


POW UP



Galerie Wedding Space for Contemporary Art Berlin

Solvej Helweg Ovesen

Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung

Ute Müller-Tischler

20	Preface by Ute Müller-Tischler
24	POW-UP: Deep Curating by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
30	POW (Post-Otherness-Wedding) and the Knowledge Embedded in an Object by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
40	Satch Hoyt, Riding Celestial Chariots: Mining Entangled Vernaculars by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
46	Ilja Karilampi, Hauptstadtrevier by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
54	Emeka Ogbah, No Food for Lazy Man by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
64	Sol Calero, Oficina del Ciudadano by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
72	Jan-Peter E. R. Sonntag, NYMPHAE_M RAUSCH ECK by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
80	Henrike Naumann, Aufbau Ost by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
86	Ahmet Ögüt, Studio Ögüt by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
92	Vacancies! with Dominique Baron Bonarjee, Marisa Benjamim, Nathalie Mba Bikoro, Lucinda Dayhew, Andrés Galeano, Surya Gied, Fadi al-Hamwi, Funda Özgünaydin, Timea Anita Oravec by Kathrin Pohlmann and Julia Zieger
102	Stine Marie Jacobsen, German for Newcomers Law Shifters by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
110	Mwangi Hutter, Circling Around Oneness by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
116	Unsustainable Privileges ... the creative redistribution of power, attention, credibility, and participation can and does happen! by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
	UP Symposium
126	Subject – Order – Loving by Paul Mecheril
133	FROM An Invisible Package of Unearned Assets: On White Privilege TO A Visible Package of Exploited Assets: Cities in Europe by Noa K. Ha
140	What We Talk About When We Talk About ›Migration Background‹, or Foreigners of All Phenotypes Unite! by Millay Hyatt
145	Some Notes on Sustaining Rights That Have Become Privileges by Nataša Ilić
152	A Short Piece on Rising Inequality in Germany as Viewed from the German Constitution by Jelena Bäuml
157	Patriarchy Has No Gender by María do Mar Castro Varela
164	A Taste of Wedding – On the Research for Emeka Ogbah's Beast of No Nation Beer Project by Carrie Hampel

- 184 **Viron Erol Vert, The Name of Shades of Paranoia, Called Different Forms of Silence** by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
- 192 **Mario Rizzi, BARE LIVES** by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
- 200 **Surya Gied, Looking into the Distance Becomes Difficult**
by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
- 208 **Mariana Castillo Deball, Pleasures of Association, and Poissons, such as Love-** by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
- 216 **Dafna Maimon, Orient Express** by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
- 224 **Azin Feizabadi, Once Upon A Time, Once Upon No Time**
by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
- 234 **Simon Fujiwara, Joanne** by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
- 242 **I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes with Donna Huanca, Ed Fornieles, FORT, Grace Weaver, Hanne Lippard, Lauryn Youden, Liping Ting, Marco Bruzzzone** by Nadia Pilchowski
- 252 **Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Ziggy on the Land of Drunken Trees**
by Solvej Helweg Ovesen
- 260 **Antje Engelmann & Cyrill Lachauer, This land is your land I This land is my land** by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung
- 272 **Biographies**
- 280 **Photo Credits**
- 284 **Acknowledgements**
- 286 **Colophon**

Field Notes

Jonas Tinius

Precursory Footnote

Field notes are fragments, reflections, traces of experiences recorded by a researcher during or after ›field research‹. In this case, I composed these fragments mostly by hand or typed them on my phone over the course of nearly two years of fieldwork, during which I accompanied Galerie Wedding's Post-Otherness Wedding and Unsustainable Privileges programmes. As curators Solvej Ovesen and Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung often put it, I have been their ›local anthropologist‹ – a designation I gladly embraced, seeing that I did indeed live close by and do research on institutions in Berlin to reflect on and talk about past, present, and planned exhibitions, unlike the trope of those anthropologists who study subjects in ›foreign‹ geographies and ›other‹ cultures. The gallery programmes POW and UP invited Berlin-based contemporary artists to probe ways in which alterity, difference, and privilege articulate in the city. Against the backdrop of the Humboldt Forum, I was interested in finding out what curatorial strategies and reflections are evoked to make us think differently about migration, otherness, privileges. Field notes are recorded during or after an event or a meeting, and they are thus subject to memory, the unconscious bias of the note-taker, and of course the inter-subjective and affective situations from which they arise. As such, they are palimpsests of lived experiences, records of collective atmospheres, but also reflections and analyses of lesser-noted, behind-the-scenes, or seemingly marginal aspects of exhibition-making; field notes as footnotes to a curatorial process. These notes are not objective records

