

FRAMER  
EBAWED

---

15 SEPT—  
12 NOV  
2017

---

CURATORS

Katia Krupennikova  
Inga Lāce

IT  
WON'T  
BE  
LONG  
NOW,  
COM-  
RADES!

EN

# IT WON'T BE LONG NOW, COMRADES!

---

## ARTISTS

Željka Blakšić - aka Gita Blak

Irina Bucan

Gluklya - aka Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya

Nikita Kadan

Tigran Khachatryan

Andreja Kulunčić

Marge Monko

Nikolay Oleynikov

Agnieszka Piksa

Karol Radziszewski

Mykola Ridnyi

Tereza Stejskalová & Zbyněk Baladrán

---

## CURATORS

Katia Krupennikova & Inga Lāce

Framer Framed presents:  
*It Won't Be Long Now, Comrades!*,  
a group exhibition coinciding with the  
100th anniversary of the Great October  
Socialist Revolution in Russia. With a  
geographical focus on countries directly  
affected by the October Revolution (and  
the Communist regime as its aftermath),  
the exhibition explores the potential  
emancipatory power of revolution and  
resistance in these post-communist  
regions today – often with reference to  
the areas' complex histories.

---

Nowadays there is a wide-spread  
scepticism of revolutions, with people  
claiming they are doomed to fail, or  
that they only worsen situations.  
This exhibition avoids the usual focus  
on disappointments. Instead, it stresses  
the often taken-for-granted rights  
today which have been hard-fought  
in the revolutions of the past, and the  
potential of revolutions in the present  
to bring about future change. It also  
focuses on the difficult but important  
task of self-organisation and bridging  
different struggles and opinions, in  
setting up truly collective, citizen-based  
political action.

So called 'post-communist' regions  
have witnessed multiple rapid  
changes in regime and state formation  
throughout the 20th century; followed  
by the re-emergence of some of  
the most recent nation states in  
the early 1990s. Along with these  
changes, different economic systems  
and ideologies have overlapped  
and replaced one another in quick  
succession. Sudden shifts from  
communism to unfettered neoliberal  
capitalism to new hybrid forms have  
led to an overwhelmingly sudden  
change in national values and ideology;  
which may well serve as a potential

learning ground, suggesting ways  
of challenging the all-consuming  
Western neoliberalism. By looking at  
the histories and present situations of  
a variety of post-communist countries,  
the artists and curators of *It Won't  
Be Long Now, Comrades!* aim to find  
answers to a series of pertinent political  
questions. How do you effectively  
organise citizen-based political action?  
Where does political agency lie, and  
how can it be (re)claimed? How can  
different, sometimes opposing voices  
be included in a revolutionary idea in an  
equal matter – combining their many  
complex and urgent points of view?  
What can we learn from the past in  
terms of revolutionary power today?

Topics revolving around the concepts  
of agency, political voice, and equal  
representation of marginalised  
social groups are manifested in  
the works of Željka Blakšić, Marge  
Monko, Karol Radziszewski, and  
Tigran Khachatryan, as well as in the  
research project by Tereza Stejskalová  
and Zbyněk Baladrán. Along similar  
lines, Agnieszka Piksa and Gluklya  
remind us that resistance may find  
various forms, and that sometimes  
it is an inherent part of everyday life.  
Stemming from both a theoretical  
and a hands-on approach, Andreja  
Kulunčić's long term multidisciplinary  
research project *Creative Strategies*  
deals with the political self-organisation  
of communities; whilst for Nikolay  
Oleynikov, love is rebellion, and the  
excitement of revolution is akin to  
sensual excitement: it makes old ways  
of life impossible, and opens a door to  
something new and uncharted.  
In her film *It is now a matter of learning  
hope* Irina Bucan seeks to address the  
role of hope in relation to the utopian

imagination and the possibility of social  
change, reciting texts of past utopian  
thinkers positioned in the physical  
environment of one of the unfinished  
projects of Romanian dictator Nicolae  
Ceaușescu. Complementing this,  
Mykola Ridnyi's newest film *Grey  
horses* examines the controversy  
surrounding the construction of  
historical memory and glorification of  
historical figures, in relation to current  
political agendas. Lastly, Nikita Kadan  
looks for ways of maintaining the  
achievements of new born civil societies  
through responsibility and care.

The title of the exhibition is borrowed  
from *Ninotchka*, a Hollywood comedy  
from 1939 that mocks the dull and grey  
communist existence, in comparison to  
the glitter and glamour of capitalism.  
With the phrase "It Won't Be Long Now,  
Comrades!" the protagonist of the film,  
Nina Ivanovna Yakushova (*Ninotchka*),  
reflects on the crisis of the capitalist  
system. In a similar way, the artists  
in this exhibition point to previous  
rapid transformations to remind us  
that political change is possible, and  
to continue the struggle for inclusive,  
bottom-up alternatives to neoliberalism.



# INTRODUCTION

*It Won't Be Long Now, Comrades!* is an exploration of contemporary activist practices that can be seen in the line of the Russian Revolution from 100 years ago. The exhibition is critical towards the major shortcomings of the results of revolutions, but at the same time wishes to emphasise the positive aspects of bottom-up activism and resistance.

Since the Cold War, a very unequivocal image has settled in our thinking about the Russian Revolution and its consequences. Justifiably, there is an emphasis on the political history of stagnant frameworks and authoritarian government, dictatorial oppression and the terror of the prison camps, which led to exclusion and mass murder. This focus on the condemnation of the totalitarian dictatorships that used communism for their own agendas, however, often disregards the great diversity of ideals and social movements that also originated from the revolutionary thought, but have for the most part disappeared since the Cold War.

In the Netherlands, these pre-war movements were often anarchistic and free of spirit. We rarely hear about the anti-militarism movement that 'did not want to pay another cent for militarism' and advocated for the independence

of the Dutch East Indies, present-day Indonesia which was still under colonial rule of the Netherlands at that time. Or about the international solidarity of people who travelled to Spain to oppose the coup of right-wing generals and who lost their Dutch citizenship because of it. Or about the education innovators who developed ideas about a cooperative didactic working community.

After 1989, the leftish ideal of a makeable society was declared dead and Western liberalism was seen as the only way forward. The well-known American sociologist, political scientist and philosopher Francis Fukuyama advocated in his book *The End of History and the Last Man*, exactly 25 years ago, that liberal democracy is the final form of government. Most governments in Western Europe expressly distance themselves of the idea that left-wing ideals still have a clear future perspective.

