

Press Release

GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen

13.01.2020



Kristina Buch

You can't walk unless the word runs.

Solo exhibition, curated by Regina Barunke

Duration: 01.02–19.04.2020

Opening: Friday, 31 January, 7pm

Press talk: Friday, 31 January, 11am

Press contact

Sarah Maria Kaiser

E presse@gak-bremen.de

T +49 421 500 897

40 J.G AK

Exhibition

Kristina Buch

You can't walk unless the word runs.

01.02–19.04.2020

We are pleased to present the first comprehensive solo exhibition of the German artist Kristina Buch (born 1983 in Meerbusch).

In the exhibition “You can't walk unless the word runs.”, which, with the exception of a multi-channel video projection (commissioned for the Istanbul Biennial 2015), consists exclusively of new works, the artist explores the semantic patterns of language. This is based on comprehensive research into the phenomenon of speech and the inexpressible as well as the origin, continuities and fragmentation of language and its inherent power. In earlier works, Buch literally dissected language and partly transferred it to other contexts. For the exhibition at the GAK, she had flags woven, on which stylized tongue motifs are depicted. In addition, video loops show close-ups of human mouths opening and closing to incomprehensible, glossolalic sounds. The question of “speaking with different tongues” arises at a time when language is becoming an increasingly powerful and tendentious political instrument.

Buch became known in 2012 through her contribution to dOCUMENTA (13), a butterfly garden. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev invited the then 29-year-old to Kassel as the youngest female artist to date. Buch studied biology and theology before moving on to the Royal College of Art in London and Rosemarie Trockel at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. Since then she has exhibited internationally. With installations, video, text, objects and "life gestures", as she calls her performative works, she tests rituals that repeatedly set people, things, materials and living beings into unexpected dialogues.

The exhibition is accompanied by a program of events. Below you will find the announcement text by New York author and art critic Aimee Walleston.

40 J.G AK

The practice of glossolalia, speaking in tongues, is tied to the common understanding of religion, yet it reflects the very inverse of religious practice. Where religion is realized through fixed rituals and overseen by an institutional fear of loss of control, glossolalia breaks through this seemingly safe choreography, galloping unharnessed and free. The tongue begins to speak independently of its owner, uttering the language of undiluted spirit.

Who are we, independent of the language we use to communicate with each other? If written text and spoken word are the constructs that assemble our reality, there is an ongoing stirring to reverse-engineer an understanding of the phenomena of Derridian logocentrism. Postmodernism promised to reveal the illusion through deconstruction, yet the castle still stands and the moat grows ever deeper. And so we look for ways around these edifices. By cutting words into pieces and allowing them to grow into new forms, like flatworms ever regenerating, Kristina Buch shapes a nuanced understanding of the syllables that bridge knowing to the known, and the unknown to the yet-to-be-knowable.

You can't walk unless the word runs. Here, the ear picks up the sound of layered utterances. We are invited into the space beyond the rigid didacticism of both the religious and the postmodern, far past our tongue-tied faith in that which can be constructed and deconstructed. A series of videos, shown on flat screens, share the exhibition's title. As though the walls have anthropomorphized and grown a garden of human mouths, each screen presents a close-up curtain of lips that open and close, revealing tongues that press delicate and fiery messages against walls of teeth.

An installation of eight jacquard-woven tongue flags hang from the ceiling, lapping away the viewer's extant associations. The front and back sides of a jacquard weave—a textile technology which figures prominently in the invention of computer code by Ada Lovelace—present a positive and negative image. When rendered into flag-forms, we are invited to consider the ontology of flags in and of themselves, so important to nations, armies, politics and sports. Are they trying to speak, and must they always play two sides against each other? The origin story of the tongue is one of protection. All reptiles, birds, and mammals have tongues, as do most amphibians. These appendages arrived in our mouths not to speak words and phrases, but to taste. Specifically, to identify poison. To discern. That Homo sapiens developed a language facility that relies on the tongue—our danger detector—is an evolutionary adaptation.

William James posited that, "If the grace of God miraculously operates, it probably operates through the subliminal door". If that door is a language, it is not one that we yet know how to write or speak. Thus, as philosopher Simone Weil stated, "Impossibility is the door of the supernatural. We can but knock on it. It is someone else who opens." It is answered by the countercultural, eternally untamable. Through image and language,

40 J.G AK

Buch directs her viewers toward this level of intuitive discernment, but not for the facile goal of understanding.

