

pet bijelih stepenica

KUSTOSICE **Što, kako i za koga/whw i**
ana kovačić

ANTON KATS

Sonic Lattice • 2025 • interactive audio installation

Sonic Lattice is an interactive installation inviting the audience to consider and engage with multiple architectures of listening. It carries a residual tape recording of the *Listening Hymns* performance from the *Five White Stairs* exhibition—an improvised sonic composition amplifying the voices of bell hooks, Chick Corea, James Baldwin, Octavia Butler, Paul Kivel, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Ursula K. Le Guin, and others. Creating a space where listening and reading converge, *Sonic Lattice* hosts books from related practitioners, inviting visitors to listen, reflect, and immerse themselves in sound, spoken word, and text. The books will remain in the library after the exhibition. (ANTON KATS)

Anton Kats (Kherson, Ukraine) works as an artist, musician, and educator across a range of media. Also known under the fluid identity of performer ILYICH, Kats' practice draws from the everyday, inspired by the complex narratives of Satellite Island, his hometown neighborhood in the southern Ukrainian port city of Kherson. His work takes the form of installations, objects, drawings, concerts, lectures, performances, poetry, films, radio shows, radio plays, vinyl releases, and publications—unfolding within cultural institutions, informal networks, and public spaces. Kats' work has been widely presented at the House of World Cultures, steirischer herbst, SAVVY Contemporary, Serpentine Galleries, and Tate Modern, among many others. He participated in documenta14 and performed at Roskilde Festival, Fusion Festival, and Sonic Acts. Kats holds a PhD from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and is a fellow of the Berlin Artistic Research Programme (2024–25).

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22.3.—26.4.2025.

JÚLIUS KOLLER

Question Mark's Cultural Situation /
Otazníková kultúrna situácia (U.F.O.) • 1992 •
Latex paint on textile, facsimile

COURTESY Július Koller Society, Bratislava

From 1969 onward, the question mark became Július Koller's signature, subject matter, and medium: a reaction to the sociopolitical instability in Czechoslovakia. The year before, the military troops of the Warsaw Pact had invaded the country, abruptly ending the liberalization process known as the Prague Spring. For Koller, the question mark functioned both as a sign of communication and as a symbol: "I made the question mark as a symbol in various ways, putting it on various materials and at various places." His choice of this sign was motivated by questions concerning the individual's relationship to the collective, and man's (humanity's?) general relationship to the world. It did not merely function as a sign that questioned the social and political situation; its meaning was universal and deeper.

Koller's personal politics were defined by mistrust, scepticism, suspicion, and all-encompassing doubt. He repeatedly featured the question mark in his work as an expression of uncertainty. Not only was the question mark directed at the oppressive power of the hegemonic state apparatus and to the fantasies of late modernism, but it is also functioned as a communication sign addressed to mankind. "I tried to resolve the discrepancy between Utopia and real life," Koller once stated. (JÚLIUS KOLLER SOCIETY)

Július Koller (1939, Piešťany, Czechoslovakia – 2007, Bratislava, Slovak Republic) attended the School of Art Industry (Industrial Art), Bratislava. From 1958 to 1965, he studied at the Academy of Applied Arts and Design in Bratislava. He became one of the most significant representatives of Slovakia's oppositional, regime-critical art scene of the 1960s. Influenced by Situationist ideas, he carried out ephemeral actions, known as *anti-happenings*, in public and private spaces. Koller had numerous solo exhibitions, including in 2003 at the Kölnischer Kunstverein, in 2004 at the Kunstraum München, and in 2010 at the Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava. He participated in the 23rd Biennale of Sao Paulo, Brazil in 1996 and in the 50th Biennale di Venezia, Italy in 2003. In 2014 the Július Koller Society, in collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art (MSM) in Warsaw, the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien (mumok), and the Kontakt Collection, initiated the first international retrospective *One Man Anti Show* (2016–2017).