From left to right, people feel alienated from traditional party politics decision-making processes. A new, yet undefined international movement begins to take form, which opposes the administrative establishment and seeks alternatives to it. Partly influenced by a basic democratic thinking process, people increasingly look for different

decision-making processes. In several European countries, new initiatives dictate the local political agenda. In Reykjavik, citizens take responsibility in formulating political agendas, in Bologna they are engaged in broad coalitions with regards to the urban commons, and in Paris and Madrid, civilian budgets are created outside of traditional party politics. Citizens demand a firmer position and are proving that they are able to self-govern their direct surroundings. Critics point out that these developments are susceptible to nationalist or xenophobic agendas, or that they are used within a neoliberal agenda of increasing market forces and liberalisation, separated from a regulatory government.

The growing interest in cooperative practices and self-government is rarely connected to a historical context or traditions of self-organisation. *It Won't Be Long Now, Comrades!* traces the developments of the contemporary art discourse after 1989 in countries that previously belonged to, or expressly fell under the sphere of influence of, the Soviet Union. The generation of artists presented here mostly grew up after the fall of the Wall and sees the shortcomings of a market-oriented thinking that has replaced collectivism and solidarity with individualism. This group does not advocate a modernist sense of universalism. The artists propose how these analyses can lead to actions, and they advocate an inclusive, democratic, sustainable, small-scale, anti-capitalist, intersectional and self-directed programme, which functions as a wake-up call to the public and encourages critical reflection on, and active participation in, local, national and global political processes.

In the context of this exhibition, numerous events will be organised in the exhibition space of Framer Framed.

-

This project is part of a long-term collaboration between Framer Framed and curators Inga Lāce and Katia Krupennikova. The collaboration was established in the framework of the lecture series and educational programme *Impossible Dialogues*, which dealt with recent developments in art in Central and Eastern Europe. *Impossible Dialogues* involved a co-operation with the PATTERNS educational programme of the Erste Stiftung (Vienna) and introduced new perspectives on educational curricula in the Netherlands.

In two conferences, a broad spectrum of social themes was addressed, as well as the way they played a part in the arts after 1989. Amongst other things, the contributors focused on the rise of nationalism in Hungary, contemporary feminist art practices in post-Yugoslavia, queer art in the Czech and Slovak context, and the mediation between Roma and non-Roma through art.

Contributions were provided by leading thinkers, including Edit András, Jelena Petrović, Alevtina Kakhidze, Zuzana Štefková, Roma Sendyka and Tímea Junghaus.

# WORKS

## ŽELJKA BLAKŠIĆ AKA GITA BLAK

*Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream* (2013). Video documentation of performance, 10' 00" and musical notations for *Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream*. Produced by [BLOK] for UrbanFestival.

In this piece, Željka Blakšić aka Gita Blak explores the ways in which class and gender divisions in society can be articulated by means of music. To do so, she collaborates with local activists and independent journalists in order to compose protest songs, with the aim of disclosing minority positions in society. In her piece *Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream*, the artist endorses various aspects of the same struggle – including disfranchised workers, young people who have lost their right to education, and persons who do not fit the heterosexual norm – using music as a tool to find new ways of mobilisation, and to expand the horizon of political struggle.

*Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream* features a performance in public space by girls aged 10 to 12 years old, using the form of child-play and children's song. Through this, the artist aims to critique the common stereotype of children being unable to grasp the socio-political processes and happenings in society. It also challenges

gender norms, which still see girls as having to conform to traditionally female (pre)occupations; linked to the private, never to the public sphere. The artistic procedure in which the 'weak' – children, moreover girls – take a stand for the other marginalised groups of society, subverts the usual positions, tackling the issues of the established yet often invisible mechanisms of dominant ideology. The performance also has an outspoken educational character, since the preparation process involves girls with a different view of the society, in which various forms of repression are publicly condemned. In this way, the artist promotes equality and encourages public engagement in decision-making concerning public issues.

### BIOGRAPHY

Željka Blakšić aka Gita Blak (born 1982 in Zagreb, Croatia) is an interdisciplinary artist who currently lives and works in New York City. Her inspiration often stems from the subculture of the 1990s-era in Croatia, when punk, anarcho- and eco movements were having a renewal. Resistance manifested itself through the gathering of and cooperation between different alternative social groups. This experimental environment became a university of rebellion – a key force,



Željka Blakšić aka Gita Blak – *Whisper – Talk – Sing – Scream* (2013). Filmstill.

giving voice to new expressions of democracy, justice, common values and free speech. Blakšić's artistic career began in early adolescence in the field of music. Her current work reflects her long-term collaborations with musicians, choirs and collectives. The artist's interest lies in possibilities and peripheral areas of different media by merging the visual and audio. She works across multiple disciplines; the constants in her practice are performance, 16mm film, video and performance. She has recently taken part in exhibitions at El Museo de Los Sures, NY; Recess SOHO, NY; Museum of Modern Art, NY; Artizen Cluj, Romania; BRIC Contemporary Art Gallery, NY; to name a few.

## IRINA BUCAN

*It is now a matter of learning hope* (2014). Video, HD, 10'40". Courtesy the artist.

The film *It is now a matter of learning hope* presents an artist, Ileana Faur, learning and rehearsing fragments of written utopian theories; including those of Ernst Bloch, Constant Nieuwenhuys, Thomas More, Karl Marx and Vilem Flusser. The cyclical repetition of these complex and imaginative texts takes place at Morii Island, one of many architectural projects of Nicolae Ceaușescu's dictatorship that were never finished. The island was initially built to create an idealised recreational park in the middle of a functional lake in Bucharest. Arguably, this unfinished



Irina Bucan – It is now a matter of learning hope (2014). Filmstill.

project represents the detritus of failed utopian (or dystopian) architecture. By contrasting the desolate and somewhat ambiguous appearance of Morii Island with the constant rehearsing and re-projecting of utopian political ideas, the film seeks to address a core issue: how do we establish hopeful socio-political realities within the context of such harsh social conditions? Ultimately, is it now a matter of learning hope?

## BIOGRAPHY

Irina Bucan (born 1970 in Ploiesti, Romania) is an interdisciplinary artist working and living in Chicago, USA and Bucharest, Romania. Over the past ten years she has been engaged in an art practice that uses multiple media – digital video, film, video installation, performance, photography – to explore the current socio-political dynamics and their possibilities of transformation.

Her work combines re-enactment strategies with auditions and elements of direct cinema (as well as cinéma vérité) to look at the roles trauma, history, language, and music play in the formation of individuals and their communities. She has taken part in solo and group exhibitions at institutions such as New Museum, New York; MUSAC (Museum of Contemporary Art of Castilia and Leon); National Gallery Jeu de Paume, Paris; Kunsthalle Winterthur and Reina Sofia National Museum, Madrid. She has participated in (amongst others) the Gwangju Biennale 2010; U-Turn Quadriennial, Copenhagen; 51st Venice Biennale and Prague Biennale.

