 Videoart at Midnight, Berlin, Germany
 Zoo Cosmos, Casa Conti /Ange Leccia Art Center, Oletta, France
 ANIMA - Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition, Hong-Gah Museum, Taipei, Taiwan
- 2019 Vdrome, London, UK
- 2017 Survival Kit 9, LCCA – Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, Riga
 MOSTYN Open 20, Llandudno, Wales
 34. Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, Germany
 33rd International Short Film Festival, Hamburg, Germany

- 2016 Body Luggage - Migration of Gestures, Kunsthaus Graz, festival steirischer herbst, Austria

«Hello, my name is...»...and...»Yes, I'm fine.»

Screenings

- MEMORY, Kunstmuseum Olten, 2020
 Histoires de l'Île des Bienheureux, Musée du chateau des ducs de Wurtemberg, Montbéliard, 2016
 33. Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, 2016
 Maumaus/Lumiar Cité, Lissabon, 2016 (solo)

Portrait of Karl Marx as a young god

Screenings

- 2021 Ecopoetics of Generic World, Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles, USA
 BIENALSUR, 3rd Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de America del Sur, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 2020 Videoart at Midnight, Berlin
- 2018 Ideal-Types, HE.RO, Amsterdam
- 2017 The Museum of Modern Comedy in Art – A Proposal, Projects Art Centre, Dublin
- 2012 The reluctant narrator, Museo Berardo, Lissabon, 2015; Image Movement, Berlin
- 2011 Video_Dumbo, an exhibition of contemporary video art, New York
 Wonders of progress, TIFF – Toronto International Film Festival, Toronto
 Hard for the money, European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück
- 2021 A few notes on life, Impakt Festival, Utrecht
 Gradual Change!, Nordin Gallery, Stockholm
 27. Kasseler Dokumentar- und Filmfestival, Kassel
 ABC_DEF, Art Berlin Contemporary, Akademie der Künste, Berlin

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Family Constellation with a Fox - 2025 - 18:00 min- Super 8 film transferred to 4K video, 4K video, color and b&w, sound

“My new film *Family Constellations with a Fox* (working title) has several starting points: One of them *Defiant Laughter* in the face of violence, ecocide, genocide or disaster. It is a way of reversing brutalization, restoring meaning, opening channels of dignity - even in the face of unequal power relations.”

In his new film, Gernot Wieland explores the urgent—but often unsuccessful—attempt to heal the damage left by Western art history, which has long been shaped by colonialism and male dominance. This legacy is just one example of how deep-rooted power structures keep shaping and reinforcing inequality.

Wieland uses the method of «family constellation» therapy as the chosen method of healing, with ceramic figures representing old European master paintings, family roles - mother, father, ego, as in Freudian psychoanalysis - and a fox. This setup tries to uncover how cultural power works: Western art history itself is built upon loss. Its scaffolding holds only by means of dispossession, colonial plunder, and the exclusion of marginalized groups.

The film’s narration flows like a story—sometimes drifting into imagined memories, then snapping back to harsh historical truths. Wieland draws on his childhood in postwar Austria in the 1970s and ’80s, a time he describes as filled with repression. The film balances humor and seriousness in a way that feels almost childlike—honest and unfiltered. Even when the film feels light, you never forget the heavy themes it’s dealing with—grief, trauma, and the long shadow of violence. It’s all there, pulsing just beneath the surface.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts - 2024- 15:44 min, Super 8 film/HD Video

“Parallel to the lake, I am walking along a path, like a cancer that has been taught to walk forward. The path as a path trodden into the earth I knew only from stories. [...] For me stories have a structure that the human voice does not have. Any attempt to tell a story is to answer the question: how did it come to this?”

Wieland opens up a space for reflection on the connections between personality development, family influences, social restrictions and institutions. What effects do images have on our memory? What role do images play in the formation of the psyche, the social and the political? What are the effects of intergenerational traumas? He uses various visual techniques, from drawing, photography, Super 8 sequences, diagrams and clay animation to potato printing and watercolor, interwoven with the use of voice-over and music on the soundtrack. The techniques appear as approachable and personal as the content. Autobiographical and fictional elements merge to create a poetic space. The personal is combined with the political and slowly develops into an analysis of social norms and repression.

« Parallèlement au lac, je marche sur un sentier, comme un cancer à qui l'on a appris à avancer. Ce chemin, comme un chemin creusé dans la terre, je ne le connaissais que par les histoires. [...] Pour moi, les histoires ont une structure que la voix humaine n'a pas. Toute tentative de raconter une histoire consiste à répondre à la question suivante : comment en est-on arrivé là ?

Wieland ouvre un espace de réflexion sur les liens entre le développement de la personnalité, les influences familiales, les restrictions sociales et les institutions. Quels sont les effets des images sur notre mémoire ? Quel rôle jouent les images dans la formation du psychisme, du social et du politique ? Quels sont les effets des traumatismes intergénérationnels ? Il utilise diverses techniques visuelles, du dessin, de la photographie, des séquences Super 8, des diagrammes et de l'animation d'argile à l'impression de pommes de terre et à l'aquarelle, entrelacées avec l'utilisation de la voix off et de la musique sur la bande sonore. Les techniques semblent aussi accessibles et personnelles que le contenu. Les éléments autobiographiques et fictifs fusionnent pour créer un espace poétique. Le personnel est combiné au politique et se transforme lentement en une analyse des normes sociales et de la répression.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

The Perfect Square - 2024- 08:01 min, 16 mm film/Super 8 film/HD Video
<https://vimeo.com/906674166>

For *The Perfect Square* Wieland worked for twelve years with an animal trainer who taught birds to fly in circles or squares. The film examines how aesthetic norms influence our (Western) view of the world and why these norms lead to failure.

Film premiere at 74th Berlinale - Berlin International Film Festival - Forum Expanded, 2024.

Pour *The Perfect Square*, Wieland a travaillé pendant douze ans avec un dresseur d'animaux qui apprenait aux oiseaux à voler en cercle ou en carré. Le film examine comment les normes esthétiques influencent notre vision (occidentale) du monde et pourquoi ces normes mènent à l'échec.

Première du film à la 74e Berlinale - Festival international du film de Berlin - Forum Expanded, 2024.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

Turtleneck Phantasies - 2023- 17:36 min, Super 8 Film/HD Video
<https://vimeo.com/800337771>

Turtleneck Phantasies tells the story of a German writer who worked as a sailor on cargo ships and later, after a shipwreck, spent over 30 years in psychiatric institutions tattooing his fellow inmates. This results in a complex work that seemingly incidentally, yet excitingly and often tragically sketch the state of a society, representing remembrances of suppressed, unheard, and forgotten voices.

Main Award of the German Competition at 69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, Germany, 2023. Main Award at 25th Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux, Paris, France. *Turtleneck Phantasies* was shown in 2023 at 69th International Short Film Festival, Oberhausen, Germany; Trembling Time, EMAF – 36th European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Germany; 17th KFFK/Shortfilmfestival Köln, Cologne; Germany; Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin; Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, Germany; Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France; Hidden in plain sight, Jogja Fotografis Festival, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; Nexus of Absentias, Rapid Eye Movement, Bangkok, Thailand and in 2022 at Kindl – Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany.

Turtleneck Phantasies raconte l'histoire d'un écrivain allemand qui a travaillé comme marin sur des cargos et qui, après un naufrage, a passé plus de 30 ans dans des institutions psychiatriques à tatouer ses compagnons d'infortune. Il en résulte une œuvre complexe qui esquisse de manière apparemment accessoire, mais passionnante et souvent tragique, l'état d'une société, en représentant des souvenirs de voix étouffées, inaudibles et oubliées.

Prix principal de la compétition allemande au 69e Festival international du court métrage, Oberhausen, Allemagne, 2023 Prix principal du 25e Festival des cinémas différents et expérimentaux, Paris, France. *Turtleneck Phantasies* a été présenté en 2023 au 69e Festival international du court métrage, Oberhausen, Allemagne ; Trembling Time, EMAF - 36e Festival européen des arts médiatiques, Osnabrück, Allemagne ; 17e KFFK/Shortfilmfestival Köln, Cologne ; Allemagne ; Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin ; Kasseler Dokumentar, Film und Videofest, Kassel, Allemagne ; Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France ; Hidden in plain sight, Jogja Fotografis Festival, Yogyakarta, Indonésie ; Nexus of Absentias, Rapid Eye Movement, Bangkok, Thaïlande et en 2022 au Kindl - Centre for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Allemagne.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

Bird in Italian is Uccello - 2021- 14:26 min, HD Video
<https://vimeo.com/800343188>

In 2022 the film received the German Short Film Award, the most important and highly endowed award for short films in Germany, an award for Best Film at Festival des Cinémas Différents de Paris, an Honorable Mention at Cannes Shorts Film Festival, Cannes, France.

Gernot Wieland takes a look at his own childhood and notes that no matter how porous the separating membrane appears, how permeable the glass of the window pane makes the landscape behind it appear, it remains at a distance. No bridge leads from the inside to the outside. The topology of the invisible spaces into which we are born is at once unconscious and rigid. The compulsion to conformity, which is cast off like a shadow and decides on life plans, views and affiliations, is oppressive. *Bird in Italian is Uccello* is a meandering, poetic search for traces of sovereignty in the socio-psychological structures that define societies. "I look at the reflections of myself in the glass of the car window. If my language would exist, I would say: absence - this absence is what speaks to me."

En 2022, le film a reçu le German Short Film Award, le prix le plus important et le mieux doté pour les courts métrages en Allemagne, un prix du meilleur film au Festival des Cinémas Différents de Paris, une mention honorable au Cannes Shorts Film Festival, Cannes, France.

Gernot Wieland regarde sa propre enfance et constate qu'aussi poreuse que paraisse la membrane de séparation, aussi perméable que le verre de la vitre fasse paraître le paysage derrière elle, il reste à distance. Aucun pont ne relie l'intérieur à l'extérieur. La topologie des espaces invisibles dans lesquels nous naissons est à la fois inconsciente et rigide. La contrainte de la conformité, qui est projetée comme une ombre et qui décide des projets de vie, des opinions et des affiliations, est oppressive. *Bird in Italian is Uccello* est une recherche méandreuse et poétique des traces de souveraineté dans les structures socio-psychologiques qui définissent les sociétés. « Je regarde les reflets de moi-même dans la vitre de la voiture. Si mon langage existait, je dirais : l'absence, c'est cette absence qui me parle ».

Screenings / Projections : in 2023 at Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium; 15th International Short Film Festival, Nijmegen, Netherlands; Diagonale '23, Graz, Austria; Glued and Screwed by wysiwyg, Filmhuis Den Haag, Netherlands; 36th Stuttgarter Filmwinter, Germany; 29. Internationale Kurzfilmwoche, Regensburg, Germany; and in 2022 at BIENALSUR, 3rd Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, Argentina; EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, Germany; Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, France; 38th Short Film Festival, Hamburg, Germany.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

Ink in Milk - 2018- 12:30 min, Video
<https://vimeo.com/800938999?share=copy>

A statement of the jury of the EMAF Media Art Award of the German Film Critics:

“Ink in Milk” is an outstanding work. In twelve minutes, Gernot Wieland unfolds a whole life: In his own sketches, metaphor-rich picture sequences, drawings and sculptures, he resurrects the disturbing world of a childhood, tells of the dark in the light, of the illness schizophrenia, which is the creative principle here, splits up experienced realities and reassembles them anew. “Ink in Milk” is a narrative whose dramaturgy is convincing from the first to the last minute - and inspires us to find answers to how to escape the Kafkaesque thornbush, the universal hopelessness. Wieland succeeds in making the hidden ruins of the psyche visible without evaluating their madness.

Ink in Milk was awarded with the EMAF Media Art Award of the German Film Critics (VDFK), 2019, Special Mentions at 36t International Short Film Festival Hamburg, 2019, and won the Main Award at VIII Kinodot Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2020.

Déclaration du jury du prix EMAF Media Art des critiques de cinéma allemands :

« Ink in Milk » est une œuvre exceptionnelle. En douze minutes, Gernot Wieland déroule toute une vie : dans ses propres esquisses, des séquences d’images riches en métaphores, des dessins et des sculptures, il ressuscite le monde troublant d’une enfance, parle de l’obscurité dans la lumière, de la maladie de la schizophrénie, qui est ici le principe créatif, divise les réalités vécues et les réassemble à nouveau. « Ink in Milk » est un récit dont la dramaturgie est convaincante de la première à la dernière minute - et qui nous incite à trouver des réponses pour échapper à l’épine kafkaïenne, au désespoir universel. Wieland réussit à rendre visibles les ruines cachées de la psyché sans en évaluer la folie.

Ink in Milk a reçu le prix EMAF Media Art des critiques de cinéma allemands (VDFK), 2019, des mentions spéciales au 36t International Short Film Festival Hamburg, 2019, et a remporté le prix principal au VIII Kinodot Film Festival, St. Petersburg, Russie, 2020.



THE PILL®

Links to films trailers:

Thievery and Songs - 2016- 22:40 min, Video
<https://vimeo.com/188433822>

“In *Thievery and Songs* Wieland narrates a dream he had about the Town Musicians of Bremen. The film itself comes across as a dream; it brings together fairytale animal characters visiting their psychotherapists with Wieland’s own childhood recollections, transformation into a snail, and the meaning of landscapes. *Thievery and Songs* also delves into the true story of a Jewish-Austrian dancer who escaped Austria for Bombay in 1938. Fables, memory, histories, and reflections on contemporary life collapse into a visual philosophy of being, conveying a tragicomic spirit that mingles irony and absurdity with a gripping, poetic sobriety.” Séamus Kealy, Salzburger Kunstverein

Thievery and Songs was awarded with the MOSTYN Open 20 Award. In a statement the jury said: “Gernot Wieland’s accomplished and complex work stood out for the panel, specifically for the way in which it creates a narrative around the human condition and how it examines the place of the individual in society.”