We might ask: what do tongues—reminiscent of the moist and vulnerable corporeal; a guard at the door, securing our opening to the world—do? They move in time with the politics of the moment. Or perhaps they refuse those safe and cozy moves and become missiles, or targets. In this way, they taste history. —Aimee Walleston, 2019

With the generous support of

Senator of Culture of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen
Kunststiftung NRW
Kulturwerk Foundation of the VG Bild-Kunst
Karin and Uwe Hollweg Stiftung
Clean Run Service Team, Bremen
and special thanks to private donors

Der Senator für Kultur  Freie
Hansestadt
Bremen

 KUNST
STIFTUNG
NRW



BILD-KUNST

/ KARIN UND
UWE HOLLWEG
STIFTUNG /

CLEAN
R U N
SERVICE
TEAM

About the artist

Kristina Buch

born 1983 in Meerbusch, Germany, lives in Düsseldorf and Cambridge

Education and Academic Career (selection)

- 2019 – Research Associate, Institute for Art and Art Theory, University of Cologne
- 2015 Visiting Lecturer, Next Society Professorship, FHNW Basel
- 2012 – 2014 Assistant Professor, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main (with Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev)
- 2011/17/18 MSc Biology, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf
- 2007 – 2011 Tutor/Visiting Researcher, Imperial College London
- 2009 – 2013 Master Student, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (with Rosemarie Trockel)
- 2007 – 2009 MA Sculpture, Royal College of Art, London
- 2002 – 2007 Protestant Theology, Université Strasbourg II, France
- 2003 – 2006 BSc Biology, Imperial College London

Solo Exhibitions and Actions (selection)

- 2016 EXECUTION SEMANTICS for a necessary criminal, Kunsthalle Bremerhaven, scholarship
- 2014 untitled (holes), Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, action
Two Monks and A Rabbit, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York City
- 2013 Sole Marie Sits, Temporary Gallery, Cologne, action
- 2009 Come dear art, come. Hockney Gallery, Royal College of Art, London

Group Exhibitions (selection)

- 2019 Großer Hans-Purrmann-Preis, Kulturhof Flachsgasse, Speyer, Germany
- 2018 The Playground Project, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn
Welcome to the Jungle, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf
- 2017 Dixit: rro, ArteBA, Buenos Aires
Urban Lights Ruhr, Marl, Germany
- 2016 Art&Nature, BAU, Merano
The Animal Mirror, ISCP Gallery, New York City
Gastmahl, Museum der Brotkultur, Ulm, Germany
- 2015 14th Istanbul Biennial
Regionale, Kunsthalle Basel
- 2014 Urbane Künste Ruhr: This is not Detroit, Schauspielhaus Bochum
Outside, Index The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation and Moderna Museet Stockholm

40 J.G AK

- 2012 dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel
Manifesta9, Parallel Events, Kasteel Oud Rekem, Belgium
Art by Animals, The Grant Museum, London
- 2011 Waiting For Suicidal Hares, International video festival, Moon Event
Organhaus, Chongqing, China
- 2010 New German Art, German Embassy, London
Diving for Pearls, Lothringer13, Munich
You can leave your hat on, Gallery Hasen at Schmela Haus,
Dusseldorf
- 2009 Impromptu, FRED Gallery, London
- 2008 Hopeless, The Beznadziejna, Warsaw
Spectrum, St. Mary's Old Church, London
- 2004 Blyth Gallery, London

Awards and Scholarships

- 2019 Grand Hans Purrmann Award
Einstein Fellowship (Shortlist)
PhD Scholarship, German Academic Scholarship Foundation
- 2015 Bremerhaven-Stipendium
- 2012 Young European Artist Award
- 2002 Carl-Steins-Preis

About our guests

Robert Logan

Robert Logan is an Emmy Award nominated composer and producer. He has created multiple critically acclaimed solo albums, with newest full-length "Flesh" having been described as "a musical object so radical and daring it seems not to belong to this time." His film credits include, with Ivor Guest, music for Alex Gibney's Oscar winning "Taxi to the Dark Side", the Oscar nominated "Semper Fi: Always Faithful", and multiple Prime Time Emmy Award winning "Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God", among others. He has collaborated musically with Grace Jones, Brian Eno, Ivor Guest, Brigitte Fontaine, Morcheeba and Steve Roach, and his live work includes performances at The Royal Festival Hall, The Royal Albert Hall and Glastonbury.