## GLUKLYA AKA

## NATALIA PERSHINA-

## YAKIMANSKAYA

From the *Clothes for Demonstrations* series:

- *Bloody Ballerina* (2015).

Watercolour on paper, 21.0 x 29.7 cm.

- *Pensioner with Beet Head* (2015).

Watercolour on paper, 21.0 x 29.7 cm.

- *Russia Stop these Wars* (2015).

Watercolour on paper. 21.0 x 29.7 cm.

From the *Clothes for Demonstration Against False Election of Vladimir Putin Part II* series:

- *Clothes for Demonstration Against False Election of Vladimir Putin Part II*. (2016). Charcoal on paper, 30.5 x 46.5 cm.

- *Screw the System* (2016).

Charcoal on paper, 30.5 x 46.5 cm.

- *Potato Patatoa* (2016).

Charcoal on paper, 29.5 x 40.6 cm.

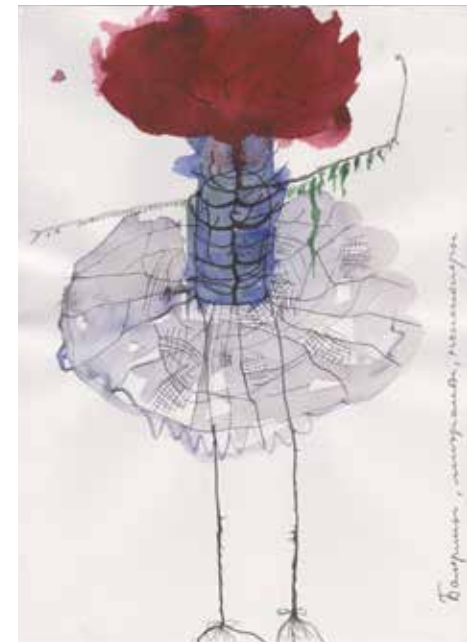
All works courtesy AKINCI and the artist.

Gluklya is well known for using clothing as a tool to build connections between art and everyday life. Addressing the personal stories of her characters, she analyses the conflict between our individual, inner lives, and the political processes that happen around us. The drawing series *Clothes for Demonstrations* is an extension of the cycle of installation works *Clothes for the Demonstration Against False Election of Vladimir Putin* (2011-2015), which consist of different garments, all referring to the protests between 2011-2013 that challenged the legitimacy of Vladimir Putin's re-election to presidency. The clothes that once

disclosed private hopes and fears have, through this work, become public banners demanding recognition and change.

## BIOGRAPHY

Gluklya aka Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya (born 1969 in Leningrad, Russia) lives and works between Amsterdam and St. Petersburg. Considered one of the pioneers of Russian performance art, she co-founded the artist collective Factory of Found Clothes (FFC), which uses conceptualised clothes referencing Utopian prepositions, and aims to bring about change in society. She is also part of the Chto Delat group,



Gluklya aka Natalia Pershina-Yakimanskaya – *Bloody Ballerina* (2015), part of *Clothes for Demonstration* series.



a multidisciplinary collective of which she has been an active member since 2003. Her work has been featured in the exhibition *All the World's Futures*, curated by Okwui Enwezor for the 56th Venice Biennale. She has furthermore taken part in exhibitions at Museum Arnhem; Moscow Museum of Modern Art; Hermitage Museum, Amsterdam; 10th Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale; MUMOK, Vienna; Creative time Summit, US; and at Shedhalle, Zurich, to name a few.

## NIKITA KADAN

*Limits of Responsibility* (2014). Sculpture, slide-show, book facsimiles. Courtesy Campagne Premiere gallery (Berlin) and waterside contemporary (London).

*Limits of Responsibility* consists of a body of work that focuses on the cultivation of vegetables amidst the tumultuous events in Ukraine in 2014. In doing so, the work explores the conditions of visual representation. A series of the artist's own photos projected onto the wall document how protestors inhabited the Independence Square of Kyiv, until they were driven away in the summer of 2014. Amongst the remains of monuments, rubble, and improvised tent encampments, the protesters planted a small garden of cabbage, onions and lettuce in the contested ground. This produce contributed to the sustenance of the activists, and rooted their claim deep into the soil. Included in the installation is an object consisting of white display boards flanking a square patch planted with lettuce and herbs, which was constructed according to a 1979 Soviet



Nikita Kadan – *Limits of Responsibility* (2014).  
Fragments of installation.

manual on how to display agricultural achievements. Here the displays have been intentionally left blank, isolating the “means of visual agitation and propaganda” from any ideological content. The work, in taking elements of the protest and rearranging it outside of its original context, exposes the limits of the positions we can assume as observers and participants.

## BIOGRAPHY

Nikita Kadan (born 1982 in Kyiv, Ukraine) is an artist living and working in Kyiv, Ukraine. In his practice Kadan employs painting, graphics, and installation, often in interdisciplinary collaboration with architects, sociologists and human rights activists. His work is a critical investigation into the experience of present-day Ukrainians and their relationship to their Soviet past.

He is a member of the artist group REP (Revolutionary Experimental Space) and founding member of Hudrada (Artistic Committee), a curatorial and activist collective. Kadan's work has been exhibited internationally, including exhibitions at CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw; ZKM, Karlsruhe; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Castello di Rivoli; 1st Kiev Biennale at Art Arsenal; and the 55th Venice Biennale. He is the winner of the PinchukArtCentre Prize, 2011.

## TIGRAN KHACHATRYAN

*Like It or Not: the Armenian Communist Party Should Be Given to This Young People* (2016). Video, 6' 35". Courtesy the artist.

Throughout late June and early July 2015, many young Armenians blocked the main avenue of Yerevan (the country's capital) to protest against the rising electricity prices. The two-week long demonstration came to be known as “Electric Yerevan”. As a reporter covering the event for a news platform, Epress.am, Khachatryan had the chance to witness the protest right at the centre of it. He then decided to create a work that would attempt to continue the civic activism, rather than make a film simply documenting it. In his video, entitled *Like It or Not: the Armenian Communist Party Should Be Given to This Young People*, the artist calls on Pier Paolo Pasolini's controversial poem *The PCI to the Young!*, whose politics inspired him whilst producing his work. For his videowork, the artist also borrowed clips from Donald Richie's film *Boy with Cat*, whose approaches to aesthetics match the feelings Khachatryan is trying to convey;

that is, the aesthetic of a lone rebel in a highly commercialised environment created by institutionalised political opposition parties over the years. These elements are combined with clips shot by Khachatryan during the Electric Yerevan. The clips themselves were not easy to obtain: during the protests, on June 23, law enforcement officers seized Khachatryan's camera and deleted the entire footage he had captured of them violently dispersing the demonstration. His team was then able to restore the video materials with help from their programmer friends. *Like It or Not: the Armenian Communist Party Should Be Given to This Young People* is the product of the artist's conviction that, despite the failure of parties and political processes, the goal of progressive artists should still be the construction of Communism.