« Dans *Thievery and Songs*, Wieland raconte un rêve qu’il a fait sur les musiciens de la ville de Brême. Le film lui-même se présente comme un rêve ; il réunit des personnages animaliers de contes de fées qui rendent visite à leurs psychothérapeutes et les souvenirs d’enfance de Wieland, sa transformation en escargot et la signification des paysages. *Thievery and Songs* se penche également sur l’histoire vraie d’une danseuse juive autrichienne qui a fui l’Autriche pour Bombay en 1938. Fables, mémoire, histoires et réflexions sur la vie contemporaine se fondent dans une philosophie visuelle de l’être, véhiculant un esprit tragicomique qui mêle ironie et absurdité avec une sobriété poétique saisissante ». Séamus Kealy, Salzburger Kunstverein

Thievery and Songs a reçu le prix MOSTYN Open 20. Le jury a déclaré dans un communiqué : « Le travail accompli et complexe de Gernot Wieland a retenu l’attention du jury, notamment pour la manière dont il crée un récit autour de la condition humaine et dont il examine la place de l’individu dans la société ».

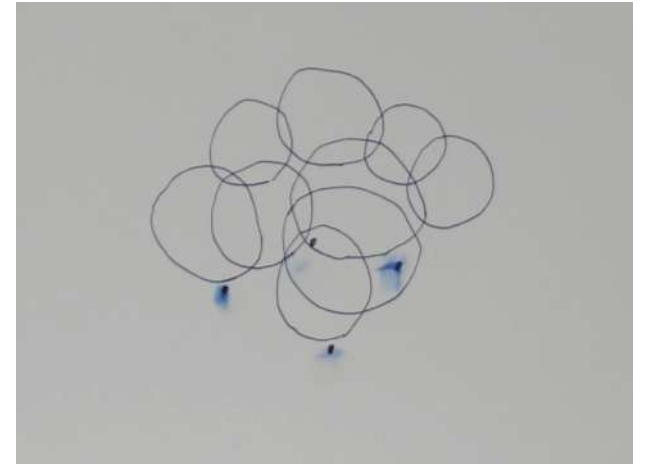
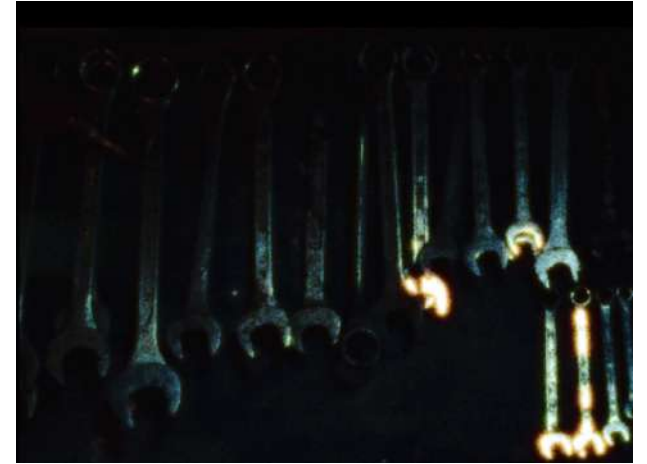
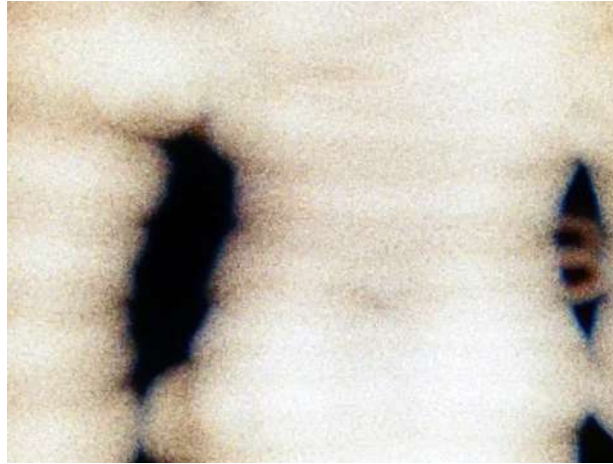


Family Constellation with a Fox - 2025 - 18:00 min- Super 8 film transferred to 4K video, 4K video, color and b&w, sound- Film stills.

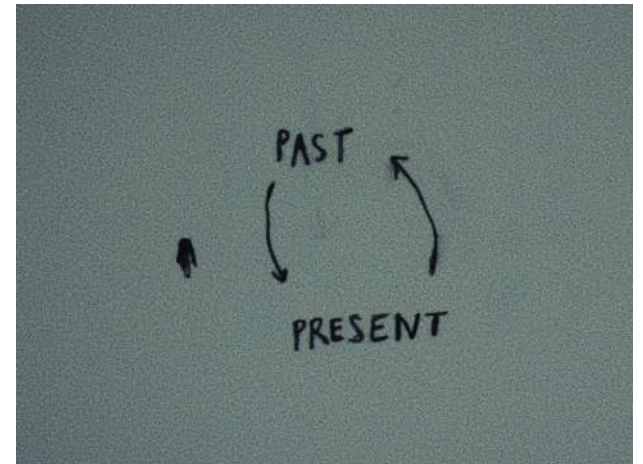
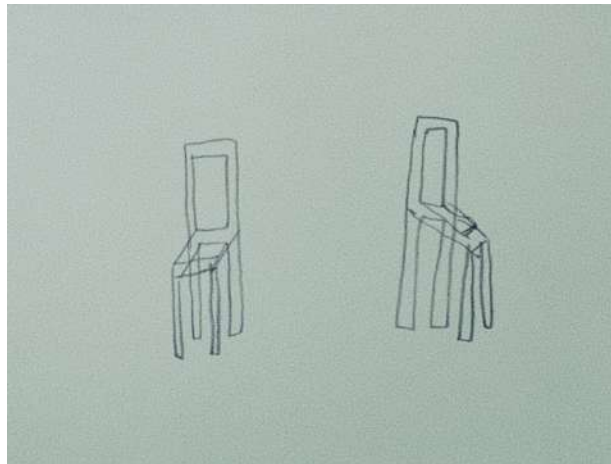
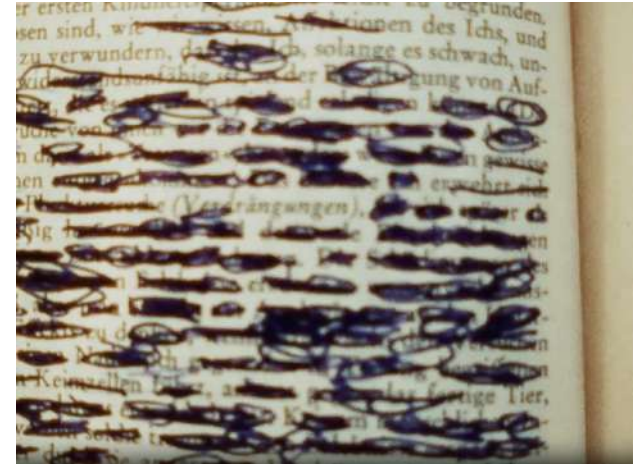
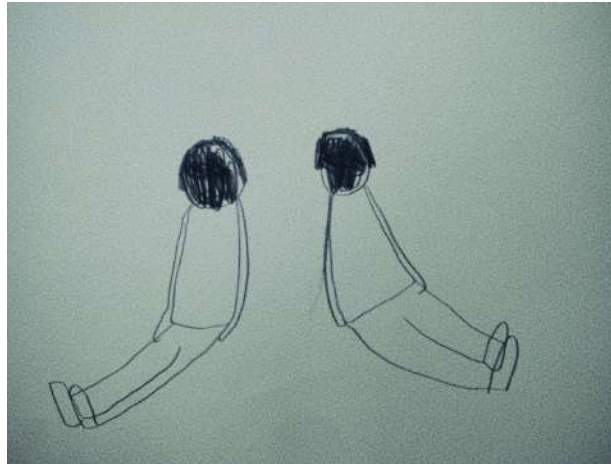




You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts - 15:44 min, Super 8 film/HD Video- Film stills



You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts - 15:44 min, Super 8 film/HD Video- Film stills



You do not leave traces of your presence, just of your acts - 15:44 min, Super 8 film/HD Video- Film stills



Half Naked

Series of 12 text/drawings and a vase consisting of three shattered vases.



Installation View, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium, 2024.

Half Naked

Series of 12 text/drawings and a vase consisting of three shattered vases.



Installation View, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium, 2024.

Half Naked

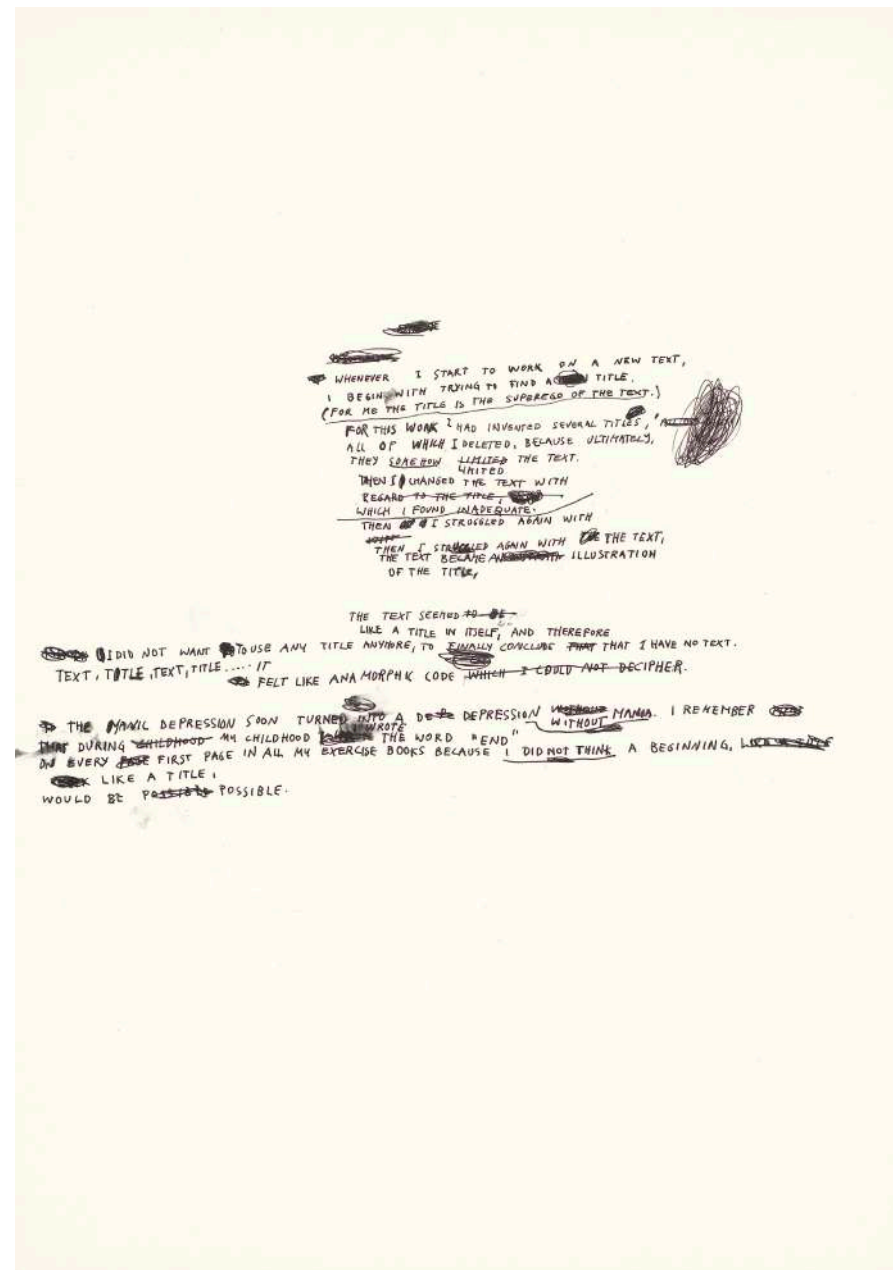
Series of 12 text/drawings and a vase consisting of three shattered vases.



Installation View, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, Belgium, 2024.