to document events, but a quasi-archive of a collective curatorial practice written not from the desk, but on the spot. They aim to translate, but also to generate new gaps, new frictions.

1 Membrane

Membranes are ambiguous. They divide and connect. This gallery has such a membrane: its giant window front. These windows allow for the exchange of glances, hushed and cramped,

178

on a rainy November morning, or curious and playful, on warm July evenings. One side faces Müllerstraße. Bus drivers halt in front of the gallery at the ›Rathaus Wedding‹ stop of the 120, N6, and N20 lines almost every five minutes on a weekday. Doors open, twenty pairs of eyes glance at sculptures, paintings, installations, videos, photographs. Curators, assistants, artists gaze back. Another side faces Rathausplatz, Schiller library, and Simit Evi bakery and café, ›saved‹ from disappearance during the recent reconstruction of the square by a neighbourhood initiative. Stone plates tracing Palaeolithic shells installed by Mariana Castillo Deball (Pleasures of Association, and Poissons, such as Love –, Oct.–Nov. 2017) are just about visible from the gallery windows. On top of a building, someone has written a message in large letters: angst fressen seele auf (fear eats the soul), which was the title of a 1974 film by Rainer Werner Fassbinder on the precarious life of a Moroccan guest worker and his elderly partner. For a long while, a construction site, and now still a meeting point for homeless people, for the elderly, for kids, for the neighbourhood. The gallery is at the bottom corner of the social services department of the district's municipal offices – Bezirksamt Mitte, Amt für Soziales. People step off the bus

and walk past the gallery, on their minds are perhaps thoughts of asylum, care, ageing, shelter, pensions, debt, unemployment. A membrane divides and connects at once. It is a boundary, a vibrating tissue, a layer, a skin, a permeable film. Towards the gallery this membrane is a kind of selective barrier, a mechanical barrier, architecture, and a curatorial element at the same time. For their exhibition *Circling Around Oneness* (Nov. 2016–Jan. 2017), Mwangi Hutter blackened out the windows with dark chalk. Soon traces and carved lines were scratched into this porous boundary: kids wrote their names, others carved hearts, dates, insults, questions. One reads, ›Wedding ist cool‹, another, ›von wegen!‹ (as if!) At the opening of this exhibition, a visitor commented: ›Circling around oneness for me also means that oneness is not a given.‹ More and more erased lines in the chalk let the light in and allow viewers from the outside to discover the projections of a man and a woman sleeping in separate beds.

2 Jour fixe

A few cupboards, a sink, no stove. A large fridge, a door leading to a storage room, a wall with posters. A staircase leading up to an office, assistants and interns typing. Programme direction, press and communication, everything else. In the main space: a make-shift table, a few foldable chairs, and a long heater with a wooden plank doubling as a bench. Milky windows obscuring the view onto Rathausplatz. Outside: construction site noise, alcoholised conversations, screaming voices, children, sirens. Inside: coffee cups, French press, croissants, pens and notebooks. Newspaper reviews, and sketches for the next exhibition leaflet. A small flowerpot. The first copies of exhibition catalogues: a print preview of Viron Erol Vert's book, *Dreamatory*. A transit