## BIOGRAPHY

Tigran Khachatryan (born 1980 in Yerevan, Armenia) graduated from the Yerevan Academy of Fine Arts in 2004. Khachatryan's artistic research favours the use of video, and reflects many of the most pressing socio-political questions of our time: the global crisis and socialist economics, the radical left, and the revolutionary wave that has broken out in many parts of the world. Khachatryan's works have previously been shown at Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato; and at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

## ANDREJA KULUNČIĆ

*What has our struggle given to me?*. Part of the multidisciplinary research project *Creative Strategies* (2010 – ongoing). Installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist.

*Creative Strategies* is a long-term multidisciplinary project that encompasses theoretical research, art production, activism and processes of critical reflection. It is an ongoing project that Andreja Kulunčić started in 2010, with the purpose of mapping and facilitating strategies to articulate social problems, and to support the search for solutions on both micro and macro level. The project has had several iterations in different places and consists of 3 different stages, which she calls ‘modules’: public spaces (module 1), community (module 2) and the toolkit (module 3).

For this piece, the artist brought together several activist groups in the 3rd module of the project, to build together a “TOOLKIT FOR A JOINT ACTION”. This toolkit is a portable modular spatial unit which travels around smaller towns and regions of Croatia, with the purpose of educating, informing, networking and archiving activities within the project. The toolkit engages with issues of direct democracy, contextual theology, feminism, syndicalism, engaged art, rights to the city, and sustainable living. Named after Kulunčić’s film of the same title, *What has our struggle given to me?*, this presentation centres on the film, and on a portable glossary created as part of the 3rd module. It examines the possibilities of self-organisation of workers in a country

in which corruption, privatisation, and social erosion play an important role. Realised as a series of interviews with the protagonists of various workers’ struggles, the video presents workers, factories, companies and trade unions who protest and defend workers’ rights during the dramatic collapse of the social security system. The installation is a call to the audience; encouraging joint actions in finding alternative solutions to the discontents of capitalism.

### BIOGRAPHY

Andreja Kulunčić (born 1968 in Subotica, Serbia) is an artist who lives and works in Croatia, where she also teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, in the Department of New Media. Kulunčić’s art practice is based on an exploration of new models of sociability and communication practices; and she is interested in socially engaged themes, confrontations with different audiences, and the principle of collaborative work. She sets up her own interdisciplinary networks, considering her artistic work a kind of research; a process of collaboration and self-organisation. She often asks the audience to participate actively and help “finish” the work. An important element of Andreja Kulunčić’s work is the creation of a multidisciplinary practice in which specific artistic skills are complemented with other non-artistic techniques. Her work has been part of several international exhibitions, including Documenta 11, Kassel; Manifesta 4, Frankfurt/Main; 8th Istanbul Biennial; 4th Liverpool Biennial; 3rd Tirana Biennial; and 10th Triennial-India, New Delhi. She has had solo shows at Museo

Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City; Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; Museo MADRE, Napoli; Art in General, New York; Silkeborg Bad Art centre; Artspace Visual Art Center, Sydney and Darat Al Funun, Jordan, to name a few.

### MARGE MONKO

*I (Don’t) Want a Baby* (2017). Photo wallpaper, vinyl sticker, acrylic glass. Dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and Ani Molnar gallery Budapest.

The subject of the wall piece *I (Don’t) Want a Baby* is a figure of the “new woman” cultivated in the Soviet Union after the revolution. The new woman, in contrast to the bourgeoisie model, was actively participating in building up the new society and practicing free love; exempt from caring and child rearing responsibilities. Among other things, the Bolsheviks legalised abortions in 1919 in order to prevent women from dying of the procedures performed in sketchy circumstances.

The vinyl graphics used in the work represent fashion designs for the new woman, created by Nadezhda Lamanova and drawn by Vera Mukhina, published in the book *Art in the Everyday* (1925). The text is from Sergei Tretiakov’s play *I Want a Baby* (1926), in which the protagonist is an unmarried political activist, Milda, who decides to have a child on her own. The play is written as a “discussion piece” – rejecting traditional formulas for a theatre play, the actions of the characters are scrutinised from the viewpoint of ideas prevalent in Soviet society. In addition to providing the viewer with a new type of independent

and sexually liberated female character, Tretiakov takes up the theme of eugenics, referring to a Soviet “Healthy Baby contest” announced by the magazine *Hygiene and Health of the Worker and Peasant Family* in 1926. The acrylic glass plates added as a second layer to the piece, depict symbols related to female fertility and contraception – issues that are still relevant to political struggles today.

### BIOGRAPHY

Marge Monko (born 1980 in Tallinn, Estonia) lives and works in Tallinn, Estonia. She studied photography at the Estonian Academy of Arts and the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. As an artist she primarily works with photography, installation and moving images. She is interested in how these mediums are and have been used as tools in, amongst others, the field of science, the field of communication (such as press, advertising) and state institutions. Most of her works link to some historical event, and are influenced by psychoanalysis, feminism, and theories of visual culture. Depending on the subject, Monko’s research includes documenting, staging, and appropriation; and she often uses a combination of these. Monko has had solo exhibitions in galleries in Tallinn, Helsinki, Budapest, and in museum Mumok, Vienna. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Manifesta 9, Genk; Center for Contemporary Art, Glasgow; and Bétonsalon, Paris, amongst others.





Nikolay Oleynikov - IN A COLD SWEAT I JUMPED OUT OF MY BED,  
I DREAMT THAT UPRISING WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE... (2016).  
Fragment of installation.

## NIKOLAY OLEYNIKOV

*IN A COLD SWEAT I JUMPED OUT OF MY BED, I DREAMT THAT UPRISING WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE...* (2016). Installation (textile, sewing, acrylic), dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist.