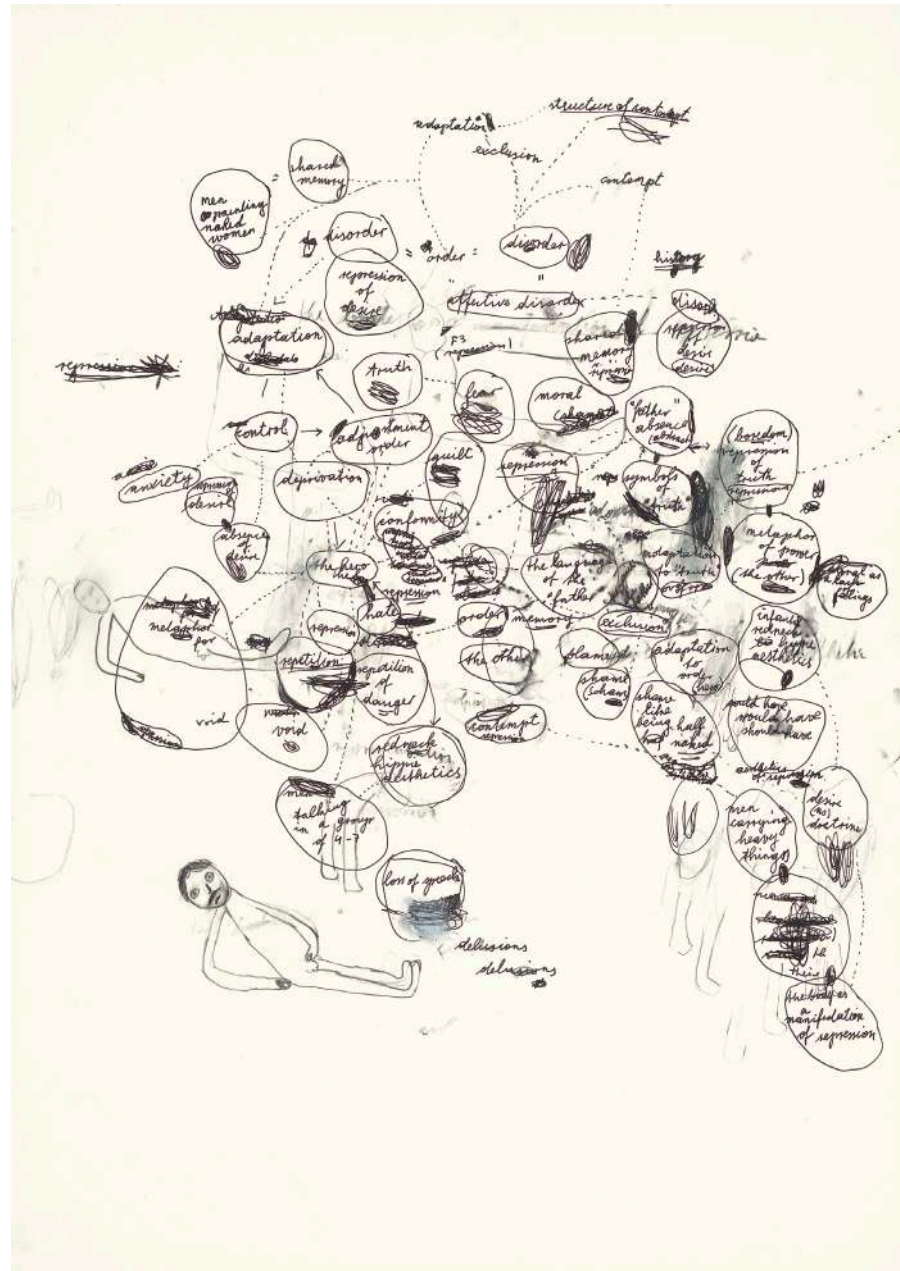
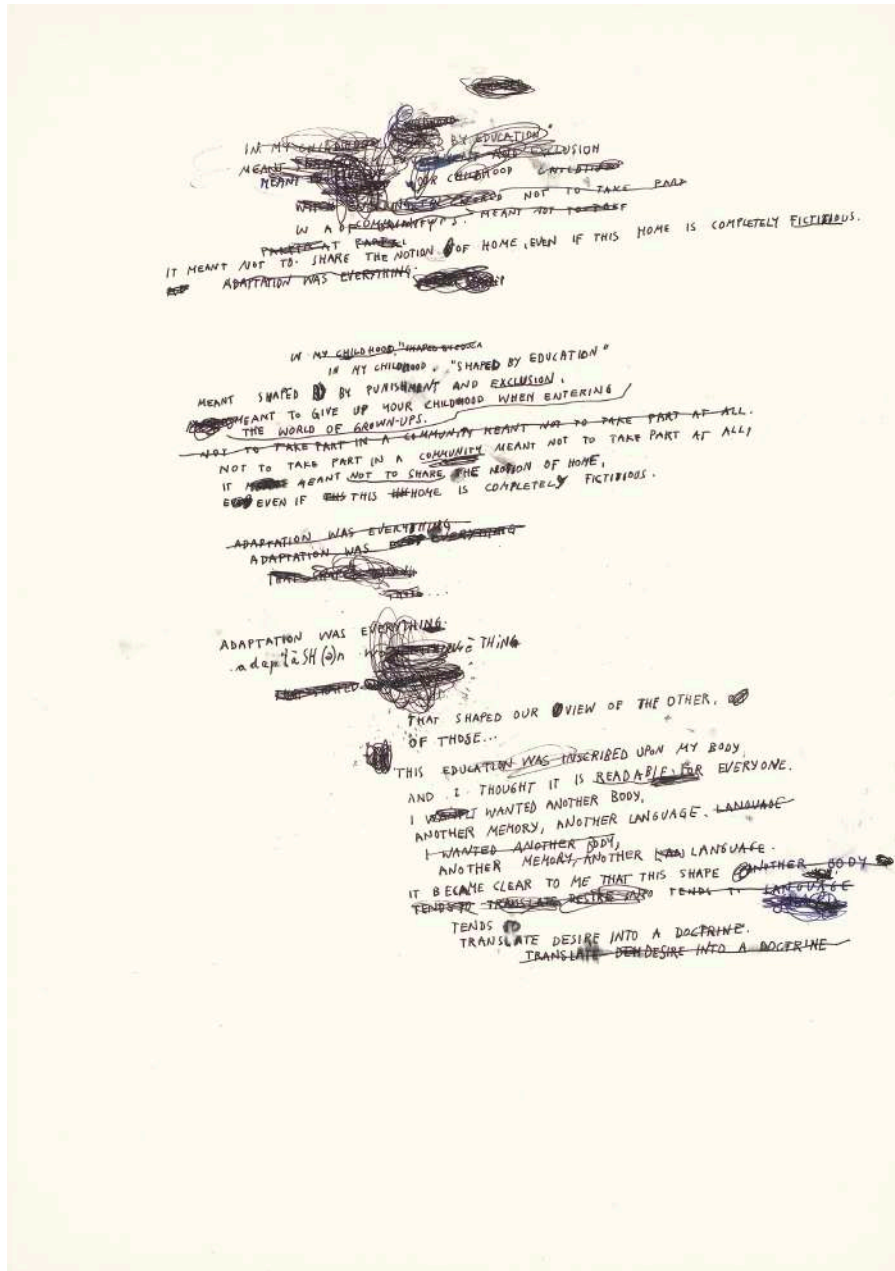
Half Naked

Series of 12 text/drawings and a vase consisting of three shattered vases.



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Series of 12 text/drawings and a vase consisting of three shattered vases.

