

Press Release

steirischer herbst 2018

20.9.–14.10.18

Opening Days: 20.9.–22.9.18

steirischer herbst—Europe's oldest interdisciplinary festival of contemporary art—opens its 51st edition on 20 September 2018. It is the first edition curated by Ekaterina Degot with a curatorial collective.

The title of the festival is *Volksfronten*—consciously used in the somewhat unconventional plural form—references very different historical contexts—the antifascist coalitions of the 1930s, an ultra-rightwing nationalist group in the US, the ironic name given to representative facades in the GDR—thus addressing the heated ideological battles and collapsing political dichotomies of the present.

As the core program of this year's festival, *Volksfronten* includes installative, performative, as well as discursive projects by over 40 artists and is conceived as a single parcours spread out over the city of Graz. Almost all works are newly commissioned, and are being produced especially for this year's edition.

In addition to *Volksfronten*, the Collateral Program, constituted of various exhibitions and events by many cultural institutions in Graz, as well as musikprotokoll, a festival platform dedicated to contemporary and experimental music conceived and organized by ORF Radio Österreich 1 and Radio Steiermark, complete this year's edition of steirischer herbst.

Program

For the festival's opening on 20 September 2018, legendary performing arts group Bread & Puppet Theater invites you to a parade through the city with a newly-commissioned performance, addressing issues of the city's urban topography and contemporary politics with local participants. Afterwards, performer and video artist Roman Osminkin will loosely adapt Dmitri Aleksandrovich Prigov's 1990 *Coup. A Play for Two Loudspeakers* for his newly commissioned, open-air performance taking place on Graz's Schloßbergstiege. The opening night ends with a specially commissioned musical performance taking place on the Kasemattenbühne on top of the Schloßberg by the legendary Slovenian group Laibach, who will present their very own take on

The Sound of Music.

Meanwhile, the festival's accustomed opening venue, the Helmut List Halle, becomes the site of an exhibition, where Moscow-born artist Irina Korina is building an inflatable landscape lasting ten days. The other works of the *Volksfronten* program are spread throughout the whole city, some in historic locations: At Forum Stadtpark, for example, Milica Tomić installs her research project dealing with a former labor camp in Aflenz, a town in southern Styria; at Haus der Architektur, Henrike Naumann stages the annexation of Austria in 1990, at least in terms of the furnishings. Funda Gül Özcan develops her work for the former Ankara Türkü Bar in Graz's Griesgasse, Tony Chakar and Nadim Mishlawi present an installation in Hotel Daniel, and the Department of Ultimology researches at Grazer Kunstverein.

At Volkshaus Graz the artist duo Igor & Ivan Buharov from Budapest are installing an anarchistic laboratory where they are planning an upcoming revolution, and Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten is showing works by Ines Doujak, Ekaterina Muromtseva, Martin Behr & Martin Osterider, Victoria Lomasko and Christoph Szalay. The duo kozek hörlonski are also presenting their latest film collaboration with Alexander Martinz here: *Demonic Screens II – Arrival*, a Heimat/horror movie that they are shooting in Graz and Styria this summer.

The *Volksfronten* program also embraces public space: the Vienna-based Japanese artist Yoshinori Niwa launches a public campaign offering to dispose of unwanted or compromising memorabilia from the fascist and Nazi era. In Graz's main square he is installing a container in which visitors can hand in such relics. Works by Rossella Biscotti & Kevin van Braak, Michael Zinganel & Michael Hieslmair, and the ZIP group also feature in public places around Graz; for the first time in Austria, the artist-activist Lars Cuzner is presenting the Intelligence Party that he founded.

Performance projects on the festival will include *The Iran Conference*, a play by the writer and director Ivan Vrypaev, works commissioned by steirischer herbst from choreographer Michiel Vandavelde or artist Nicoline van Harskamp, new pieces by Roe Rosen, Theater im Bahnhof, and Michael Portnoy. Another production is the commissioned work by composer Christian von Borries, who is developing a collage of the New Year's Concert for the festival based on algorithmic sampling and rearrangement. Ideas is the title of the festival's discursive program that kicks off at the symposium *Our Little*

Fascisms, with participants including Lars Cuzner, Tobias Ginsburg, Ishay Landa, Ewa Majewska, G. M. Tamás, Oxana Timofeeva, Renata Salecl, Tiago Saraiva, and others, along with performative contributions by Oliver Zahn/HAUPTAKTION, and Mazzaj & Ausländerbehörde.

Participating artists *Volksfronten*

Martin Behr & Martin Osterider / Rossella Biscotti & Kevin van Braak / Christian von Borries / Bread & Puppet Theater* / Igor & Ivan Buharov / Tony Chakar & Nadim Mishlawi / Lars Cuzner / Department of Ultimology / Ines Doujak / Funda Gül Özcan / Nicoline van Harskamp / kozek hörlonski & Alexander Martinz / Irina Korina / Laibach / Victoria Lomasko / Mazzaj & Ausländerbehörde / Ekaterina Muromtseva / Henrike Naumann / Yoshinori Niwa / Roman Osminkin / Michael Portnoy / Roee Rosen with Hani Furstenberg and Igor Krutogolov's Toy Orchestra / Christoph Szalay / Theater im Bahnhof / Milica Tomić / Michiel Vandevelde / Ivan Vyrypaev / Oliver Zahn/HAUPTAKTION / Michael Zinganel & Michael Hieslmair / ZIP group
Program

Festival Pass

Together all programs build a larger, grander narrative, each of its parts interconnected both on the physical map of Graz and on the calendar of the festival. For this reason, this year for the first time steirischer herbst is introducing a Festival Pass that gives admission to all events and exhibitions of the *Volksfronten* program and hence allows multiple and repeated visits, making the festival more accessible to everyone, and not least enabling you to engage with the program in greater depth. The Festival Pass also offers reduced admission to musikprotokoll events and the collateral program of steirischer herbst.

Festival Pass Prices

20.9.–14.10. — 29/23 Euro

1.10.–14.10. — 21/15 Euro

Single tickets for performances — 15/11 Euro

Every autumn since its founding 1968, half a century ago, the festival has provided a platform for new productions, provoking and shaping public debates in a variety of forms across disciplines and media. Reinventing itself many times over, steirischer herbst has always redefined the terms of the conversation about what culture might mean in a changing contemporaneity, as seen in Graz, Austria's second most populous city.

In 2018, the festival continues in the collaborative spirit of its founding and stays true to its focus on international breadth and local depth. It seeks to foster long-term engagement and the production of new work based on in-depth research and emphasizes urban and regional narratives in their sometimes bizarre relation to global processes.

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