The installation presented by Oleynikov consists of used bed sheets and towels that preserve the traces of someone's life: their wishes, nightmares, impulses, dreams and bodily fluids. Sleep has played a role in Oleynikov's work previously, such as in his 2005 monumental mural *Sleeping worker*, and in the 2007 graphic series *Heroes*. The first addressed the political sleep of the modern working class, whereas the second portrayed indifferent young people sunbathing on the beach; thus interpreting the civil passivity of the contemporary intellectual class. In this new work the artist returns to the theme of sleep, and yet again interprets it politically. The protagonist of the work wakes up in cold sweat, and realises that his loved one "left him before the dawn" (classical motif for blues songs). Additionally, he has just woken up from a nightmare in which any sort of insurrection was impossible, and the thoughts of it still torture him. Here, the artist connects the loss of his partner to the impossibility of civil political action. In other words, to him love is rebellion, and the excitement of revolution is akin to sensual excitement. Love and political revolt are also comparable in that, once materialised, they make old life impossible – and both open a door to something new and uncharted, which in the present moment seems to be indefinitely glorious.

As he often does, Oleynikov gives this piece the structure of a ballad, or even of a collection of songs. He quotes or refers to songs from varying bands; from The Sparks (*Rock!*) to Meredith Monk (*Last Song*), to late soviet punk phenomena (Zvuki Mu, Grazhdanskaya Oborona, Zdob Si Zdub). He also recites poems in Italian, such as the fragment of the Russian poet Mayakovsky's *Cloud in Trousers*. And one of the major pieces of this series is Oleynikov's own poem:

### IL MIO COMMUNIQUE

In every curl on your pelvis – Lenin  
In every new sip of your saliva – Gramsci  
In your left armpit – Angela Davis in  
ferocious leap  
In every scratch-hatch-crack-  
fold – Virno/Agamben/Negri and their  
comrades-in-melancholy  
On this and on this nipple –  
Luxemburg and Aliende  
In amber of your jet – poor Benjamin  
On a single hair – our Pier-Paolo collapsed  
on the sand  
That's why in each splash and every  
slap of my sperm there is 0.01% average  
concentration of your tears, and unless 1  
drop of my menstrual blood  
QUESTO E' PERCHE

*Oleynikov's installation was carried out with the help of sewing cooperative "Shvemy" (Anna Tereshkina, Olesya Zamojskaya).*

## BIOGRAPHY

Nikolay Oleynikov (born 1976 in Gorky (Nizhny Novgorod), Russia) is a St. Petersburg based artist, member of Chto Delat, and editor for Chto Delat newspaper. Since 2013 Oleynikov is a tutor at the School of Engaged Art of Chto Delat; as well as being involved in the board of Rosa's House of Culture, a

multidisciplinary hub for new practices of engaged culture in St. Petersburg (since 2015). Oleynikov is known for his didactic murals and graphic works within the tradition of the Soviet monumental school; as well as for his comics, surrealist-like imagery, and elements of punk culture in his work. Oleynikov has had numerous international shows at amongst others Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (MAM/ARC); Serralves Museum, Porto; Cittadellarte – Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella; and Museo dell'Arte Contemporaneo Luigi Pecci, Prato. In Russia his works have been shown at amongst others Moscow Museum of Modern Art; Center for Contemporary Art, Voronezh, and NCCA in Moscow, Yekaterinburg and Nizhny Novgorod. Oleynikov is author of the book *Sex of the Oppressed* (2013).

## AGNIESZKA PIKSA

*Instructions for a Protester* (2017). Zine, A6 format. Courtesy the artist.

In the *Instructions for a Protester* guide, produced specially for this exhibition, Agnieszka Piksa collected some basic tools and tips for a non-violent fight for freedom, from Polish citizens active in protests. It is inspired by the experience of Czesław Bielecki, an architect and a politician who was an active member of the Solidarity movement\* in Poland, specifically his book *Freedom: Do It Yourself Manual* (2010). She also took inspiration from the book *The Art of Being Right: 38 Ways to Win an Argument* (1831), a sarcastic treatise by Arthur Schopenhauer, and the writings of Polish architect and theoretician Oskar Nikolai Hansen (1922-2005).

Starting from the idea of organising a revolutionary movement through everyday self-organisation, the artist brings up aspects of resistance such as non-violent intellectual methods of conflict, tools for producing a revolutionary visual identity for street posters, forms of group voicing and a survival kit for street protests.

\*The Solidarity anti-bureaucratic inclusive social movement (September 1980-December 1981, re-emerged in 1989) was the first trade union in the Warsaw pact country controlled by the communist regime. In 1980-1981 it was a powerful force, that up until today inspires the world with its non-violent and daring activity.

## BIOGRAPHY

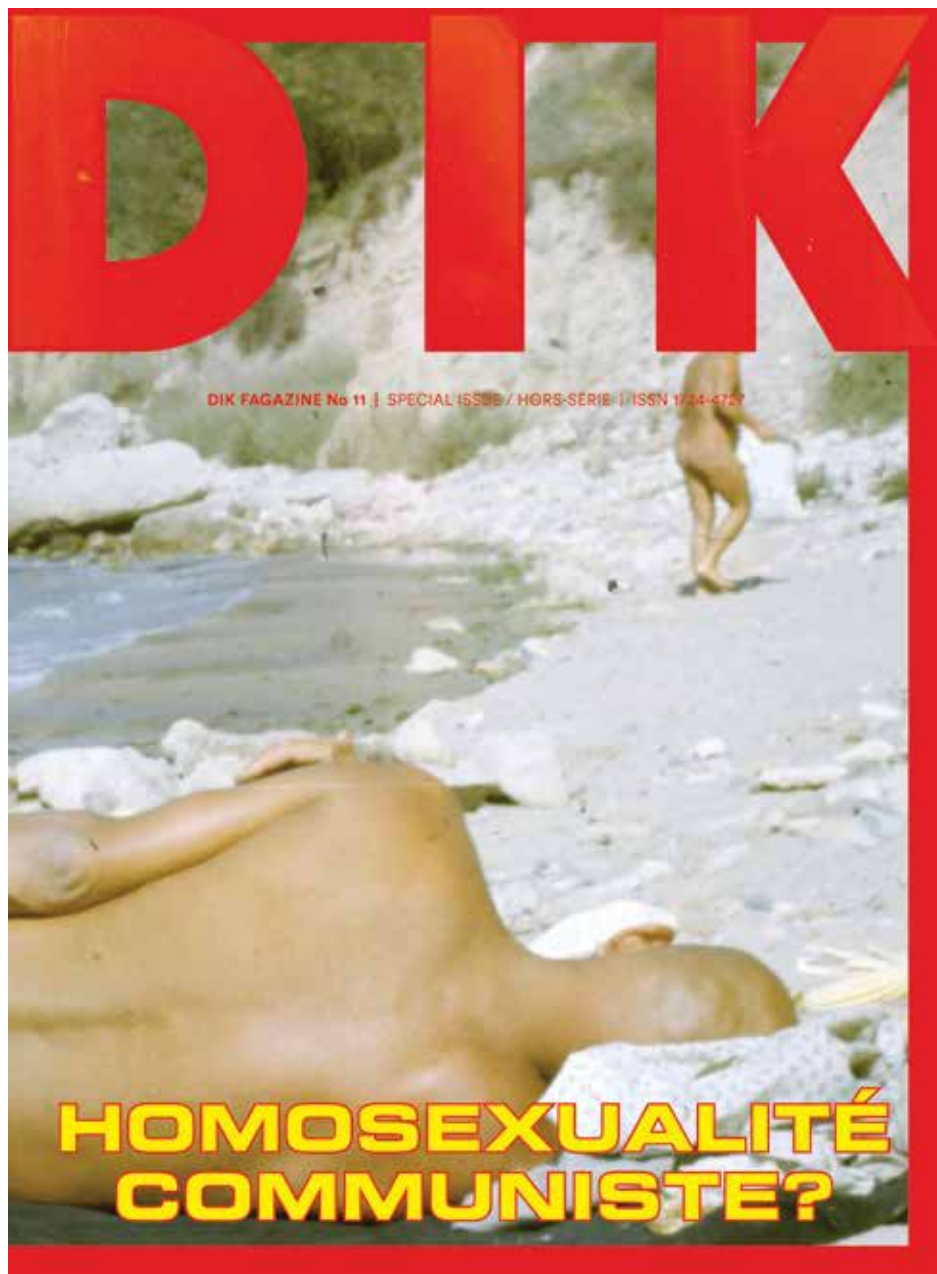
Agnieszka Piksa (born 1984 in Warsaw, Poland) lives and works in Kraków, Poland. Piksa graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts of Kraków, and currently works with illustration, comic books, drawings and design, and occasionally VJing. Her work analyses visual languages in order to expose stereotypes of communication. Piksa has had recent exhibitions at Galeria Biała, Lublin; 31st São Paulo Biennial; Arsenal Gallery, Białystok; Gallery Škuc, Ljubljana; BWA Tarnów; Museum of Contemporary Art, Kraków; Museum of Art, Łódź.