Natascha Sadr Haghghian

is an artist based in Berlin. She is professor for sculpture at the HfK University of the Arts, Bremen. Her research-based practice encompasses a variety of forms and formats, including video, performance, installations, text and sound. Exhibitions include: 2019 German Pavilion (curated by Franciska Zólyom) Biennale di Venezia, Venice; 2012 dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel; 2007 Manifesta 7, Trentino - Alto Adige, Italy; 2002 Manifesta 4, Frankfurt am Main.

VALIE EXPORT / Ingrid Wiener / Oswald Wiener

Oswald Wiener wrote the screenplay for "Das Unsagbare sagen" (1992), which was produced together with Ingrid Wiener and VALIE EXPORT and commissioned by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ORF. VALIE EXPORT and Ingrid and Oswald Wiener had previously worked together on the film project "Yukon Quest" (1986), also a video documentary for ORF. / VALIE EXPORT born 1940 in Linz, lives and works in Vienna, is considered one of the most important international pioneers of conceptual media, performance and film art. / Ingrid Wiener, born 1942 Vienna, is an artist and cook and her work mainly comprises experimental weaving works (together with Dieter Roth and VALIE EXPORT, among others), but also singing and cooking performances, video letters, watercolours and film. / Oswald Vienna, born 1935 in Vienna, lives with Ingrid Wiener in Styria, is a writer, cyberneticist and language theorist. In the 1970s he coined the "Wiener Gruppe", a Viennese association of writers who sought to overcome the classical literary genres and experimented with visual and acoustic components of language, among other things.

Events

Friday, 31 January, 7pm

Double opening of the exhibitions of Kristina Buch
and Esther Adam (GAK Projekte)

Thursday, 27 February, 7pm

VALIE EXPORT, Ingrid and Oswald Wiener:

The Unspeakable Speaking, 1992

45 min (de, enUT)

Courtesy: the artists and sixpackfilm, Vienna

Film screening (de)

“The Unspeakable Speaking”, a video essay made in the early nineties by VALIE EXPORT and Ingrid and Oswald Wiener, is dedicated to the phenomenon of glossolalia or speaking in tongues, of speaking without an audible sense. The film shows, among others, people with speech disorders and psychoses, sound poets and infants. The production of unfamiliar speech sounds and neologisms is found in shamanic traditions; today it is mainly practiced in communication rituals of US-American Pentecostal churches. The research trip therefore took the filmmakers to Louisiana to various congregations of this movement, in which glossolalia is exercised as an universal religious practice of the enthusiastic-ecstatic vocal expression of being filled by the Holy Spirit. “Language, as a tool of thought, essentially supports human expression. What happens, however, if, due to illness, this function is suspended through the loss of the ability to speak or to comprehend, through automatisms of the speech apparatus or conscious artistic interventions?” (O. Wiener)

Sunday, 15 March, 11am

Public guided tour with Sarah Maria Kaiser, curatorial assistant, and Anne Storm, trainee

Tuesday, 7 April, 7pm

Bremer Atelier IV: Natascha Sadr Haghghian

Studio visit (for members only)

Saturday, 18 April, 4pm

Kristina Buch & Robert Logan: Proto-lexicon

Concert and conversation (en)

40 J.G AK

Logan and Buch will invite to orbit around questions of speech and language – its vast as well as more narrow territories; its formation, continuities and fragmentations, the unspeakeable and the power structures implied.

Sunday, 19 April, 11am

Curator's talk

with Regina Barunke, curator of the exhibition

For more information on our events please check:

www.gak-bremen.de

40 J.G AK

About us

The GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst was founded in 1980. On the occasion of its 40th anniversary as a non-profit art association (Kunstverein) in Bremen in 2020, numerous events and projects are planned throughout the year, which are dedicated to the topic of “Remembering Exhibitions”.

