

Portfolio  
Olivia Abächerli

CV

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025

- Messe Art Basel [Swiss Art Awards](#)
- Kunsthaus Langenthal [Im Haus der grossen Frau. Ein künstlerischer Blick auf die Sozialpionierin Amélie Moser-Moser](#)

2024

- b-05, Montabaur, GER [ECHOHALL IM BUNKER: history invades the present](#)

2023

- Our Place, Taipei, TWN [Neutral background](#)
- Imaginary Z, Hangzhou, CHN [Light and cold conversation: Agency and Technology](#)
- CAN Centre d'art Neuchâtel [Video Show & The Blind Pigeon](#)

2022

- Nieuwe Vide & GOLF-festival, Haarlem, NL  
Collaboration with Harun Morrison [Ataraxia](#)

2021

- E-Werk, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, Freiburg, GER [Material Worlds – Storied Matter](#)
- Kunsthalle Basel [...von möglichen Welten](#)

2020

- Espace 3353, Le Carouge, Geneva [The Stones in our Hands](#)

## SOLO PROJECTS

2024

- Kunsthalle Bern [the center and the other \(title in progress\)](#)

2023

- Projekt Links, Galerie DuflonRacz , Bern, Kollektiv «Companionship Euphoria» [You are not here with me in the kitchen right now, but I wish you were](#)
- Kunsthalle Luzern [the center and the other](#)

2022

- Espace libre, Biel/Bienne [global earth powder trace](#)

2021

- Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, Kollektiv «DUELL» [Smudge, the messenger –](#)
- Galerie Hofmatt, Sarnen [IBU SILLA](#)

2020

- Benzeholz – Zeitgenössische Kunst, Meggen, Kollektiv «DUELL» [Riddley, how does one make fire again?](#)

2019

- M8 Art Space, Helsinki, FIN [I can't hear myself without you listening](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

2024

- [Tools for collective being](#) (Book project with Égle Šalkauskyte, unvague, Bern)

2024

- [Ibu Silla](#) (Book project, Edition Fink, Zürich)

2023 – 2024

- [Jelly Sunday Zine](#) (Online Zine, monthly, curated by Égle Šalkauskyte)

2023

- [Ich bin frei und mir ist schlecht](#) (with Tanja Schwarz)

## EDUCATION

2019–2021

- Fellowship [Sommerakademie Paul Klee](#) (Tirdad Zolghadr – STATECRAFT)

2017–2019

- MA Art Practice, [Dutch Art Institute](#), Arnhem, NL

2013–2016

- BA Fine Arts with extinction, Hochschule der Künste Bern

## CURATORIAL PROJECTS &amp; TEACHING

2024

- Hochschule der Künste Bern, Y-Institut, with Yvonne Lanz [How do I care if everything seems to fall apart?](#)

2023

- Hochschule der Künste Bern, Y-Institut, with Yvonne Lanz [Radical Empathy](#)

2021

- Hochschule der Künste Bern, BA Fine Arts, with Felipe Castelblanco and Airi Triisber [Decolonial Sensibilities](#)
- Hochschule der Künste Bern, Y-Institut, with Yvonne Lanz [Future Cartographies](#)

2019

- Hochschule der Künste Bern, BA Fine Arts, with Felipe Castelblanco [Para-Fictioning](#)

2017–2021

- [Cabane B project space](#) (Organisation, curation)

2016–2019

- [Immer Am Achten Schwobhaus](#) (Organisation, curation)

2015 / 2017

- [Artist Residency Weidli](#) Residency programme with Remy Erismann (Organisation, curation)

# the center and the other

## Iterations

- «the center and the other»,  
(mural) 2023
- «the center and the other»,  
Aeschlimann Corti Stipendium  
(mural) 2024
- «the center and the other  
(title in progress)», (long-  
term performance / mural)  
2024