## KAROL RADZISZEWSKI

*QAI/Revolution* (2017). Installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist.

Karol Radziszewski presents a selection of materials on the topic of queer resistance from the collection of the Queer Archives Institute (QAI),





Karol Radziszewski – Cover DIK Magazine No 11 (2017). Part of installation QAI/Revolution.

which he founded in November 2015. QAI is a non-profit artist-run organisation dedicated to research, collection, digitalisation, presentation, exhibition, analysis and artistic interpretation of queer archives, with a special focus on Central and Eastern Europe.

Amongst others, the display introduces Ryszard Kisiel, founder of the first East-Central European gay-zine, *Filo*, and a major inspirational figure for Karol Radziszewski. Kisiel's archive consists of dozens of colour slides, documenting photoshoots organised by Kisiel and his friends in a private apartment. The photos, taken in 1985 and 1986, may be considered a direct reaction to the Polish anti-gay militia campaign ("Hiacynt"), during which the Secret Police collected information about homosexuals in Poland, later using them as blackmail. The snapshots from Kisiel's archive are also a testimony of the early AIDS years, the collective memory of which is limited, and still remains in the "intimate public sphere". The Kisiel archive brings us close to the everyday in the 1980s, and shines a light on the transnational undercurrent of the decade. His work defies the apparent binary Cold-War era oppositions between East and West; pointing instead to the underlying and surprisingly cosmopolitan commonality of the sexual, political and artistic avant-garde of the day – in Gdansk, Warsaw, London, and New York City.

Inspired by *Filo*, Karol Radziszewski has founded *DIK Magazine*, that he has been self-publishing since 2005. *DIK Magazine* is currently the only artistic magazine from Central and Eastern Europe focused on the topics of homosexuality and masculinity.

## BIOGRAPHY

Karol Radziszewski (born 1980 in Białystok, Poland) lives and works in Warsaw, Poland, where he received his MFA from the Academy of Fine Arts in 2004. He works with film, photography, installations and creates interdisciplinary projects. His archive-based methodology contains multiple cultural, historical, religious, social and gender references. His work has been presented in institutions such as the National Museum, Museum of Modern Art and Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; New Museum, New York; amongst others. He has participated in several international biennales including PERFORMA 13, New York; 7th Göteborg Biennial; 4th Prague Biennial and the 15th WRO Media Art Biennale.

## MYKOLA RIDNYI

*Grey horses* (2016). HD video, 44' 30".  
Courtesy of the artist.

The narrative for *Grey horses* is based on the records of interrogations and memories of relatives of the unknown Ukrainian anarchist Ivan Krupskyi; who was the great-grandfather of the film's author. In this work, documentary and staged episodes intertwine to reflect paradoxical periods of the hero's life: the leadership of a rebel group, his participation in the Civil War of the early 1920s, his need to hide from persecution by taking the disguise of a Soviet policeman, and his employment as a builder of a plant.

This storytelling of the past is performed by today's heroes:



contemporary anarchists, police officers, students and workers. The film was shot in different regions of Central and Eastern Ukraine, in relation to these specific historical events. Drawing parallels between different times and mixing reality and fiction, the film poses questions about controversies surrounding the construction of historical memory and glorification of historical figures in relation to current political agendas.

## BIOGRAPHY

Mykola Ridnyi (born 1985 in Kharkiv, Ukraine) lives and works in Kharkiv, Ukraine. He graduated in 2008 from the National Academy of Design and Fine Arts in Kharkiv. As an artist he creates short films, photography series, and installations in public space. Since 2005, he has been a founding member of the SOSka group, an artistic and curatorial collective based in Kharkiv. His works have been shown internationally at exhibition spaces and film festivals including, most recently, *Docudays, documentary film festival about human rights*, Kyiv (2017); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Videokunstzentrum Nordsternurm, Gelsenkirchen; GfZK – Museum for contemporary art Leipzig; Kyiv Biennial of 2015; The 56th Venice Biennale; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; and DAAD gallery, amongst others. Selected filmography: *Regular places* (2015), *Fortress* (2014), *Dima* (2013).



Mykola Ridnyi – Grey horses (2016). Filmstills.

## TEREZA STEJSKALOVÁ &

### ZBYNĚK BALADRÁN

*Biafra of Spirit* (2016). Installation consisting of 4 videos (variable lengths), poster, printed materials.