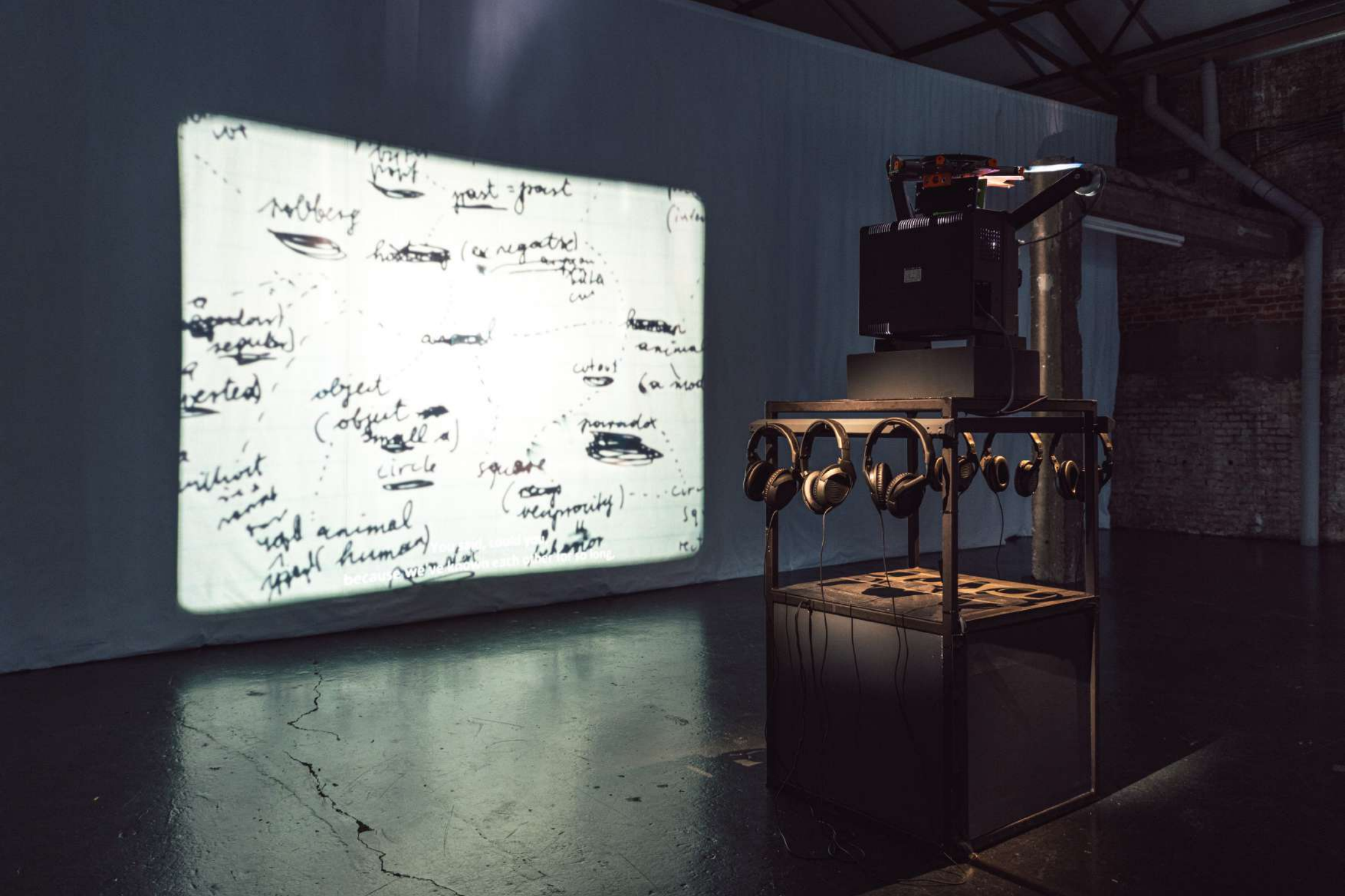




Installation view, Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, BE

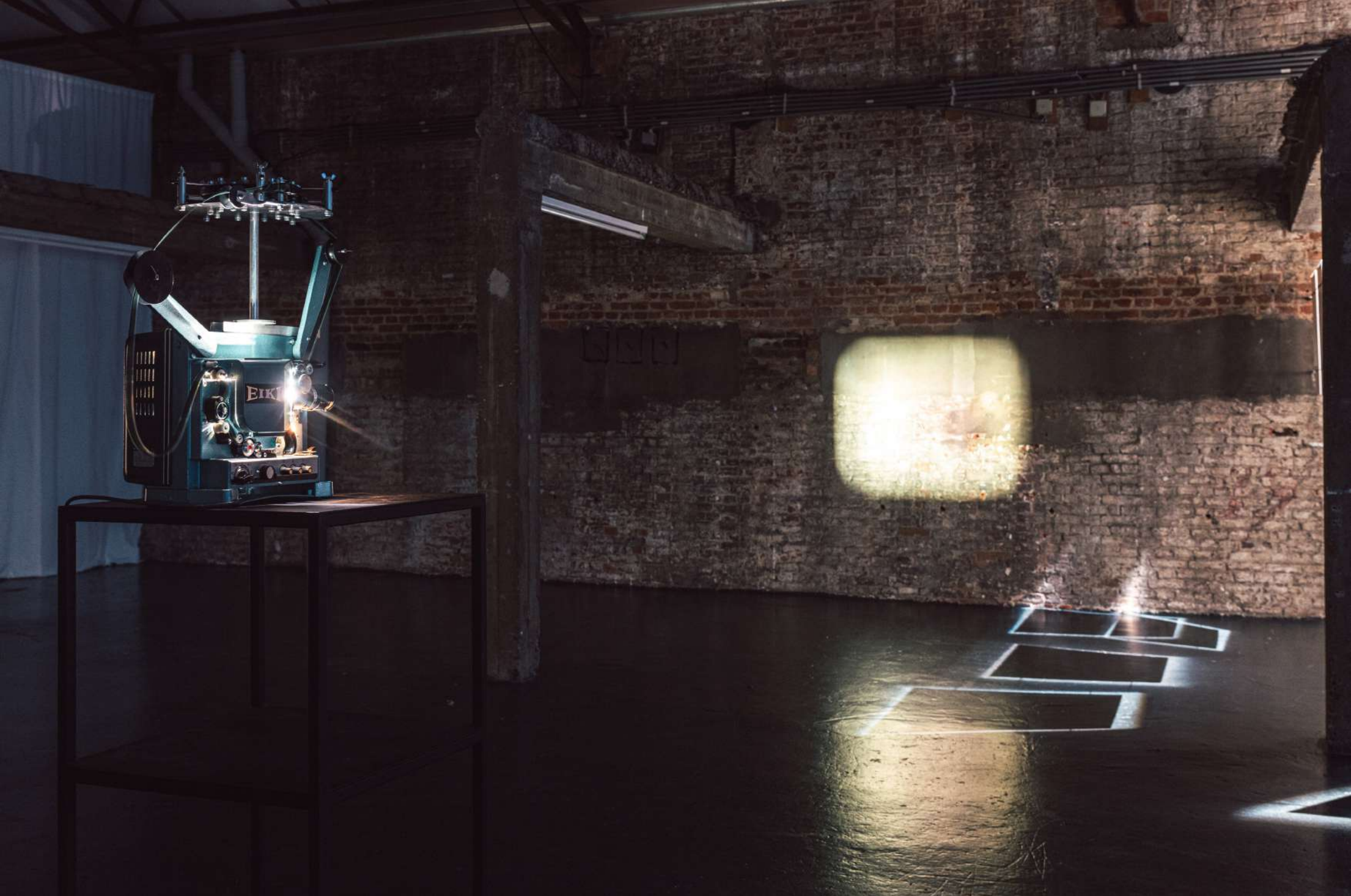


Installation view, Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, BE

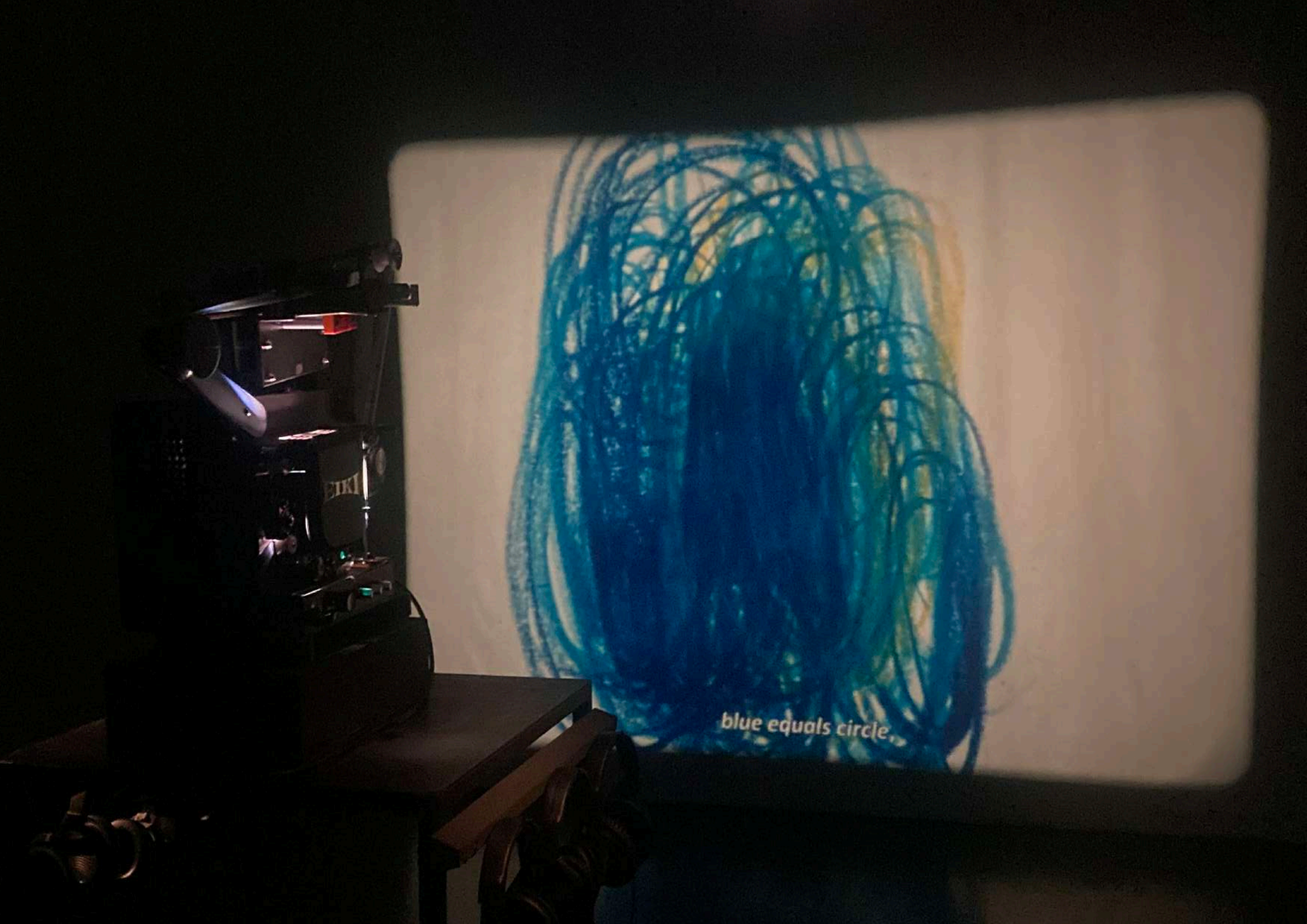


Installation view, Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, BE





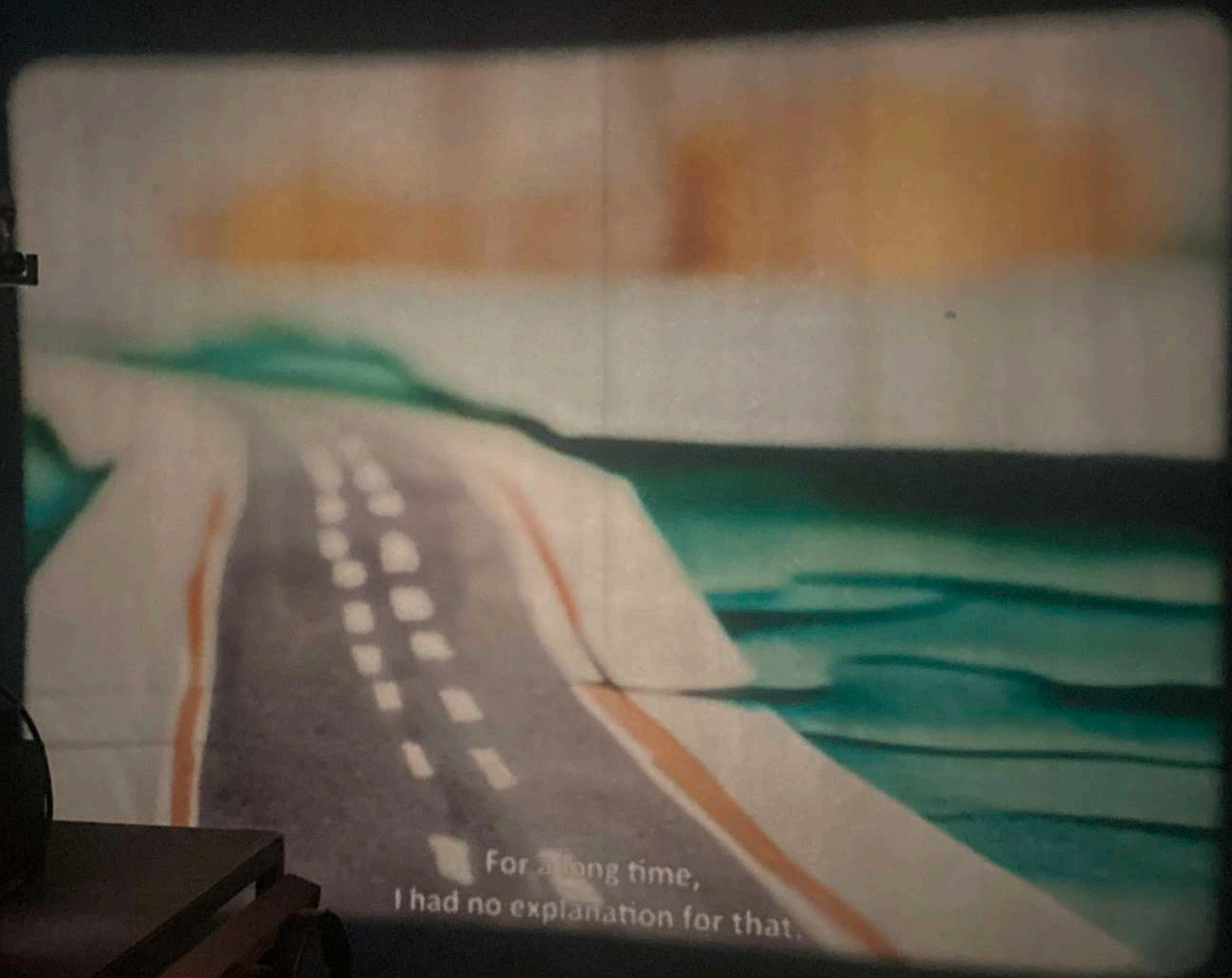
Installation view, Square, Circle, Square, Argos centre for audiovisual arts, Brussels, BE



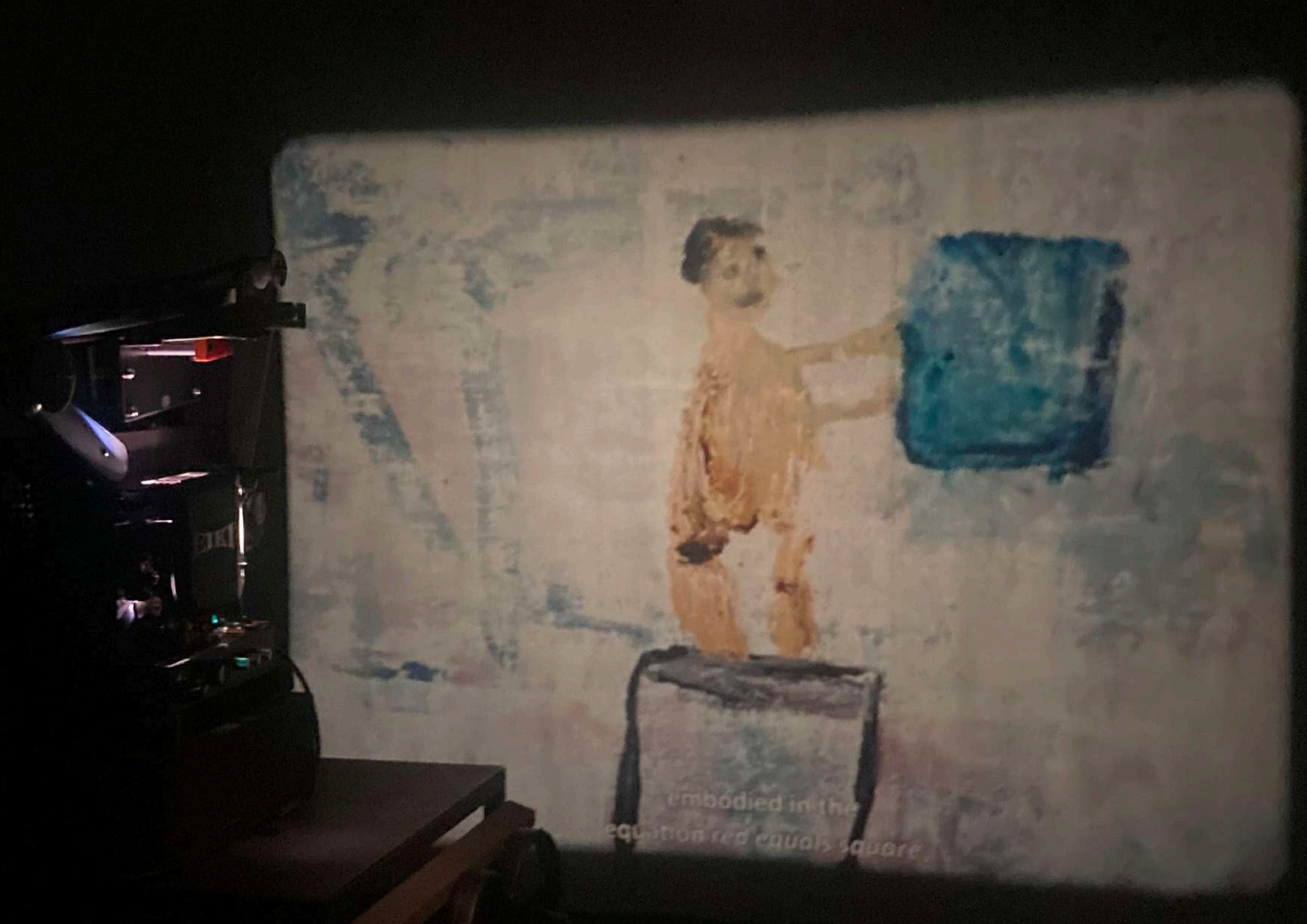
blue equals circle.



less often green
or yellow or orange cities



For a long time,
I had no explanation for that.



embodied in the
equation red equals square

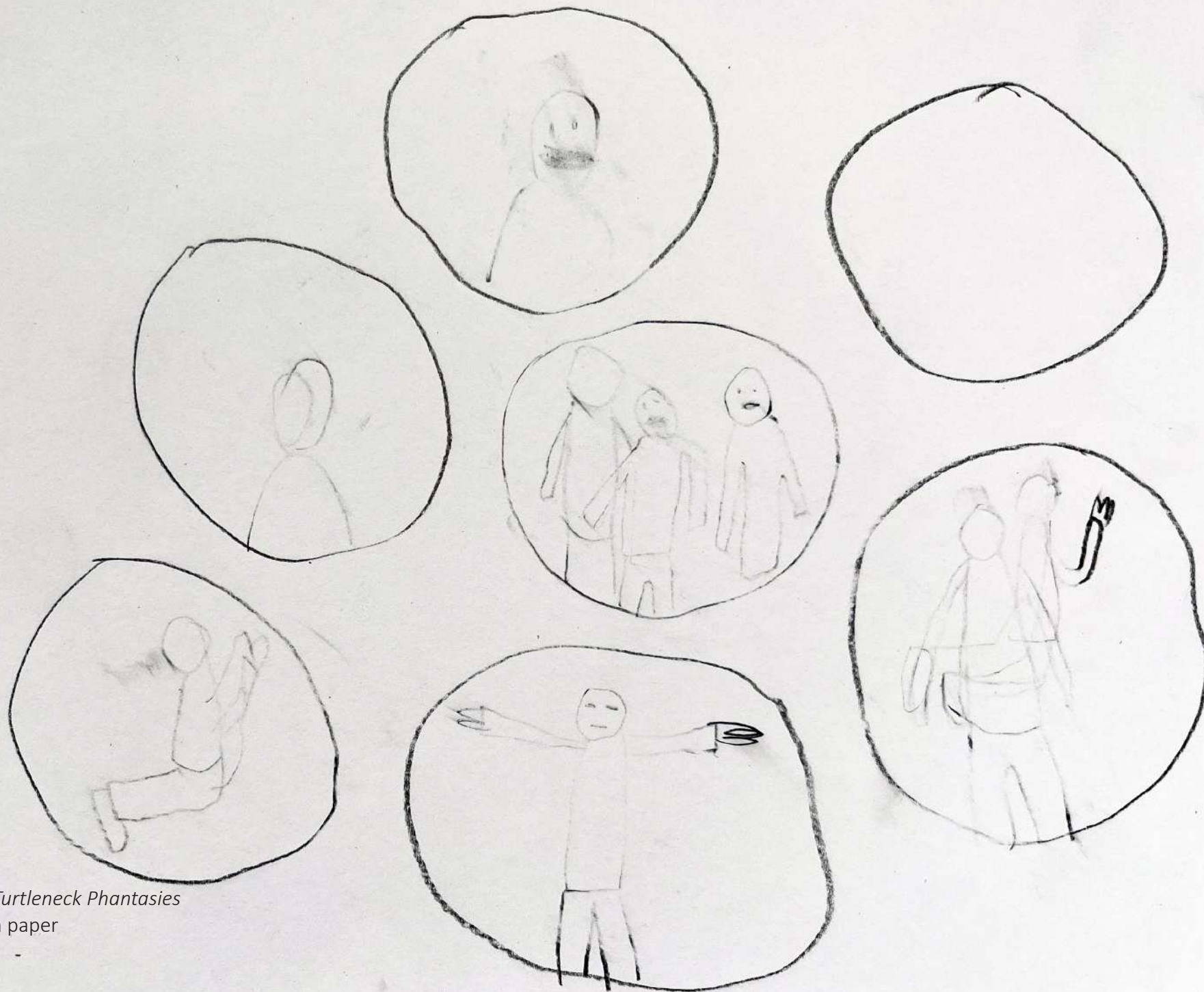








Still/prints from the film *Turtleneck Phantasies*
pencil, coloured pencil on paper
21 x 29,7 cm



Still/prints from the film *Turtleneck Phantasies*
pencil, coloured pencil on paper
21 x 29,7 cm



Still/prints from the film *Turtleneck Phantasies*
pencil, coloured pencil on paper
21 x 29,7 cm

spac

Reiner

Stills/Prints from the film Bird in Italian is Uccello
2016, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP



Stills/Prints from the film Bird in Italian is Uccello
2016, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP



Stills/Prints from the film Bird in Italian is Uccello
2016, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