«the center and the other»  
2023  
chalk on wall  
28 x 3,5 m

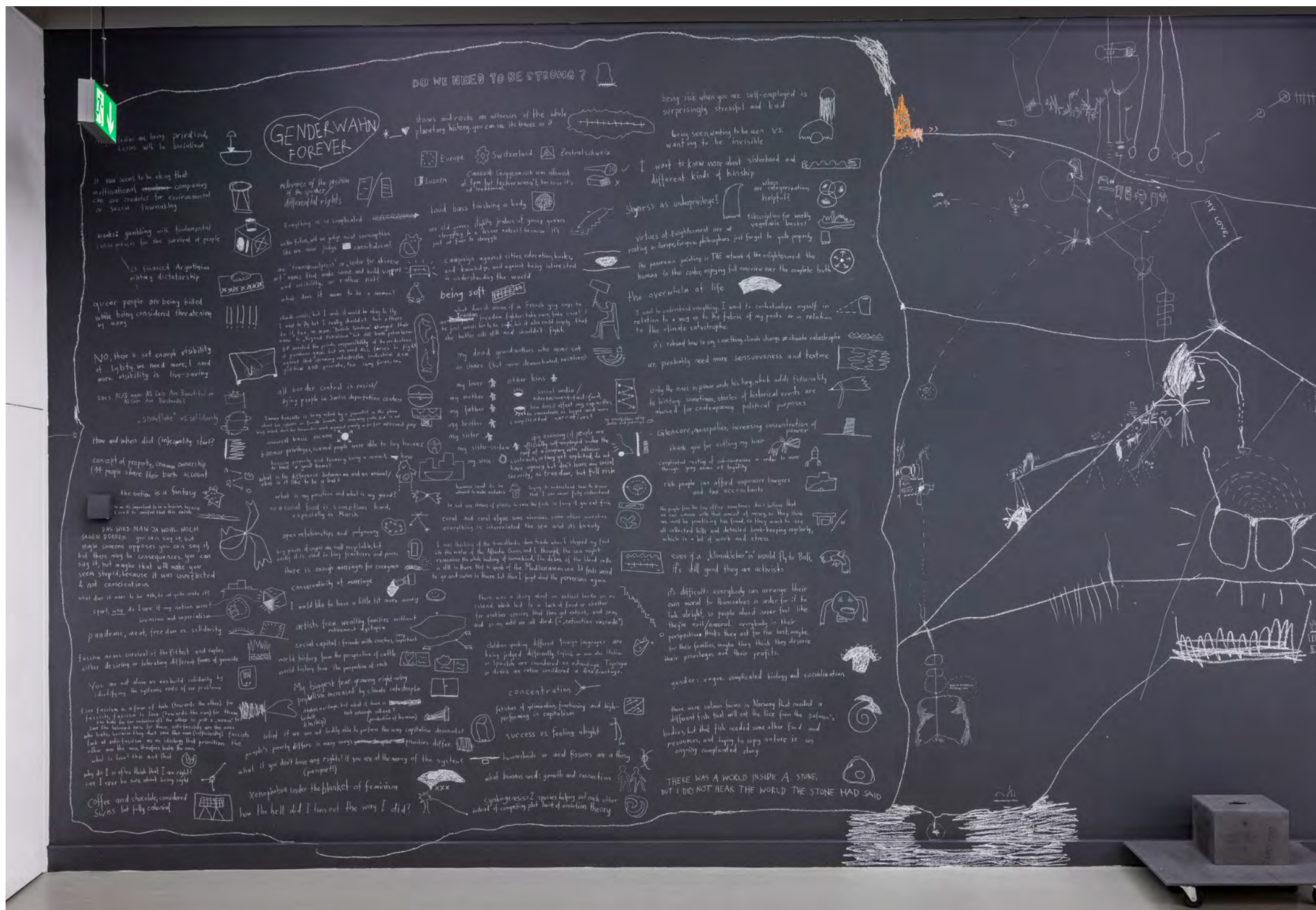
• Kunsthalle Luzern «the center and the other»,  
2023

«How is intersectional feminism or the principle of property related to the difficulty of shopping seasonally?»

A subjective cartography of 28 meters makes connections: The wall drawing - dimensionally a quarter of a panoramic painting - includes an index of 120 terms, explanations, symbols, and questions that either concern or are of concern to

the artist. How are complex situations intertwined, and where am I in it – where do I position my subjectivity specifically? This section of a contemporary „horizon of thought“ presents itself as a very personal, exposed reflection of the artist's inner self. It is a performative piece about grasping the specificity of one's personal perspective among other's.