## ESSAY ON THE WORK BIAFRA OF SPIRIT - BY TEREZA STEJSKALOVÁ

The phrase “Biafra of Spirit” was coined by Louis Aragon in *Les Lettres Françaises* during October of 1968 to refer to the effects of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia; namely, to the crackdown of Czechoslovak intellectuals. Perhaps today we no longer see why the name of an African secessionist state in eastern Nigeria – Biafra – was used to describe the crashed reformist revolution in an Eastern European country. The two tragic events took place at about the same time. Yet, there is more to the

“Biafra of Spirit”. Despite great cultural, geographical and political differences, the struggle of the Czechoslovak people and the people of Biafra were understood by many at the time as the very same fight – a courageous struggle for independence in the face of a much stronger oppressor. In other words, both Biafra and Czechoslovakia have become symbols, the importance of which exceeded their respective borders. And so we read in the archives of the University of 17th November, the Czechoslovak institution of higher education in charge of international students of non-aligned countries: “During the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of Czechoslovakia’s declaration of independence, Biafran students have staged a symbolic ‘dance of feathers’, a traditional war dance, and with feathers they decorated the portrait of Dubček which was brought to the stage to help them reach victory.”

The word “spirit” in the phrase can be understood as referring not only to the catastrophe of the defeat, and to the emergence of a new sense of despair, but also to something we could call internationalism: solidarity that surpasses geographical, cultural and political differences. It is in this spirit the project wishes to actualise – bring to the present – the often uneasy interaction with cultural otherness.

The 1960s in Czechoslovakia were marked by an increasing number of students from countries part of the Non-Aligned Movement coming to Prague, Bratislava and other cities to study at the local universities. It was a result of the internationalist spirit of communist ideology and the state-imposed solidarity with the former

colonies. The communist elites might have been internationalist; nevertheless, the arrival of students from Africa, Asia, and South America created friction and misunderstanding in the postwar homogeneous Czechoslovak society, which had been cleared of most minorities that had lived there before the war. The encounter with the students from Asia and Africa was for most Czechoslovak citizens the first real encounter with cultural otherness. As noted by the voiceover in the 1968 documentary film *Black and White* by Krishma Vishwanath, an Indian student of film in Prague:

“Our grandfathers have encountered them as curiosities on display in a circus; our fathers knew them as soldiers of the American army, and we meet them everyday.”

Racism and xenophobia were a taboo in the socialist country. There was no public debate on the problems foreign students encountered in Czechoslovakia as narrated by the archival materials. They found no mention in the official media. It was in the realm of culture, through the socially critical cinematic image of the Czechoslovak New Wave (e.g. Drahomíra Vihanová’s *Fugue on the Black Keys* (1964) or Jaromír Jireš’s *The Cry* (1964)) that the tension first found its articulation. During the Prague Spring of 1968, University of 17th November started to publish a newspaper called *Forum*, the contributors of which were the foreign students themselves. Here they could for the first time – until *Forum* was dissolved a year later – write openly about their experience in Czechoslovakia and reflect on their



Tereza Stejskalová and Zbyněk Baladrán - *Autoignition* (2016). Filmstill. Film part of installation *Biafra of Spirit*.

studies, their encounters with the local customs and people and, most importantly, on the political and cultural upheaval they were witnessing and in which some of them were directly involved.

*Forum* was also full of student poetry, essays and reviews on literature, cinema, art and culture of the various exotic countries. It was students skilled in poetic practice who represented an eloquent voice offering a perspective on history that to this day complicates our understanding of Czech and Slovak cultural identity. Most students who studied art in Czechoslovakia chose film as their means of expression. Besides significant filmmakers such as Nabil Maleh from Syria, Mohammed Lakhdar-Hamina from Algeria, Karimi Nosratollah, Pati Pramod from India or Octavio Cortazár from Cuba, there

were others whose destinies after they left Czechoslovakia remain unknown, despite that they left behind remarkable films and documentaries. Their films are images of internationalism, of cultural exchange, and of the role Czechoslovak art played in the cultural emancipation of countries with colonial pasts. They pose never before asked questions about the influence these temporary residents had on Czechoslovak culture and politics. The work *Biafra of Spirit* is a political proposal to consider these links and exchanges as bearing significant legacy.

#### BIOGRAPHIES

Tereza Stejskalová (born 1981 in Prague, Czech Republic) is a curator and a writer currently working for Tranzitdisplay. Her curatorial

projects are research-based and her collaboration with artists avoids the usual hierarchy of curator-artist relationship with the curator as someone who inserts the artwork in the context of an exhibition. She has previously collaborated with the artist Barbora Kleinhamplová with whom she curated exhibitions (*Fieldwork on the Human Kind; In Dialogue with Harun Farocki*, Fotograf Festival, 2015), produced artworks (*Sleepers' Manifesto*: New Museum, New York, 2014, *Sleepers*: Tranzitdisplay, 2014; 11th Gwangju Biennale) and co-authored a book (*Who Is an Artist?*, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, 2015). *Biafra of Spirit*, her collaboration with Zbyněk Baladrán, was earlier shown at Tranzit.sk, Bratislava and at National Gallery, Prague. Recently, she has been working on a collaborative project on the concept of a Feminist (Art) Institution.

Zbyněk Baladrán (born 1973 in Prague, Czechoslovakia) is an author, artist, curator and exhibition architect. He studied art history in the Philosophy Department of the Charles University (Univerzita Karlova) and in the studios for Visual Communication, Painting and New Media at the Academy of Fine Arts, both in Prague. In 2001 he co-founded Display, a space for contemporary art, which in 2007 was changed to Tranzitdisplay, where he is now responsible for the exhibitions program. In his works Baladrán investigates those territories commonly referred to as 'Western'. Using a methodology similar to that of ethnographers, anthropologists and sociologists, he digs up remnants of the not-so-distant past.

As (co-)curator, he worked on the long term research project *Monument to Transformation*, and on Manifesta 8 in Murcia, Spain (2010). He also exhibited in MoMA, NY (2015), in the 56th Venice Biennale (2013) and in the 11th Lyon Biennial (2011), to name a few. He is represented by the Jocelyn Wolff Gallery in Paris, Gandy Gallery in Bratislava and Hunt Kastner in Prague.