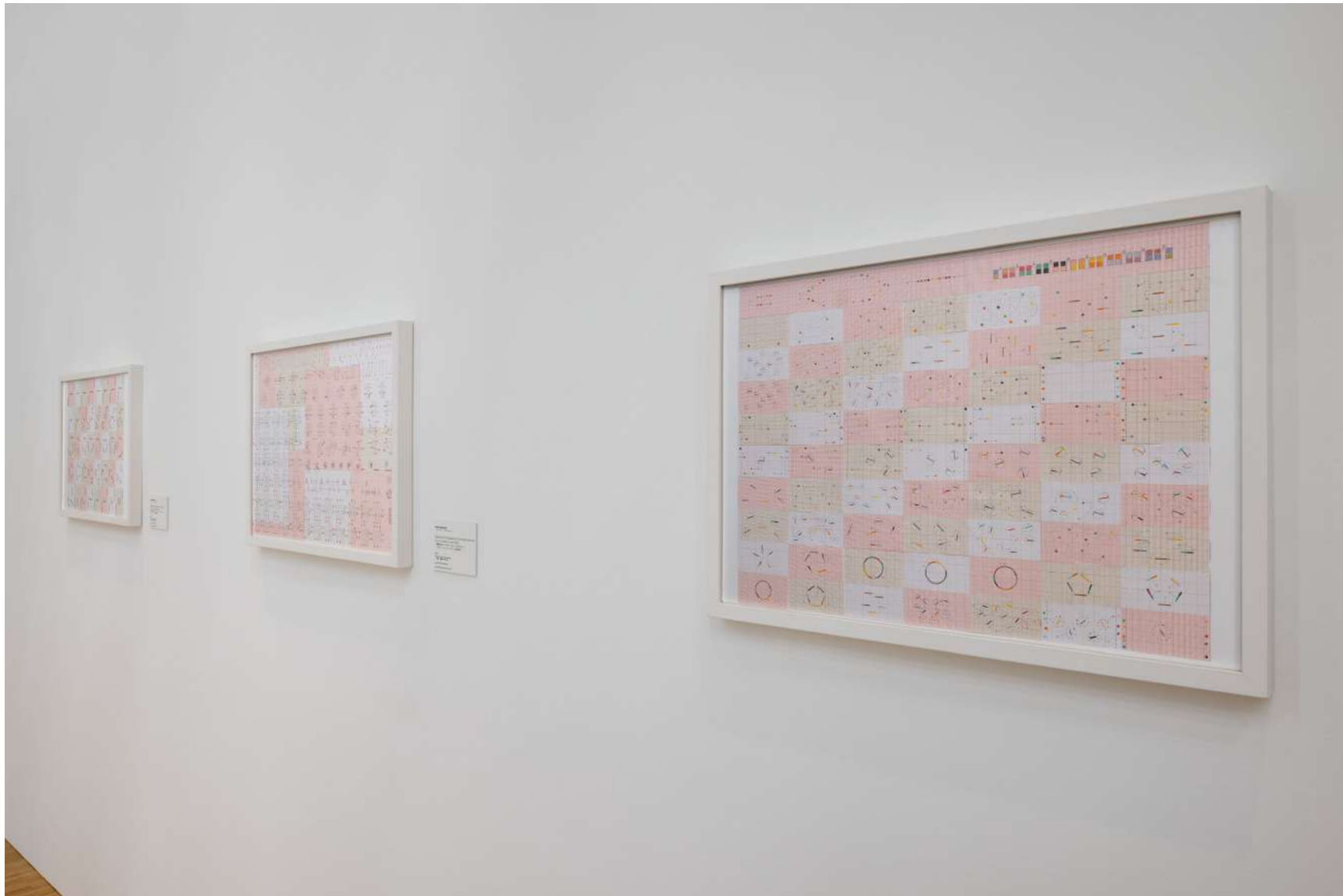


Stills/Prints from the film Bird in Italian is Uccello
2016, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

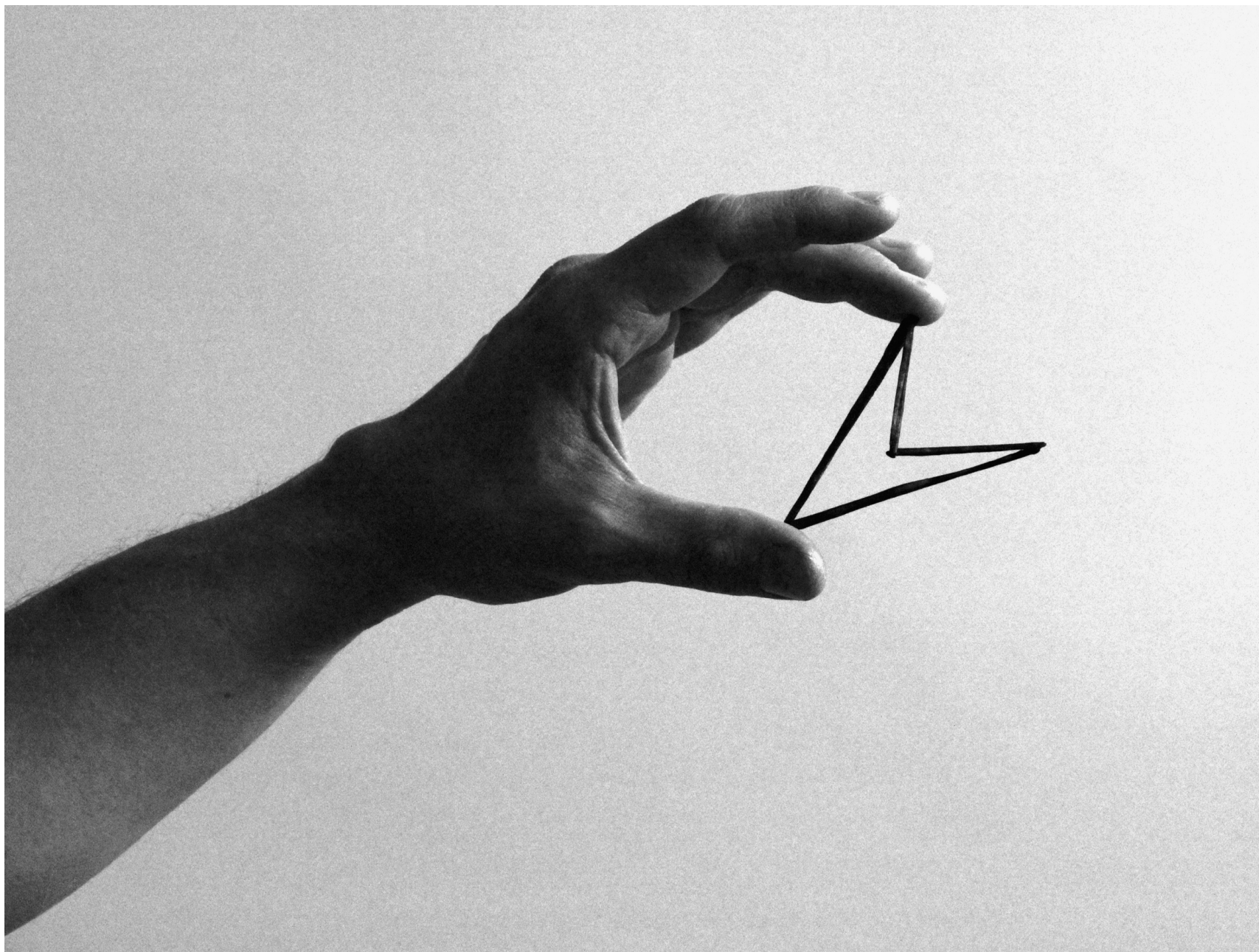


Stills/Prints from the film Bird in Italian is Uccello
2016, pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

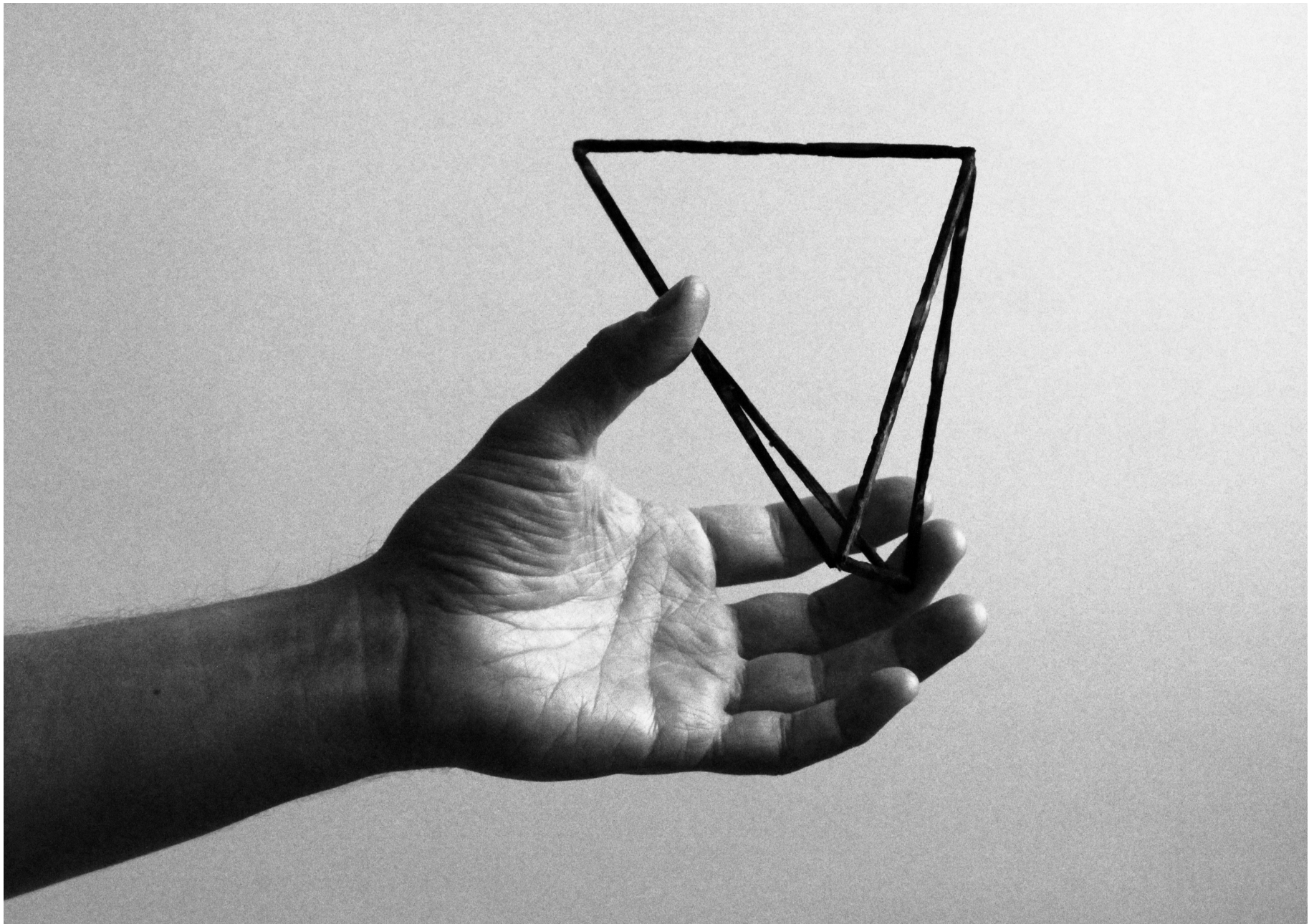




Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Memory, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP



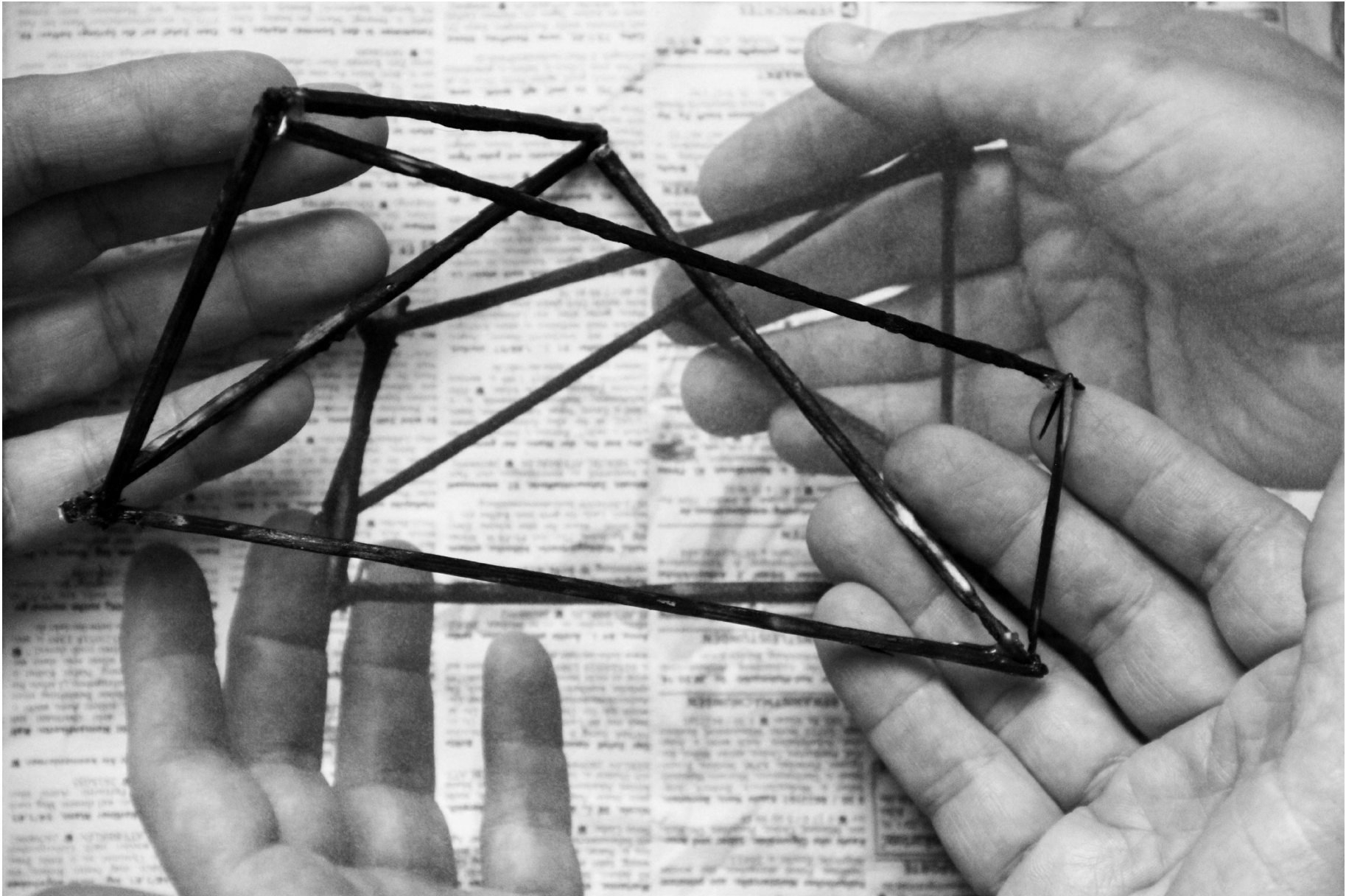
Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Being Around People, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP



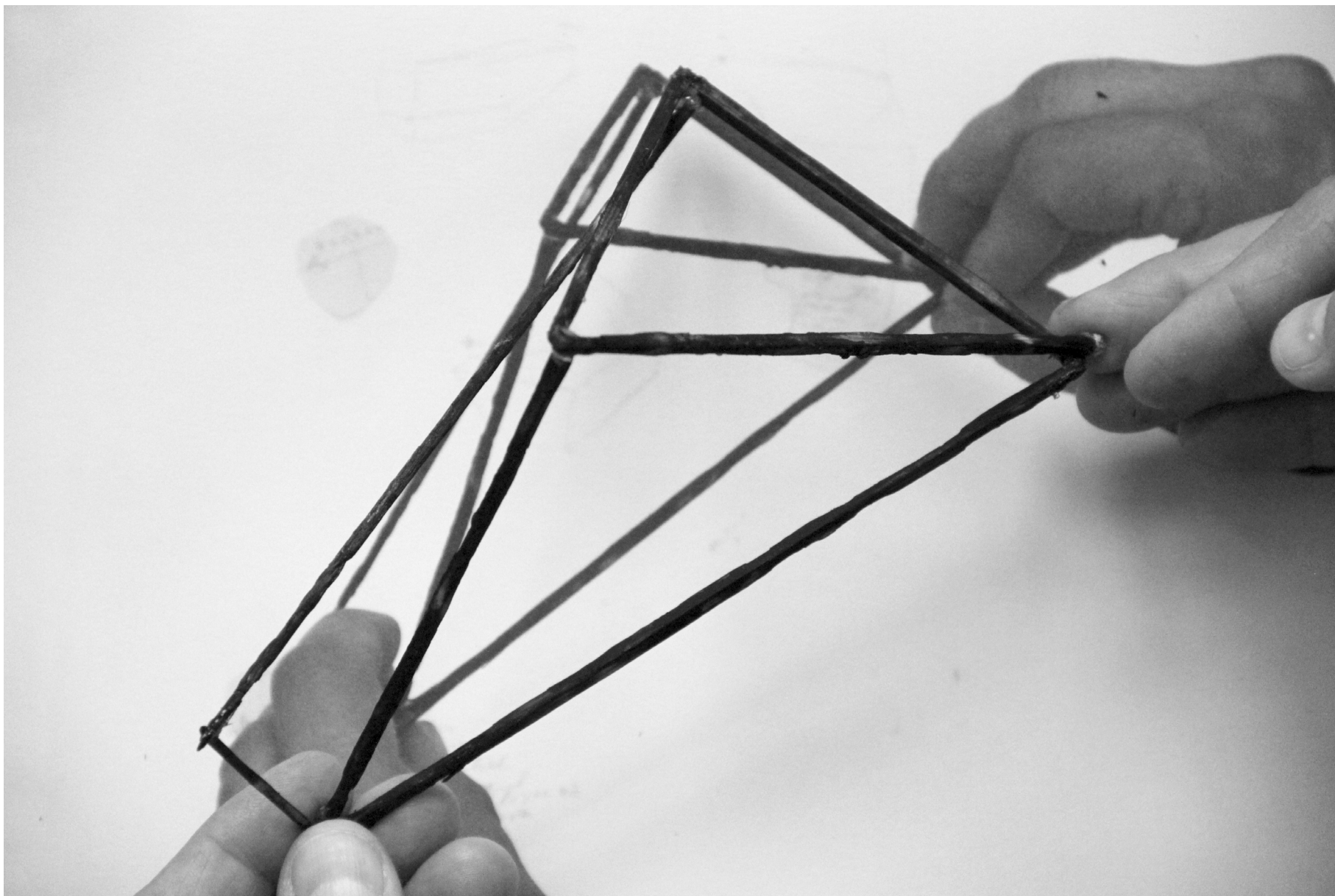
Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Happiness, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP



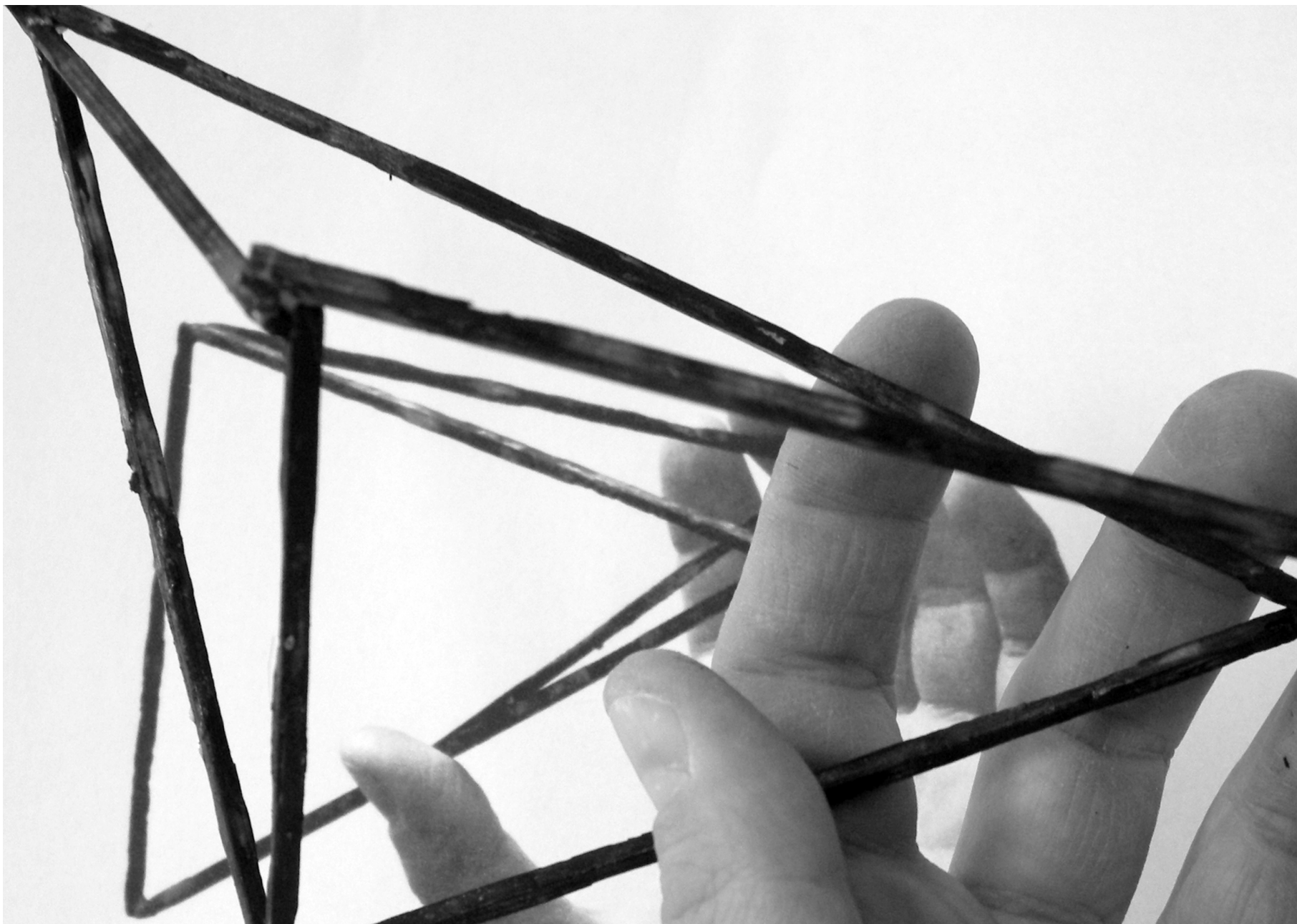
Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of the attempt to overcome the fear of heights, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP



Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Daydreaming, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 x 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP

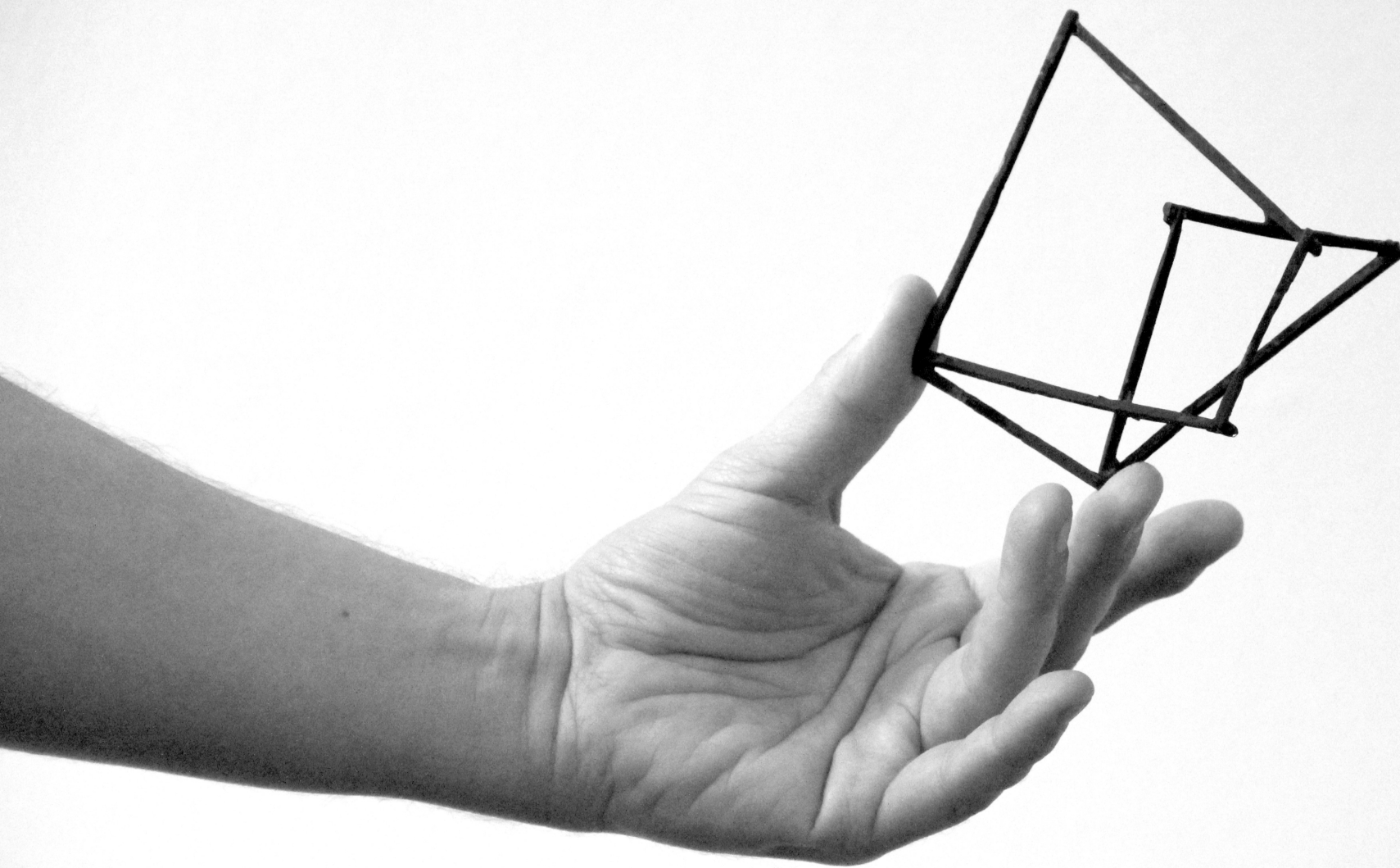


Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Heights, or of Standing Still, and of Fear, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP

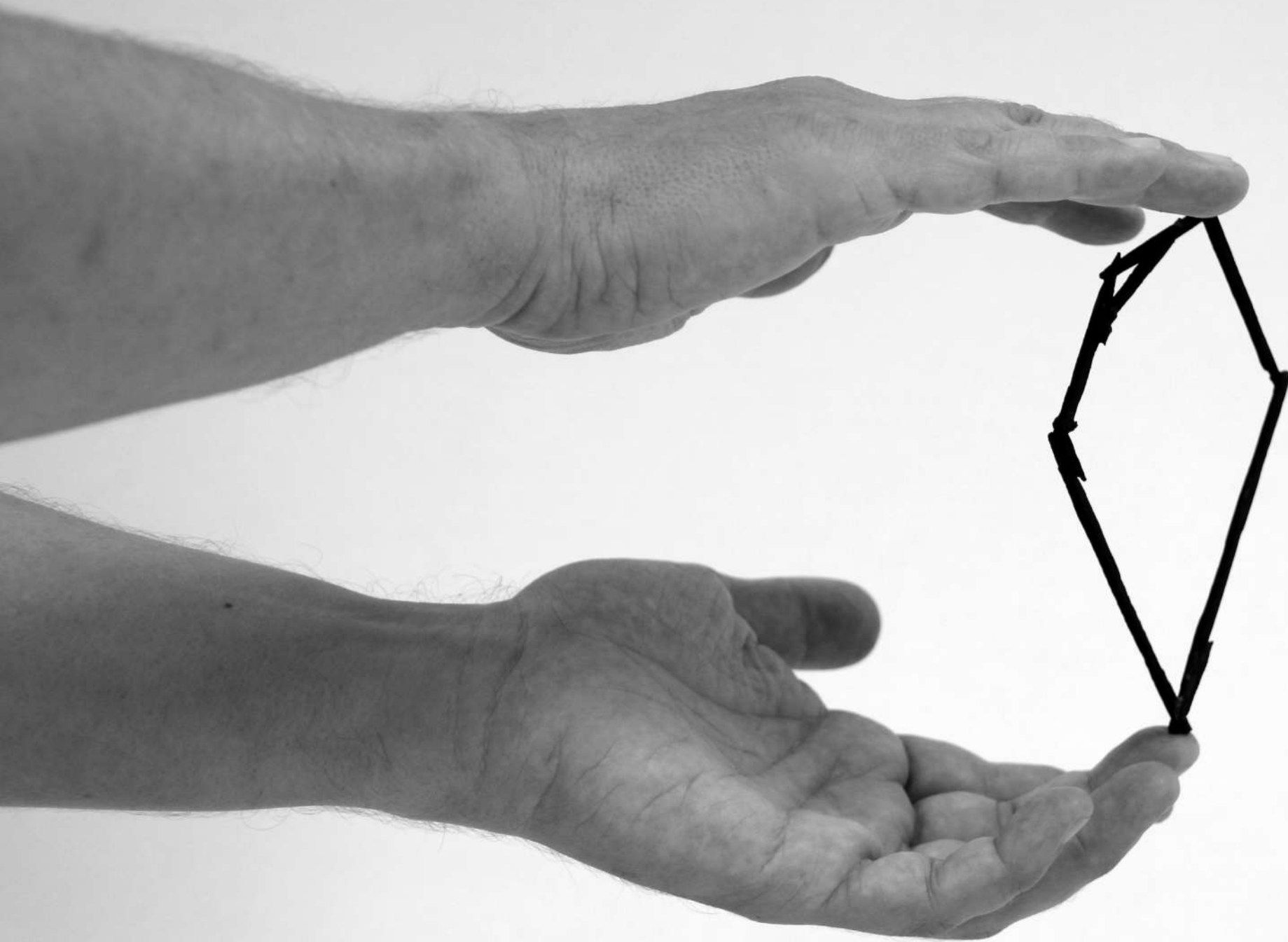


Still/prints from the film *Ink in Milk*
Fear of Inner Velocity, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper,
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP