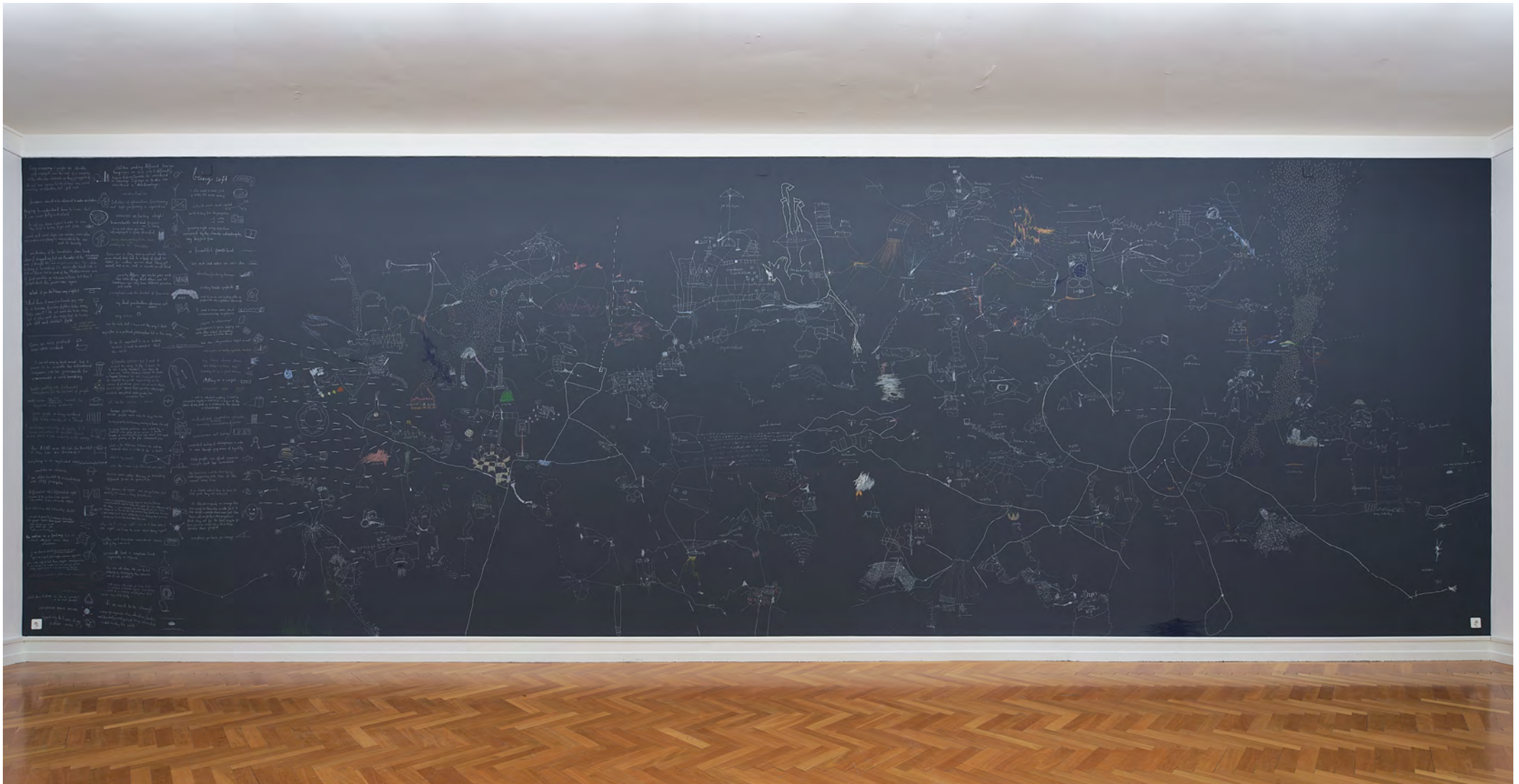
↑ Exhibition view: «the center and the other», Kunsthalle Luzern, Photo: Kilian Bannwart





↑ Exhibition view: «the center and the other», Kunsthalle Luzern, Photo: Kilian Bannwart