---

## ON THE CURATORS OF *It Won't Be Long Now, Comrades!*

Katia Krupennikova (born 1982 in Moscow, Russia) is a curator and art critic based in Amsterdam. She graduated from De Appel Curatorial Program in 2012. She currently works as an assistant curator at Bergen Assembly 2017-2019 and earlier worked at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw. In her independent curatorial practice, Krupennikova investigates how international artists respond to and comment on pertinent social and political contexts. She was the winner of Akbank Sanat International Curator Competition 2015. The resulting exhibition *Post-Peace*, meant to take place in Istanbul, was censored by the host institution; it subsequently opened in an extended form at Württembergische Kunstverein in Stuttgart (2017) and in Nest in Den Haag (2017). Her other recent projects include *Games People Play*, Nest, Den Haag (2016); *INSIDEOUT*, a special project of the 6th Moscow Biennale (the project consisted of tours to 8 apartments of Moscow inhabitants); *There is Absolutely No Cause for Alarm*, within a special program of the Unseen Festival, De Punt and Kepler Studio Amsterdam, Amsterdam (2015); *Women Commentators: Russia and Ukraine*, National Museum Krolikarnia, Warsaw (2014); *My Joy*, a special project of Artgenève, Palexpo (2014). As an art critic Krupennikova writes for colta.ru about international events and for various art catalogues.

Inga Lāce (born 1986 in Jūrmala, Latvia) lives in Riga and is a curator at the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (LCCA). She was a curatorial fellow at de Appel arts centre, Amsterdam (2015-2016) where she examined the intertwined relationships between nature and culture, (art) institutions and ecology, resulting in a symposium *Instituting Ecologies* (October, 2016) and a publication (forthcoming in 2017). She has recently curated the exhibitions *Resilience. Secret Life of Plants, Animals and Other Species*, Bükü – Büro für kulturelle Übersetzungen, Leipzig (2016), and *Lost in the Archive* (with Andra Silapetere, 2016), Riga, that took the LCCA's archive of contemporary art as a starting point. She also curated the exhibition *(Re)construction of Friendship* (2014) held in the former KGB house in Riga. Lāce has co-edited the book *Revisiting Footnotes. Footprints of the Recent Past in the Post-Socialist Region* (with Ieva Astahovska, 2015). She has been co-curator of the 7th and 8th edition of the contemporary art festival *Survival Kit* (2015-16) and is currently working on *Survival Kit 9* (with Solvita Krese and Jonatan Habib Engqvist). She is also co-curator of a research project called *Portable Landscapes*, which traces and contextualises Latvian artists' emigration exile stories throughout 20th century (forthcoming at Villa Vassiliev, Paris, and Latvian National Art Museum, 2018).

---

TEXT AND EDITING  
Katia Krupennikova / Inga Lāce  
The artists  
Framer Framed

GRAPHIC DESIGN  
Diego Montero Ris

FRAMER FRAMED IDENTITY  
Van Lennep, Amsterdam

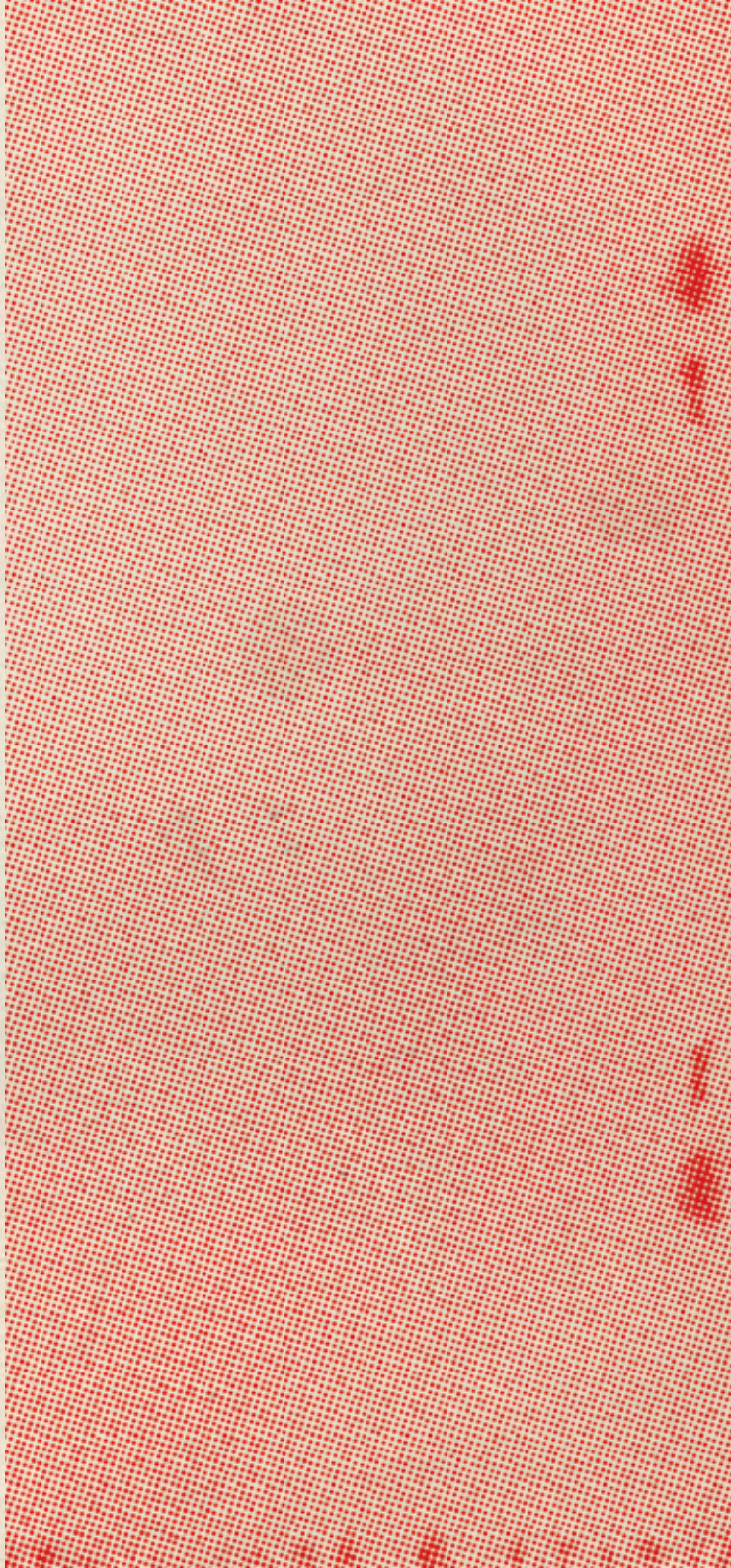


TOLHUISTUIN



ADDRESS

Framer Framed  
IJpromenade 2  
1031 KT Amsterdam

A large, vertical red halftone pattern covers the right half of the page. It consists of a dense grid of small dots, with some larger, more irregular dots scattered throughout, creating a textured, screen-like effect. The pattern is uniform in color but varies in density and dot size.

OPENING TIMES

Tue – Fri: 13:00 – 21:00  
Sat – Sun: 11:00 – 21:00

CONTACT

framerframed.nl  
020 763 09 73  
press@framerframed.nl