Fear of Turning Around, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP

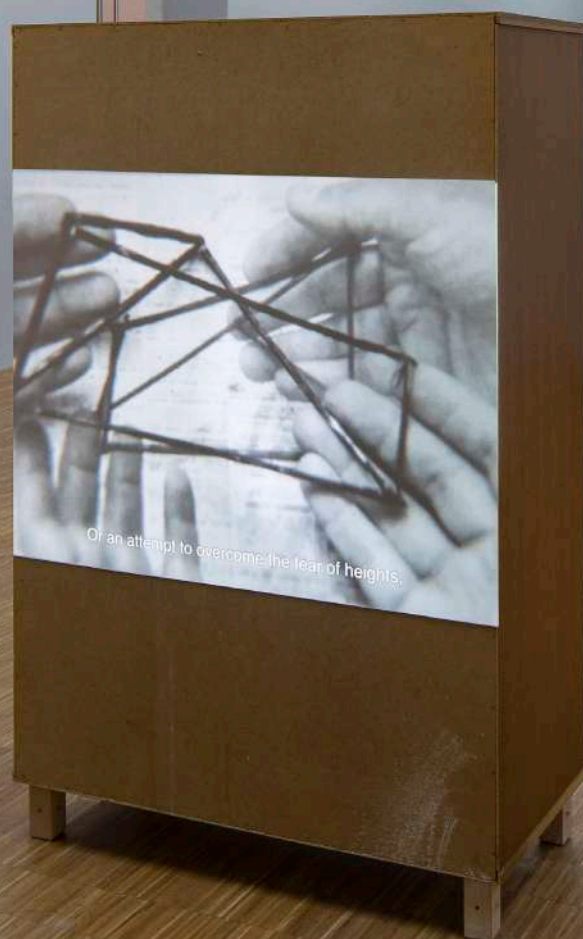


Fear of Sleep, 2018
Pigment print on Hahnemühle paper
27 × 36 cm, 4 + 1 AP



Ink in Milk
2018

1 channel video, 4:3/16:9, Super 8 film/HD Video,
sound, colour, b&W, 12:30 min





Ink in Milk
2018

1 channel video, 4:3/16:9, Super 8 film/HD Video,
sound, colour, b&W, 12:30 min

Stills/Prints from the film Thievery and Songs
Untitled, 2016
pigment print on Hahnemühle paper
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

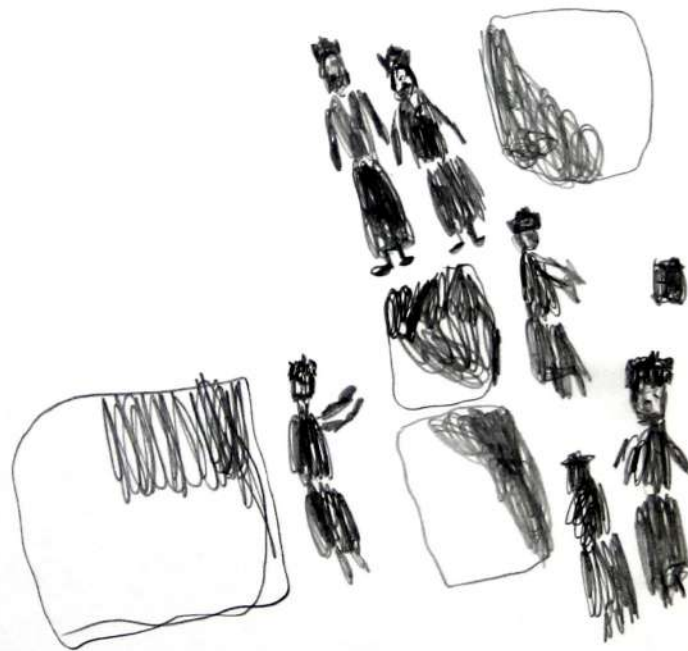




Stills/Prints from the film Thievery and Songs
Untitled, 2016
pigment print on Hahnemühle paper
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

Stills/Prints from the film Thievery and Songs
Untitled, 2016
pigment print on Hahnemühle paper
30 x 40 cm, 4 + 1 AP

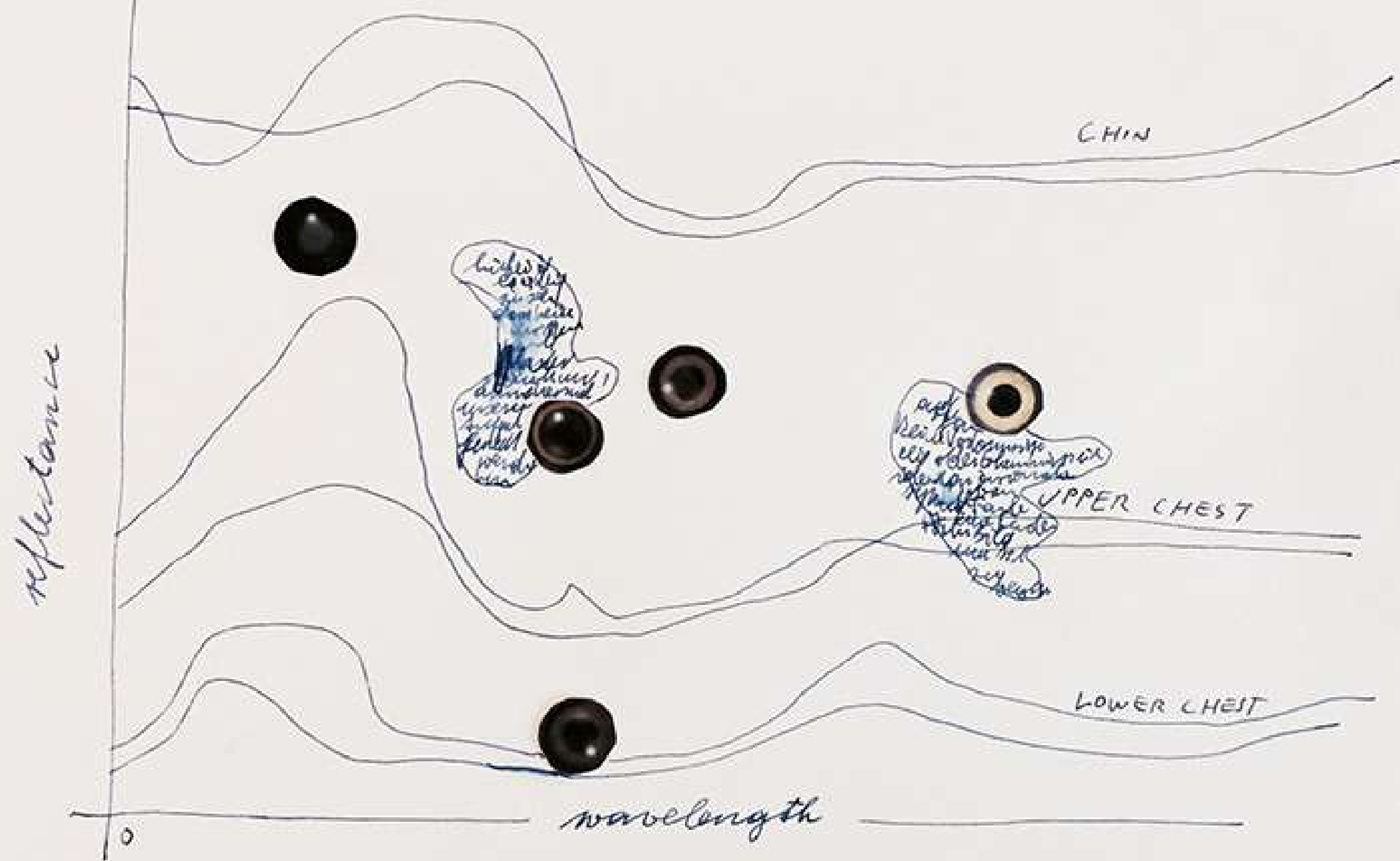




Drawings from the film *"Hello, my name is..."...and..."Yes, I'm fine."*







THE PILL®

PRESS

ArtReview

Gernot Wieland on the couch



Bruce Nauman on the fence

Plus Luc Tuymans, Mexican Macabre, Susan Cianciolo

Gernot Wieland

by Mark Rappolt



In 1945, Allied forces, about to occupy Austria, were issued a guide to the country and its people. 'It is no good expecting Austrians to be punctual and reliable, as we understand those terms,' it reads. 'They are not made that way. They will be quite sincere when they promise to do something; they will be equally sincere when they apologize for not having done it. But they will have a sense of "style".' The guide as a whole reduces the people to a type, defined by the geographic space they inhabit (the country looks like a shoe and its western border is 'quite a small stream'), the climate of that place ('hard to describe') and its sociopolitical history (it has only been a 'self-contained country' since 1918 and 'therefore there has not been much time for Austrians to get the feeling of being a nation'). It's these restricted, prejudiced ideas of identity and the way in which it is constructed that the Berlin-based Austrian artist Gernot Wieland seeks to confront in his work. Though the previous statement in itself represents a limited view of his recent output of expansive lecture-performances and films. He does, however, have a definite sense of 'style', one that juxtaposes fact and fiction, horror and humour, profundity and bathos, and a sense that art and artmaking can be at once useless and useful in navigating between these poles, but either way can play a role in humanity's search for its place in the world.

In the performance *Speaking in Places (Ink in Milk)* (2017, which presents a schoolboy's traumatic account of a fellow male pupil being shamed for coming into class wearing lipstick, through to the village's obsession with forming their bodies into healing crystals in order to expunge their sorrow over his eventual death), currently being made into a film, Wieland describes how, shortly after moving to Berlin, he discovered that he lived around the corner from Grunewaldstrasse and that house number

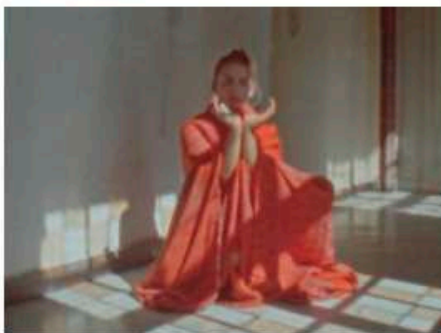
13 on that street was where Franz Kafka once lived. As he walked past the property and obsessed about it he became 'closer' to Kafka (even adopting what he imagined to be his walk and his 'Praguish' accent), ending up convinced that the author could only have written what he did because of the fact that he lived in this particular house. (There's a sense here, as there is in much of Wieland's work, of Gaston Bachelard's famous description of Victor Hugo's Quasimodo as a person whose deformities are shaped by the building he inhabits, the relation between the two being 'like a turtle to its carapace' and posing the issue of whether or not an animal is shaped by its environment or cage.) Later, Wieland reports, he discovered that there is another Grunewaldstrasse in Berlin and that it was on this street that Kafka had actually lived. Ultimately, the Kafka Wieland had constructed

was a fiction based on a misunderstanding, doubtless influenced by the author's own fictions, and tethered to nothing resembling a fact. Although, at a certain point, Wieland's Kafka was a fact, as far as the artist, possessed by the writer's shuffle and talking in tongues, was concerned.

Facts, fictions and how they are instrumentalised in art as in life lie at the slippery heart of Wieland's work. He might have made up the entirety of that Kafka stuff, the street address aside. Although his generally emotionless, somewhat monotonous delivery in the performance, combined with his Germanic accent, help to enforce the sense, psychologically (but based on no essential truth), that facts are in the air. *Thievery and Songs* (2016), a 23-minute film that won Wieland first prize at last year's Mostyn Open, entwines the story of Hilde Holger, a pioneering Jewish dancer who fled Austria for Bombay in 1939, with the story of the artist's great-aunt's bondage to a cruel and violent Austrian farmer (as told to him by

Facts, fictions and how they are instrumentalised in art as in life lie at the slippery heart of Wieland's work

Thievery and Songs (still), 2016, video, 22 min 40 sec. Courtesy the artist



his father), a folk tale collected by the Brothers Grimm, a therapy session, the perceived relationship between NASA and Leonardo da Vinci, that between religion and postwar Austrian art, the question of to what extent the past informs the present, the extent to which the experiences of childhood shape the form of an adult, and the relationship of character to place.