Over the last four decades, the GAK has presented changing exhibitions and events with a strong international focus and high artistic quality. Today it is considered one of the most important institutions of contemporary art in Northern Germany, and its special profile to exhibit aspiring and rediscoverable artists and to stimulate current discourses in the field of current art theory. It cooperates regularly with art institutions and universities, art academies and other partners. The institution is located in a prominent location on the Weser Island, in the immediate vicinity of the Weserburg | Museum of Modern Art and the Center for Artists' Publications. Since 2001, the GAK has been a member of the ADKV (Association of German Art Associations). In 2001, its curatorial program was awarded the ART FRANKFURT AWARD (former Adam Elsheimer Prize) and in 2012 and 2013 it was nominated for the ADKV-ART COLOGNE Prize for German Art Associations. Since 2019 Regina Barunke is the Director.

GAK

Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst e.V.

Teerhof 21, D 28199 Bremen

+49 421 500 897

office@gak-bremen.de

www.gak-bremen.de

Opening hours

Tue–Sun 11 am–6pm

Admission

Exhibition: Euro 3.– / reduced 2.–

Event: Euro 2,50

GAK members free

Combined ticket with the Weserburg Museum: Euro 10.– / reduced 6.–

Public transport

Stop: Am Brill

Tram 1, 2 und 3

Bus 25, 26, und 27

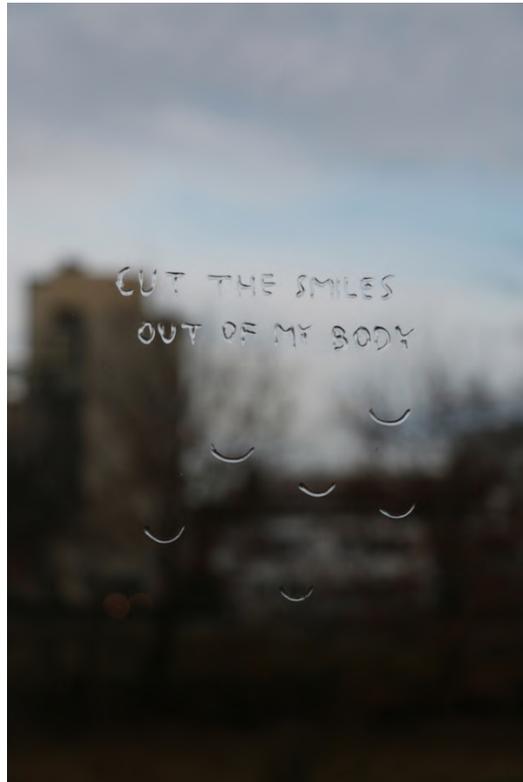
By car, please use the car park Am Brill

40 J.G AK

Press Release

GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen

13.01.2020



40 Years GAK
January–December 2020

GAK Projekte: Esther Adam
Duration: 01.02–01.03.2020
Opening: Friday, 31 January, 7 pm
Press talk: Friday, 31 January, 11 am

Press contact
Sarah Maria Kaiser
E presse@gak-bremen.de
T 0421 500 897

Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst

Teerhof 21, D 28199 Bremen +49 421 500 897 office@gak-bremen.de www.gak-bremen.de

40 J.G AK

40 Years GAK

January–December 2020

The GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst was founded in 1980. On the occasion of its 40th anniversary as an art association in Bremen this year, numerous events and projects are planned that are dedicated to its exhibition and institutional history.

For the anniversary year, the GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst will receive a temporary project space, titled "GAK Projekte". Just below its current entrance there will be a small room in which young artistic positions and projects will be presented. The prelude will be made by the Bremen artist Esther Adam.

GAK Projekte: Esther Adam

01.02–01.03.2020

For her site-specific work "Perspectives" (2020) Esther Adam draws linguistic and graphic analyses on the wide glass front of the GAK project room using transparent window colour. This hardly visible, subtle artistic work is a message intended exclusively for attentive observers. For at first only a physically empty exhibition space can be seen. In order to recognize that it is at the same time full of thought fragments, it is necessary to reposition oneself in front of the glass surface and thus also the work of art itself, to change perspectives again and again – otherwise what is seen will disappear or become an illegible trace. This dynamic relationship, which encompasses the movement and spatial engagement of the viewer, finds its parallel in what is depicted. In word and image, Esther Adam explores the relationship of the individual human being to his/her world or environment. Circles, arrows and other diagrammatic signs are repeatedly found between the terms "I" and "We", between personal thoughts and universal themes, indicating a relationship of dependence: the relationship of the individual with his fears, his vulnerability, his existence in the face of the influences of collective processes and social situations, of media and cultural phenomena, and in the face of their own codes and power systems.