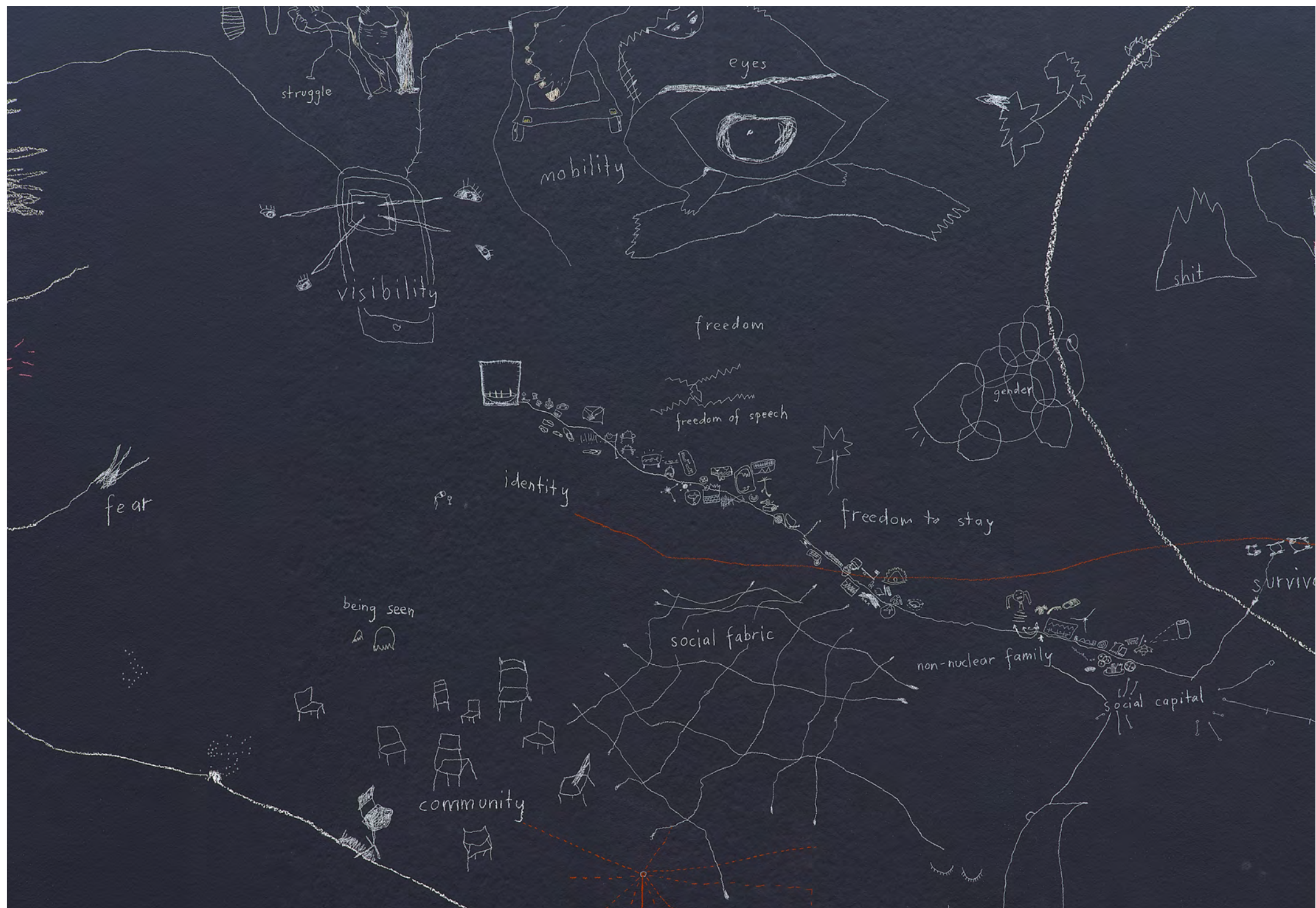


«the center and the other»  
2024  
chalk and pencil on wall  
11 x 4,5 m

• Kunsthalle Bern «Aeschlimann Corti Stipendium»,  
2024

The iteration of „the center and the other“ at Kunsthalle Bern begins on a flat, uncurved wall. It contains 280 additional abstract and concrete terms (like «companionship», «illness», «spaghetti») that constitute the «world» from the viewpoint of an exemplary subjectivity.