zone, a thinking space, storage, archive, and meeting room, between the desktops and the exhibition space. Doors open, Laika, the gallery dog, strolls in. A parcel delivery: the new programme leaflets for an upcoming show. In this space, the curatorial team meets, week after week. Tuesday mornings, often well into the afternoon. Jours fixes – a loose term encompassing almost the entire planning of the gallery organism: laptops and Skype calls, budget plans, artist visits, drafting of texts, invitations to programmes, heated discussions, interviews. One morning, 3 March 2017: Bonaventure, Solvej, Nadia Pilchowski (curatorial assistant), Kathrin Pohlmann (artistic assistance and production manager) and Mario Rizzi (artist, Bare Lives, April – June 2017) are all present. We talk about the role of refugee camps and the gaze of the male photographer. The conversation later gets printed by a local publishing house to accompany the exhibition, Bare Lives (2017, Archive Books). We get interrupted. Solvej: ›Sorry, before we proceed. We need to speak about the wall.‹ Kathrin: ›We cannot screw it into the floor, and not into the ceiling either. It's a listed historic building.‹ Mario: ›What about a black curtain?‹ We walk into the gallery space to measure the room required for the photographs and the projections. Kathrin emphasises the repeated difficulties in installing projection screens and establishing the right lighting conditions in a room suffused with brightness during the day and passing headlights at night. The team decides on the spot. A journalist arrives. Lunchtime. The meeting disperses.

3 Wedding

›I looked for a pub and someone said ›Go there and see the Yugoslavians!‹‹ They were all just known as ›the Yugoslavians‹.‹ (Carrie Hampel). ›But how does this represent Wedding? It sounds to me like a stereotyped, even racial-

ised, projection of ›a group of migrants‹.‹ (Bonaventure). ›The question to me seems to be: Does this beer project seek to find a representative taste that can correspond to the ›essence‹ of Wedding? Then that's problematic and not possible – all you will ever find are projections of people, constant recreations of multiple ideas of the district‹ (Jonas). ›No, no. It's not about representation, but to provoke a discussion about Germanness, migration, subversion. If it's a beer, then it definitively cannot adhere to the German purity law. This district is ›impure‹. So the beer cannot be ›rein‹ either.‹ (Emeka Ogbob) Someone recounts a Bosnian friend of theirs bringing back thick slices of smoked ham wrapped in aluminium foil to Germany by car. It was shared among close friends and family, ceremoniously, just served on its own. ›I imagine smoking the barley. A smoked beer. Like this Franconian Schlenkerla‹ (Emeka). This conversation ensued after Carrie presented her initial interviews for Emeka's beer-brewing project, Beast of No Nation, B.O.N.N. (launched as part of the Unsustainable Privileges Symposium in September 2018). Already in 2015, Galerie Wedding, Vagebund-brewery, and Emeka produced a dark beer. Last year, documenta 14 popularised his critical Sufferhead. This project now – a reference to beasts, untidy and rough characters – attempts to think about the transnational, the post-national, about post-Heimat through research into taste and the complex ›character‹ of Wedding. Carrie had gathered conversations with inhabitants of the district about their ideas on the character of the district, sampling different imaginations of taste to be worked into a craft brew project. But the project conjured up friction that forced the gallery team in the project meetings to stop and think: the ›character‹ of a district cannot be grasped in its essence, because characters are about identity, but also about roles one assumes

or is expected to perform. Wedding features as a district in the imagination of sociologists, artists, and the gallery itself – but it risks becoming a projection screen for characterisations of Berlin's new diverse and noble savage: working class, ethnically diverse, rough, untidy. ›On the one hand, we say there's a strong drinking problem in Wedding, and yet we still do a beer project – that's ethically ambiguous‹, Kathrin adds to the conversation. In a brief exchange between Bonaventure and Solvej during this

180

meeting, it became evident that the curatorial framing of the gallery and its position in Wedding confronts the same complexity as the beer project: Does it reveal or assemble, unearth or produce new ideas of what Wedding is?