Esther Adam was born in Reutlingen in 1988. Since 2014 she has been studying at the HfK University of the Arts in Bremen (master student of Natascha Sadr Haghigian).

With the generous support of

Beate + Hartmut Schaefer's Stiftung

Press Images
GAK Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen
13.01.2019



Kristina Buch, Untitled, 2016



Esther Adam, Perspectives, 2019

Kristina Buch
You can't walk unless the word runs.
01.02–19.04.2020

GAK Projekte:
Esther Adam
01.02 – 01.03.2020

Press contact
Sarah Maria Kaiser
E presse@gak-bremen.de
T +49 421 500 897

For receiving printable images, please contact us.

40 J.G AK



GAK_20KB_01_Untitled_2016.tif

Kristina Buch

Untitled

2016

Lambda print, framed in acrylic glass

25 x 14 cm



GAK_20KB_02_word_2019_Still1.tif

Kristina Buch

You can't walk unless the word runs.

2019

10-channel video installation

HD video (loop), film still

Colour, sound

Dimensions variable



GAK_20KB_03_word_2019_Still2.tif

Kristina Buch

You can't walk unless the word runs.

2019

10-channel video installation

HD video (loop), film still

Colour, sound

Dimensions variable



GAK_20KB_04_gravity1_2017.tif

Kristina Buch

How would you argue with gravity?

(No vacancy! No rival! You never saw a triangle in your life!)

2012–2017

Lambda print, framed in acrylic glass

35 x 26 cm



GAK_20KB_05_gravity2_2017.tif

Kristina Buch

How would you argue with gravity?

(No vacancy! No rival! You never saw a triangle in your life!)

2012–2017

Lambda print, framed in acrylic glass

45 x 34 cm

40 J.G AK



GAK_20KB_06_prophecy_2015.tif

Kristina Buch

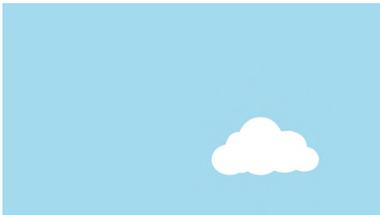
Such prophecies we write on banana skins. (triangulation of criminal grace) 2015

2-channel video installation

HD video (scope, loop), film still

2:35 min., colour, sound

Commissioned for the 14th Istanbul Biennial, 2015



GAK_20KB_07_character_2020.tif

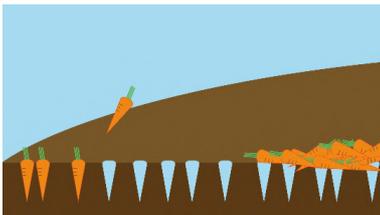
Kristina Buch

Character assassination (failure guaranteed). Dead yesterday? Seen today. Sneaked out your narrow living room, I guess.

2020

2-channel video animation

HD video (loop), film still



GAK_20KB_08_character_2020.tif

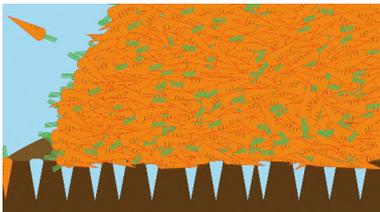
Kristina Buch

Character assassination (failure guaranteed). Root canal (picking our own pockets)

2020

2-channel video animation

HD video (loop), film still



GAK_20KB_09_character_2020.tif

Kristina Buch

Character assassination (failure guaranteed). Root canal (picking our own pockets)

2020

2-channel video animation

HD video (loop), film still

Copyright/Courtesy (all):
the artist, Dusseldorf

Installation shots by
Simon Vogel, Cologne, will be available
from 10 February 2020.

40 J.G AK



GAK_20EA_perspectives_2019.jpg

Esther Adam
Perspectives, 2019
Window colour on glass
Dimensions variable

Photo: Esther Adam
Copyright/Courtesy: the artist, Bremen

Installation shots by
Simon Vogel, Cologne, will be available
from 10 February 2020.