RENE MATIĆ

Amelia in Bed, Dalston • 2024

Fiantain Dancing in Zodiac Bar, Euston • 2023

Food Bank, Dalston • 2024

Glastonbury Kiss • 2024 •
Photographs

365 • 2024 • Sound work

COURTESY the Artist and Arcadia Missa, London.

365 (2024) is a sound work originally conceived in relation to the particularities of the space for which it was first made—CCA in Berlin, located next to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. The piece samples artist's recordings of the church bells and the chorale. The church's original bells were cast from melted cannons, which were later remelted for war purposes. Matić interweaves different soundscapes—from the church, the news, personal conversations, chanting at protests, heartbeats, and pop songs—creating a collage that attests to the deeply fractured realities we live in. (CCA BERLIN)

For *Five White Stairs*, Rene Matić presents a selection from a photography series capturing highly personal images that explore the fascinating intersection of bodies, identities, and expressions of political alliance amid the global rise of right-wing populism. For Matić, these works embody an inherently subversive dimension of the everyday—comprising snapshots of kisses and graffiti, glimpses from a pub, a street corner, parties, and protests. (?)

Rene Matić (b. 1997, Peterborough, UK) is a London-based artist and writer whose practice spans photography, film, and sculpture, converging in a space they describe as “rude(ness)” — an evidencing and honouring of the in-between.

NIKO MIHALJEVIĆ

Singing Snake (Sometimes Staged) • performance • 2025

Singing Snake (Sometimes Staged) is a procedural opera whose libretto is determined by a formal system—an alphabetical list of words derived from an art critique written about an earlier iteration of the work, *Anti-ambience of Ceremonial Cigarettes*.

The piece continues Mihaljević's exploration of language's limitations: as the alphabetical list of words is sung, meaning shifts from the exact and literal to the ambient and sensory, while the conceptual self-referential aspect of the text remains in the background. The new textual template has been adapted into English, introducing new sonic dimensions. Here, form becomes content, and performative-musical variations develop through the formation of an expanded ensemble.

Singing Snake (Sometimes Staged) was conceived by Niko Mihaljević, with an ensemble featuring Ivana Bojanić as the deconstructed art critic, Miodrag Gladović on trombone, Leonardo Losciale on triangle, and Niko Mihaljević on organetto. Selected pages from the libretto will be performed: 2–3, 6–7, 8–9, 16–17, and 18–19.

First 15 Words from the Anti-ambience of Ceremonial Cigarettes Score • 2025

The first 15 words from the score of *Anti-ambience of Ceremonial Cigarettes* are applied to the exhibition window. Originally, this score was a kind of postscript to Miha-ljević's artist's book/catalogue *Leave the Bowl and Head Toward the Bird (Be Right Back) / Napusti zdjelu i kreni prema ptici (vraćam se odmah)*, an exhibition dedicated to painter and mystic Ivan Žuti, held at Galerija SC in 2024. Instead of a conventional postscript, the catalogue contained a text structured in oulipian manner—an alphabetical list of all words extracted from an art critique written about the exhibition. This list later became the score for a performative work, musically interpreted by Ivana Bojanić (vocals) and Niko Mihaljević (organetto).

In this experimental musical performance, the vocalist sings all words from the list—from 'a' to 'žutog' (n.a. 'yellow', referencing the surname of Ivan Žuti)—using a range of vocal styles, from exclamatory to subtle ornamentation. She is accompanied by the obscure early music instrument, the organetto—a portable organ that reached its peak popularity in the 15th century. The instrument's sound, tuned to an ancient Ptolemaic intense diatonic scale, moves from rhythmic dissonant tonal clusters to quasi-liturgical melodic passages, drones, and abstract wails. During this musical interaction, the vocabulary of the deconstructed art critique dissolves into an abstract realm of feeling—the ironic distance evaporates, and meaning transcends.