4 Dreaming

A room with twelve beds, white sheets, white wood. Beds of different sizes, bunk beds, children's beds. Viron Erol Vert's exhibition *The Name of Shades of Paranoia, Called Different Forms of Silence* (Feb. – April 2017) had just opened a few days before and the installation spreads across the entire space of the gallery. Veiled curtains shelter from view, the membrane is reactivated to create a ›dreamatory‹, a dream-laboratory, a social sculpture that invites visitors to sleep in the space during the day, and to record their dreams in the notebooks provided by the gallery in lieu of a visitor's book. ›I want to collect these dreams, let people draw on what they've experienced – but I fear they might not dare‹, Viron comments when we met in his Kreuzberg studio-flat for an interview. Solvej and Bonaventure had earlier invited him to a jour fixe to plan a joint symposium on dreams and consciousness in collaboration with the

Association of Neuroaesthetics, organised by Jörg Fingerhut and Elena Agudio. The beds are meant as an invitation. Not just to dream, but also to process: ›I just had a long conversation with a taxi driver‹, Viron recounts, ›who told me of sleepless nights, trauma, because he fears for what happens in Turkey. But even here we are not safe: many are paranoid to speak up. Much of this is invisible to the majority population, but I hear it.‹ Bonaventure picks up the conversation: ›These are invisible privileges: who can rest and who cannot rest at night, who can speak and who cannot speak for themselves?‹ To what extent can a gallery become a space that speaks ›for‹ others? It cannot, someone says, but we ›speak nearby‹, as Trinh T. Minh-ha put it, for whom this indirect speaking is always ›a way of positioning oneself in relation to the world.‹ ›I don't want to talk about Germany, or Europe. I want to talk about humanity and to explode national frameworks, not redefine them‹, I hear Bonaventure saying. ›But we have to begin somewhere – with the local, with identification. We have to talk about freedom and competence of speech‹, Solvej responds. ›It is a privilege and resource to speak.‹ Someone turns on a laptop to show an online advertisement of the German Identitarian movement in Bavaria: ›This debate on being rooted is highly charged – who is rooted where?‹

5 Migration

Again, the view is barred. Cardboard boxes hung from the inside of the gallery windows block the curious gaze from outside. Dafna Maimon's *Orient Express* (Nov. 2017 – Jan. 2018) is on show. In 1958, her father opened the first falafel and kebab restaurant in Finland, Orient Express. Restaging elements of the original eatery, documented in a high-budget advertisement from 1986, the gallery reproduces a

migration story from memory. A micro-autobiographical archaeology of smells, impressions, family affects. Resisting the exotic by exhibiting it? Orient Express is itself a reappropriated orientalism. What does it mean for a gallery to restage an othered fast-food restaurant within vicinity of ›real‹ ones? Whose narratives are told in each, and in what language – visual, sensorial, olfactory? In preparation for her performance *After Hours*, in which the falafel gallery-bar is activated by a repetitive repertoire of surreal gestures by invited performers who borrow material from the everyday activities that occurred in the restaurant and lines from the video-relic, we speak about a six-minute video she has produced from the original Finnish ad for her father's business. Scenes from the lively mall where the Orient Express was situated are repeated a few times, over-layered, however, by different narratives, while the dramatic and ›oriental‹ string music reaches a climax. ›One kebab please‹, says a man smartly dressed in a trench coat and bowtie – the only black man in the video. Dafna, Bonaventure, and Solvej negotiate multiple lines in this work: 1980s Finland, foreigners, exoticisation, but also the artist's personal story, her relation to a patriarchal family structure, the gastropolitics of Wedding. ›You need more than objects to tell this narrative, the objects and the performance, the video need a storyline‹, Dafna thinks out aloud. ›As curators, we can only guide – the decisive line comes from the artists‹, Bonaventure adds. ›I changed different words to allow characters to speak different stories, stories that tell of my own life between Israel and Finland‹, Dafna adds. ›The key is for the audience to understand that it is not about food ...‹.

Post-Otherness- Wedding Unsustainable Privileges

Satch Hoyt

Ilja Karilampi

Emeka Ogbon

Sol Calero

Jan-Peter E. R. Sonntag

Henrike Naumann

Ahmet Ögüt

Stine Marie Jacobsen

Mwangi Hutter

Viron Erol Vert

Mario Rizzi

Surya Gied

Mariana Castillo Deball

Dafna Maimon

Azin Feizabadi

Simon Fujiwara

Ann Duk Hee Jordan

Antje Engelmann & Cyrill Lachauer

GALERIE

Raum für zeitgenössische Kunst

WEDDING

KERBER