

## EMOTIONAL LANDS

Maria Hanl & Ziad Naitaddi

curated by Elisabeth Piskernik & Achraf Remok

Opening: Friday, 01/03/2024, 6 pm

Duration: 02/03 – 16/04/2024

In a rapidly changing emotional and physical landscape, we migrate through life by the labyrinthine forces of the mind and the subconscious. We are ever more presented with questions of who we are, what we feel, where we are heading, whom we are taking this journey with, and where we belong. In undiscovered lands, both mentally, emotionally and geographically, narratives unfold, written from diverse and disparate perspectives.

Genetic memories, thoughts, and emotions animate our physical movements, playing a pivotal role in our evolution. Within this interplay, the rejection of migration, whether on a physical or emotional scale, is tantamount to resisting the essential transformation of living matter required for Darwinian evolution. This perspective aligns with Kant's notion that changes in nature respond to diverse stimuli, ranging from genetic adaptations to emotional responses triggered by potential threats.

The exhibition "Emotional Lands" probes the intricacies of human emotions and prompts us to explore the triggers and catalysts behind our evolving emotional landscape. Artists Maria Hanl (Vienna) and Ziad Naitaddi (Salé) delve into the themes of migration and political manipulation, offering their own researched perspectives.

During his residency at philomena+, Ziad Naitaddi encountered people in exile and migrants, whose narratives became the basis for his works, conveying the gradual shift of emotional landscapes. A discourse on identity and home, echoing the theoretical foundations of Homi K. Bhabha. His artistic pursuit revolves around the exploration of emotional "transmutation", and the concept of belonging.

Ziad's chosen method is to extract details from static images, employing a visual surgery that reduces each element to its microscopic

essence. Images are reduced to their pixels, which in turn become the story, used to a political end. He narrates the process of emotional manipulation through his transformation, deliberately eliciting a specific emotional response, simulating the alteration of reality.

At the same time, Ziad's videographic imagery – an exploration of movement and weight – delves into the inherent fatigue accompanying physical movement, capturing the idea of migration and displacement, and the layered impact of constant relocation and the search for habitat.

In Ziad's work, a question arises: if one manages to perceive beyond the surface of images, freeze a moment within moments, what emerges? What defines reality? What meanings and emotions linger in the stillness, in those undiscovered moments while time is suspended? How can we witness the intricate process of movement and the unfolding emotions within it? All these sensations, the nostalgia of a revolutionary era or memories no longer accessible in motion, reveal experiences surpassing the immediate grasp of mind and heart. In the manipulative world of who moves first, who arrives first, and what remains behind, a migration of emotions takes place.

Maria Hanl highlights the invisible links present in society. She explores the highly charged emotional and psychological subject of mass-manipulation through political existence and action.

Inspired by Gustave Le Bon's "Psychology of the Masses", she scrutinizes his assertion of dissemination and imposition of ideology as a potent tool for influencing people through her contemporary lens.

Maria's work transcends mere representation of mass manipulation; it becomes an exploration of the intricacies inherent in collective consciousness. Each thread in her installation unfurls the clandestine mechanisms at work, weaving interconnectedness among individuals and entities. Through a deft interplay of gestures and psychological states, Maria not only acknowledges this interwoven invisible links but also unveils the underlying dynamics of manipulation that govern it.

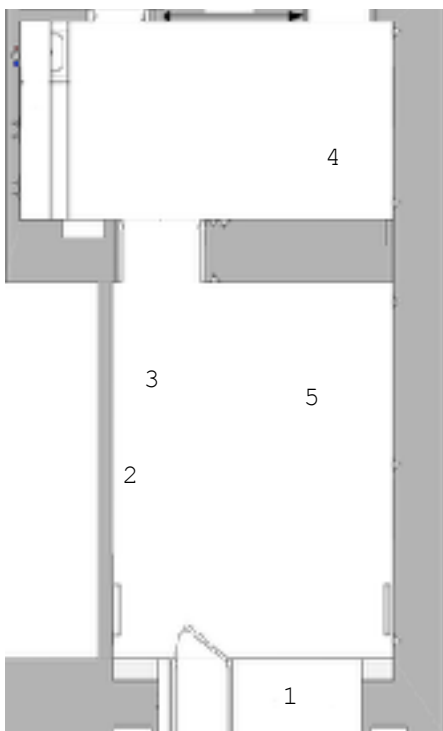
Emotional connections are not fixed; instead, they sway with external influences. A specific "selected medium" acts as the channel for spreading messages, profoundly shaping the collective perception. Initial interactions create lasting impressions capable of influencing, manipulating, or even reshaping societal dynamics. Yet, Maria's perspective critically

scrutinizes these connections, revealing their concealed and elusive characteristics.

Certainly, emotions are not static entities; instead, they are dynamic interactions between living beings, offering a lens through which to examine relationships and social dynamics. In Maria's work, fear emerges as a potent and pervasive force that molds our collective human experience. She encourages viewers to contemplate the complexities of emotions amid rapidly changing social dynamics. The juxtaposition of emotions and power dynamics prompts us to question and criticize the manipulations inherent in societal structures.

What's the game plan? Do we gracefully proceed, sashaying in a world where each step comes with its own set of restrictions? Glide. Experience. Maintain that ever-so-critical ground control.

Text by Achraf Remok, February 2024



(1) Maria Hanl, *Do we recognise the old patterns in the new design?*, digital print on textil, 2023/24.

(2) Maria Hanl, *Das Zentrum der Macht ist leer, auf dem Stuhl sitzt niemand mehr\**(\*Paul Verhaeghe), installation with photography, drawing, threads, coils, clay, ink, text, wooden board, slag.

(3) Maria Hanl, *Can you hear the melodie?*, photography, glas, textil, table object, 2024.

(4) Maria Hanl, *Wir müssen uns mehr küssen*, video, FullHD, 2022.

(5) Ziad Naitaddi, *Fouad is not a criminal. Captive*, ongoing project.