This window intervention reflects the ongoing transformation of the work: the postscript became a score through performance, and now it is being transformed into an enlarged graphic piece in public space. No longer performed, the words now communicate directly within the public environment. Their meaning shifts—a new relationship between signifier and signified emerges, as certain words resonate with the future purpose of the exhibition space onto which they are applied. (NIKO MIHALJEVIĆ)

Niko Mihaljević is an interdisciplinary artist, graphic designer, and lecturer. His interests span the everyday and the otherworldly, documentation and archiving, experimental sound composition and performance, pop music and the avant-garde, language and typography, humor and absurdity. His works include: a permutational net-art composition with a duration of 130 years; the founding of the *Museum of the Crystal Skull*; an experimental karaoke performance for improvisational whistling; and a philosophical dialogue proving that the island of Prvić is land surrounded by sea on all sides. He holds a Master's degree from Werkplaats Typografie (ArtEZ Institute of the Arts) in Arnhem, Netherlands, and is a recipient of the *Radoslav Putar* Award (Young Visual Artists Awards). He works as an independent designer and as an assistant professor in the Department of Media Design at the University North.

ANA OPALIĆ

Carbon Based Love • 2025.

Carbon Based Love is a collection of notes on trees and family, told through video recordings, photographs, a sound installation, and short texts. These fragments form a story about deep emotional connections, heritage, belonging, responsibility, and reflections on the world we leave behind.

“Since you’ve been gone, our family has been replaced by conifers. Pines. I visit them with tenderness.”

The exhibited work fragments consist of photographs altered with charcoal, small test prints with handwritten notes on the back—written while reading *Elderflora: A Modern History of Ancient Trees* by American historian Jared Farmer—alongside a video recorded across different seasons and years, and a sound installation weaving together diary excerpts and musical improvisation. (ANA OPALIĆ)

Ana Opalić (b. 1972, Dubrovnik) graduated in TV and Film Cinematography from the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb in 1997. She has exhibited photography and video art since 1991. Through autobiographical sequences, her work explores questions of identity, belonging, the fates of places, and the documentation of changes within the unstoppable flow of time. Her relationship with her surroundings ranges from using the environment to explore categories of identity to actively engaging with the stories and memories embedded in specific places. She works across photography, video, and music. She lives and works in Zagreb.

LAURE PROUVOST

Flying Mother (The Bird Ban Her) Part 2 • 2022 •
Wool tapestry and hand-sewn threads

COURTESY OF Lisson Gallery

The hand-sewn wool tapestry *Flying Mother (The Bird Ban Her)*, Part 1, is a section of the large-scale tapestry *Flying Mother (The Bird Ban Her)*, 2022, first exhibited in ‘Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float’ at The National Museum of Oslo in 2022. The tapestry combines central themes of Prouvost’s practice, such as migration, translation, unity and the shifting nature of language. The work guides the visitor through a flying narrative, depicting humans, plants and birds fluidly merging into one another, suggesting the interconnection and interdependence of species in the age of climate change and mass migration. However, as migratory bird routes are increasingly disrupted by climate change, a melancholic note concludes the journey and tapestry: “most birds travel alone.” (COURTESY OF LISSON GALLERY)

Laure Prouvost was born in Lille, France (1978) and is currently based in Brussels. She received her BFA from Central St Martins, London in 2002 and pursued her MFA at Goldsmiths College, London. She also took part in the LUX Associate Programme. Prouvost won the MaxMara Art Prize for Women in 2011 and was the recipient of the Turner Prize in 2013.

Language—in its broadest sense—permeates the video, sound, installation, and performance work of Laure

Prouvost. Known for her immersive, mixed-media installations that combine film and installation in humorous and idiosyncratic ways, Prouvost’s work explores miscommunication and the ways in which ideas become lost in translation. Playing with language as a tool for the imagination, Prouvost is interested in confounding linear narratives and expected associations between words, images and meaning.