At the core of this tightly interwoven ball of problematics is an exploration of how people and the power they wield shape environments: the Anschluss and with it the arrival of the National Socialists in Austria creates an environment that can no longer provide sanctuary to Hilde Holger. When the artist's great-aunt is sold to the farmer (who loses all his 'property', including his wife, to a 'good' farmer over a game of cards in the prewar era, before returning as a member of the Nazi Party to take it back) he shapes her identity and existence. A Hitler-Eiche to which the artist and his brother played Mendelssohn as an act of childhood atonement (for the sins of Austria) is wiped from the landscape and has been replaced by a shopping centre when he revisits as an adult. The Berlin psychiatrist that the artist consults concerning his dreams of imaginary landscapes, whose meaning Wieland can't interpret, demonstrates an obsession with his patient's Austrian dialect and his having lived in Vienna, the home of Freud, even as his patient exhibits mounting anxiety and anger while he seeks to reframe the session around the artist's own problems, all the time sweating on the couch.

The narrative is accompanied by a series of illustrations: Plasticine animations, childishly naive paintings, textbook illustrations, scientific-looking emotional diagrams that attempt to make sense of the therapy session, photographs belonging to the artist's father and a filmed performance of a dancer (in a dress that might approximate some of the costumes worn by Holger). At times they introduce visual links between the various narratives, at other times their childlike execution serves to highlight the absurdity of those narratives, while at other times still they're presented as evidence of the purported facts of the tale. For example, we're shown a man waving his right hand as pictured on the plaques that accompanied NASA's Pioneer 10 and 11 probes into outer space during the early 1970s. The artist claims to have confused these messages for extraterrestrial life with Leonardo da Vinci's illustration of *Vitruvian Man* (c.1490), an ideal image that he then obsessively perpetuates (we're shown several childhood drawings) so that any man he draws is pictured holding up his right hand. This image crops up again, in Plasticine form, illustrating the artist's discomfort during the therapy session and, as the narrative turns to National Socialism, has uncomfortable echoes of the infamous Nazi salute. By the end of the film the image of a waving man comes to mean comfortableness, friendliness, discomfort and hostility: everything and nothing at the same time. Gernot's imagery in general comes to operate in such a way as to leave you questioning whether it's the 'plot' that gives meaning to objects presented or the objects that give truth to the plot. And similarly, does

memory define us or do we define our memories? In both cases the one nourishes the other like an Ouroboros gnawing its own tail.

The relation of art to artificiality is something that Wieland pursues in all his work. In *Thievery and Songs*, the artist recalls the much-discussed connection between actionist performance and the Catholic Mass (while digressing on the fact that you are allowed to eat the body of Christ in the form of the host, but not allowed to chew it); in the lecture-performance *Depression in Animals* (2016, in which the artist examines depression in animals as a transference of human problems and a sign of humankind's estrangement from nature) he describes the stuffed animals in an Austrian classroom as being 'like an art installation'. All of which leaves you questioning what is more absurd, the art or the customs and traditions it imitates. And if it's the latter, then what does that say about the society we inhabit? In *Thievery and Songs*, the artist recounts the folk tale 'The Town Musicians of Bremen', in which four domestic animals – a dog, a cat, a donkey and a rooster – having reached the end of their 'useful' lives on a farm decide to go to Bremen and become musicians. Along the way they stop at a house populated by robbers. To scare them off and take the house for themselves, the animals stand one atop the other, leading the thieves to confuse them for a witch, a judge, a giant and an ogre. To a story that ends with the animals living happily ever after, Wieland adds an Orwellian coda: after a while the animals can't decide who should be on top of the other; they go to therapy to resolve their issues; therapy doesn't help so they go their separate ways. Their occupation of the

house and what followed, Wieland suggests, is a parable for Occupy Wall Street. Although given that 'The Town Musicians of Bremen' was collected in Grimm's *Fairy Tales* in 1819, perhaps the fairy tale is more truthfully a precedent.

Ultimately it's not just the interhuman dynamics of power and hierarchy that the artist seeks to confront, but also humanity's speciesism and dominance over the rest of the world. At the beginning of *Thievery and Songs*, the artist describes feeling that he is in reality a snail and only attempting to fit into human society. 'I eat your food and pretend I share your taste. I talk and show affection, and imitate a normal life,' he proclaims, all the while suggesting that ideals of human society are as much a performance as his artwork. At the end of the film he confronts his dreams about landscapes he doesn't recognise and cannot interpret saying, they are 'the opposite of fear and I do not exist in them'. Oh and by the way Wieland does have a habit of being punctual and reliable.

Mark Rappolt is the editor-in-chief of ArtReview

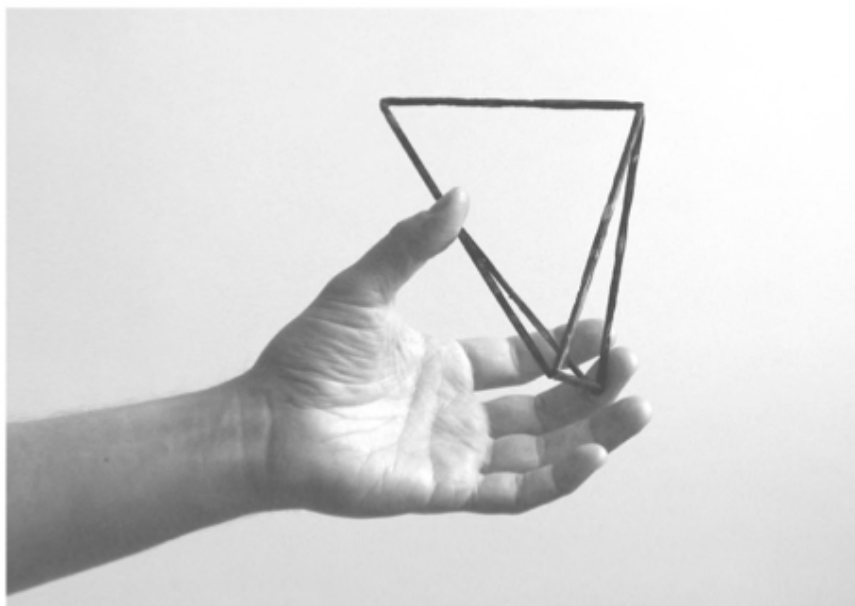
Gernot Wieland will perform the lecture *Depression in Animals* at OGR Torino on 5 June. The film *Ink in Milk* will be shown as part of *Shame* at Künstlerhaus Bremen, 30 June – 26 August. The artist's work is also included in *Zeitspuren* at the Kunsthaus Centre d'art Pasquart, Biel/Bienne, 9 September – 18 November

opposite page
Thievery and Songs (stills), 2016, video, 22 min 40 sec.
Courtesy the artist

—SPACES

On carpets, cats, cages, and three films by Gernot Wieland

by Barbara Casavecchia



Gernot Wieland, *Ink in Milk*, 2018. Still from video, 12:30 minutes. Image courtesy of the artist.

I am not working, so I'm working out. Crunch and plank, back and forth. I do it next to my desk, on the ragged carpet brought back from Morocco decades ago, immersed in the most familiar of interior landscapes.

When I was in elementary school, an unspeakable fear of going blind (ommetaphobia; suggested treatment: hypnotherapy) made me secretly walk around my room at night, eyes wide shut, just to rote-learn every inch of its perimeter. Now, there's an irony in using this domiciliary setting for exercise. On the wall above my desk there are black cats stretching, bending, and arching their backs, stencil-sprayed there by an artist friend, Riccardo Previdi, and inspired by Gatto Meo Romeo, a foam

rubber toy designed by Bruno Munari in 1949 as a playful contortionist for young hands. They are a daily remainder of my sentimental education, based among other things on graffiti, punk comics, squatting, absurdist jokes, yoga, and modernist Milanese design.

In Berlin, I think it was the mid-2000s, Riccardo introduced me to his friend and fellow artist Gernot Wieland. We've been in touch ever since and I intended to visit his exhibition at Salzburger Kunstverein, which opened in February. But now I can't. The three films on show (*Thievery and Songs*, 2016; *Ink in Milk*, 2018; and *Square, Circle, Square*, 2020), which were projected there in their original analogue film format, are now accessible as videos through the institution's website. I watch the films under the sardonic gaze of my black cats and laugh at their deadpan humor. When they move me, I curl up on the rug, glad to hide my feelings from other eyes. I'm mourning the loss of a much-loved member of my family. Of course I miss white cubes, which abstract us from the vulnerability of our "daily persons," in Brian O'Doherty's term, and allow us to move around unnoticed, as "The Spectator" and "The Eye." In his introduction to the 1986 edition of O'Doherty's *Inside the White Cube*, art critic and poet Thomas McEvilley writes: "In classical modernist galleries, as in churches, one does not speak in a normal voice; one does not laugh, eat, drink, lie down, or sleep; one does not get ill, go mad, sing, dance, or make love."⁽¹⁾

But in housebound quarantine, people do all these things. This housetraining shapes our ways of seeing. John Berger compared visitors to an art gallery, "who stop in front of one painting and then move on to the next or the one after next,"⁽²⁾ to those at a zoo, proceeding from cage to cage, where subjects waver between lethargy and hyperactivity. (In the temporary absence of both galleries and zoos, I guess it's not by chance that millions of viewers are obsessed by *Tiger King* on Netflix.) In an attempt to cope with intensive scrutiny within our own captivity, some of us even decorate our Zoom backgrounds with fake en-plein-air views. "Within limits, the animals are free, but both themselves and their spectators presume on their close confinement," Berger writes. He cites the zoologist (and surrealist painter) Desmond Morris, who suggests that observing the unnatural behavior of caged animals may help humans understand the strain of living in consumer societies. Isolation and artificial environments affect the reactions of all creatures, who become "immunized to encounter, because nothing can any more occupy a central place in their attention." When faces and images meet my gaze, now, through the screen, I struggle to sustain it: it's as if they are visitors staring into my moat. Of course I miss my Responsive Eye.

Gernot's films have plenty to do with animals, human and nonhuman: their domestication and their encounters. What makes them so compelling to me, at this moment, is their tactful supply of humor and imagination as strategies for survival, as well as their treatment of the psychopathologies of the everyday (anxiety, depression, grief) as part of everybody's lives on the planet. They take in pain and process it. Small catharses ensue.

The stories are personal, narrated in voiceover by the artist himself and illustrated with simple media (pen and pencil drawings, watercolors, photos, plasticine animations, Super 8 films). Meticulously annotated maps reconstruct the backdrops of certain autobiographical episodes, often drawn from the narrator's youth, but their childlike style makes it difficult to situate them either in the past or the present, as is common with dreams or memories. Likewise, they appear full of mistakes, exaggerations, fictional twists, and sentimental overtones.

Ink in Milk (12 minutes 30 seconds) starts with the image of a dark liquid swirling in a sink (I've cleaned mine twice, today) while Gernot narrates the story of one of his best friends, a boy who came to school, aged eleven, wearing red lipstick, eyeshadow, and nail polish. The teacher enrolled him on her regular list of "losers," who were forced to wrap around their heads a towel full of chalk powder from the blackboard and sit facing her cupboard, vulnerable to the gaze of others. "How we place our bodies in relation to each other is the start of politics," Gernot says. The friend ends up in a psychiatric hospital; when visited, all he wants to do is walk up and down the stairs, as an exercise of freedom. (A friend recently recommended stair-climbing routines for cardiorespiratory fitness, I recall.) The narrator moves to another village, where a person known only as "uncle" convinces everybody to relieve their sorrows and fears by miming the geometric structure of the crystal associated with their psychic conditions. (Rudolf Steiner, who grew up in an Austrian village, felt during his childhood "that one must carry the knowledge of the spiritual world within oneself after the fashion of geometry.") (3) The practice becomes so absorbing that villagers stop working, cattle run away, and nature reconquers all dwellings.

A classroom also marked the beginning of the earlier lecture-performance *Depression in Animals* (2010–ongoing) (4), demonstrating how human identity is constructed upon "the exclusion and control of the other—namely the animal." One day, a sad schoolmate brings with him an equally sad German shepherd, and candidly reveals the dog's fondness for sodomy during a biology class held by a taxidermist. The story unfolds along tragicomic lines, including the artist's recollections of dealing with trauma through obsessive potato-print-making. "I remember sitting with this child psychiatrist in his room full of pictures of Flipper, Donald Duck, nice but imbecile-looking dogs, and he asked me, Gernot, how did you get here, why did you steal half a million of potatoes? And I remember it was not my voice but something in me said: because the zebra was so sad."

Psychoanalysis is an obvious point of reference, as well as an obvious target for parody, with Sigmund Freud in pole position—it should be mentioned that Gernot is Austrian, although not Viennese, and entertains a conflicted relation with his culture of origin and Catholic upbringing. *Thievery and Songs* (22 minutes 40 seconds) departs from an excruciating therapy session and a dream, involving the cast of the fairy tale "The Town Musicians of Bremen" (a donkey, a dog, a cat, and a rooster), who lead the Occupy Wall Street anti-capitalist revolution, but wind up disbanding because they are unable to agree on who will have to stand above all others. The human fixation on anthropomorphizing everything, as well as on placing despotic Sapiens at the top of the natural ladder, seems ludicrous in a time of pandemic and climatic emergency. In the film, the idea of Vitruvian man as ideal measure of all things is wittily upended. With a nod to Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915), the narrator explains that "in order to understand the world or the many worlds" sometimes one must become animal, and clarifies that he is, in fact, a snail. He adds: "If you want to know how a snail's life feels like in a human body, I can only tell you, it feels quite normal. [...] I eat your food and pretend I share your taste."

The third film, *Square, Circle, Square*, is silent and shot in 16 mm. It lasts only a couple of minutes, and wouldn't be complete without its caption: "Wieland has collaborated for 12 years with an animal trainer who trained birds to fly in a circle or square." We see black birds flying in the sky, alone or in small flocks; their trajectories remain open. Ancient ornithomancists used to see omens in these aerial maneuvers. Like the animals that roam freely across our empty streets, they seem to me to go simply

where they want, without paying much attention to us. This morning, swallows returned to Milan. I think it's a good sign.

Online viewing room

"Gernot Wieland" at Salzburger Kunstverein

- (1) Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: The Lapis Press, 1986), 10.
- (2) John Berger, "Why Look at Animals," in Filipa Ramos (ed.), *Animals: Documents of Contemporary Art* (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2016), 68–69.
- (3) Rudolf Steiner, *The Story of My Life* (London: Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1928), 11.
- (4) See gernotwieland.com.

Barbara Casavecchia is a writer and independent curator based in Milan, where she teaches at Brera art academy. She's a contributing editor of *frieze*.

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*For inquiries
contact@thepill.co*

Mürselpaşa Caddesi No 181 34087 İstanbul
4 Place de Valois 75001 Paris | thepill.co