ŠKART

Awakening Songs / Budnice • January — ongoing, 2025

The *Awakening Songs / Budnice* series began in mid-January 2025 with Škart’s *A Song for Children / Pesma za decu*, an old song originally written for the children’s choir *Deca sa Meseca (Moon Children)*, now finding new relevance in the context of student protests:

*Don’t listen to grown-ups
Their ears have stretched out
Their noses grew too—
Where did they go askew?*

Unplanned, yet triggered and accelerated by unfolding events, *Awakening Songs* emerged as daily protest songs—a kind of protest diary and a warning against repeating the same cycle of political self-destruction. Initially shared digitally via Facebook and Instagram, they quickly transitioned into physical formats—stickers, posters, and badges—for street actions and free distribution. Printing costs were covered through a grassroots solidarity initiative led by Belgrade-based activists. The habit of waking up to an *Awakening Song* has inspired messages of support from all sides: “Hey, I was just wondering—where’s today’s Awakening Song? How am I supposed to start my day?!”

The awakening continues... (ŠKART)

Škart grupa was founded in 1990 in an abandoned printmaking studio at the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade. Through their ‘architecture of human relationships’ and the willingness to embrace risk—viewing mistakes as a means of discovering new values—Škart, alongside numerous collaborators, continuously explores and merges the boundaries of poetry, architecture, graphic design, film, publishing, performance, music, comics, animation, and alternative education through a process of constructive conflict. Their lectures, actions, concerts, and workshops have taken place across Europe, America, and Asia. Retrospective exhibitions have been held in Rijeka (2009), London (2010), Belgrade (2012), and Nagoya (2013). In 2010, Škart presented *Seesaw Play-Grow – A Playground of Imbalance* at the Venice Architecture Biennale. Currently, a Serbian and Croatian translation of the book *Building Human Relations Through Art*, curated by Seda Yildiz and a group of authors, is in progress. Originally published by Onomatopee (Eindhoven), the book is now being reissued by Žene u crnom (Women in Black), Belgrade.

TIZINTIZWA COLLECTIVE

A Song to the Oar • video • 02:30 min • 2024

In North Africa, having a pirate ancestor is a source of family pride. The so-called 'Barbary Pirates' are seen as resistance fighters, refugees and victims of the Spanish Inquisition who returned to raid the very villages they were expelled from. But the former 17th century 'pirate republics' of Salé or Algiers are today sleepy metropolises, home to a booming young demographic of working class men with no jobs. As we say in Darija Arabic, "koulshi ti galleri"— everyone is in the galley, rowing. Yet, even the monotonous rhythm of the oars can be subverted. For many young North Africans, the football stadium is the only remedy for monotony and, in the anonymity of the crowd, the only space for political expression and resistance. Aside from adopting the pirate symbolism, the 'ultras' (football fan organisations) played a key role in the Arab Spring. Amidst popular scepticism towards political organisations, the ultras become a galvanising force. In 2011, they secured the bridge to Tahrir Square, and during the 2019 Algerian Hirak movement, their chants became revolutionary anthems.

Yet outside of these explosive historical moments, in the daily status quo reality of economic inequality and authoritarianism, one of the major themes in their chants is 'Hrig'— meaning 'to burn,' a reference to the symbolic act of burning one's identity papers before the clandestine Mediterranean crossing. For many young people, reclaiming a piece of Europe's wealth remains the only option on the table. (TIZINTIZWA COLLECTIVE)

Tizintizwa is a Moroccan poly-disciplinary art-research collective that acts as a pretext for collective creation and cross-pollination. Their practice is rooted in working together and with others, finding consonance in difference, and championing heterogeneity in nature and culture. They frequently collaborate with rural communities, documenting oraliture, observe ecological transformations, initiate cross-regional conversations, and explore the importance of transgenerational transmission and relations between land and people. Their work has been shown at various venues including the Pompidou Kanal, Centre Pompidou-Metz, the 35th São Paulo Biennial, documenta 15 and IDFA.