↑ Exhibition view: «Aeschlimann Corti Stipendium», Kunsthalle Bern, Photo: David Aepli







↑ Exhibition view: «the center and the other (title in progress)», Kunsthalle Bern, Photo: David Aebi



# (Facing shame) facing conflict

«(Facing shame) facing conflict»

2024

Video

HD, stereo, loop

16:9, 18'56''

Guitar/Synthesizer: David Koch

Animation template: Brigade Brut

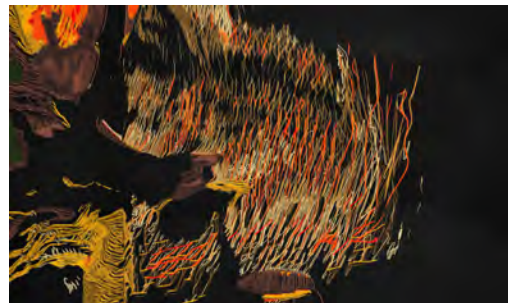
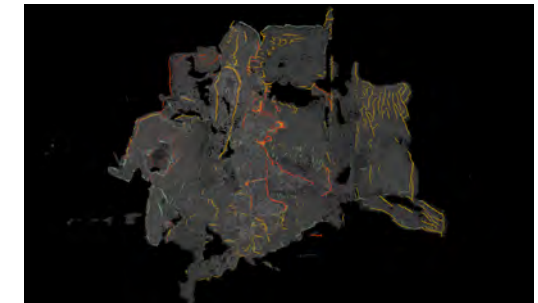
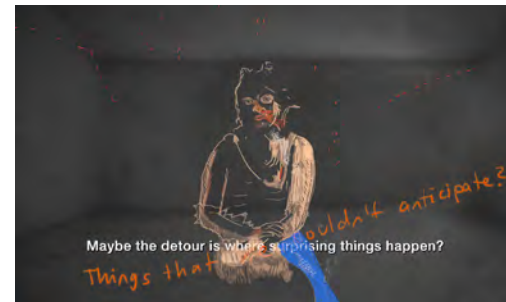
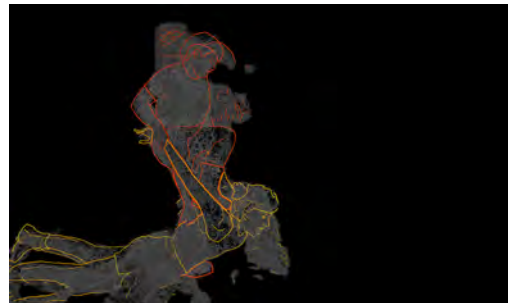
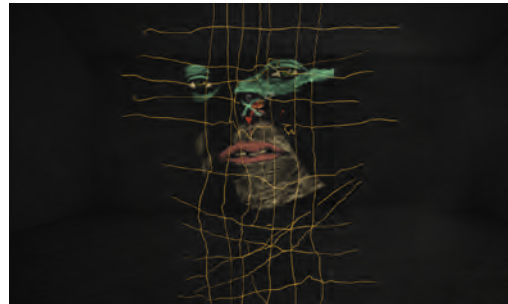
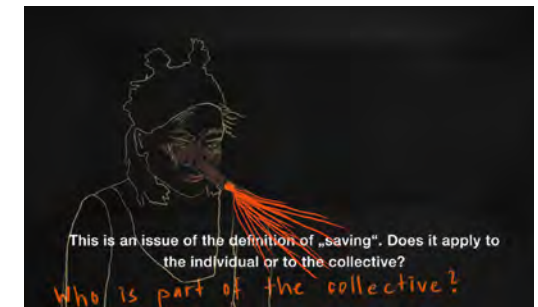
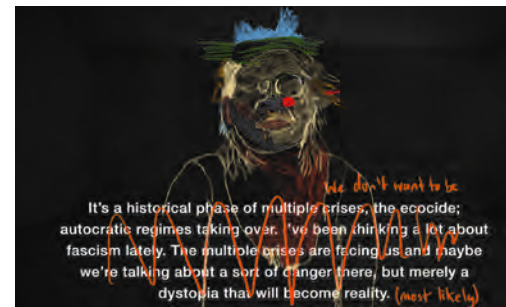
[Video Link \(vimeo\)](#)

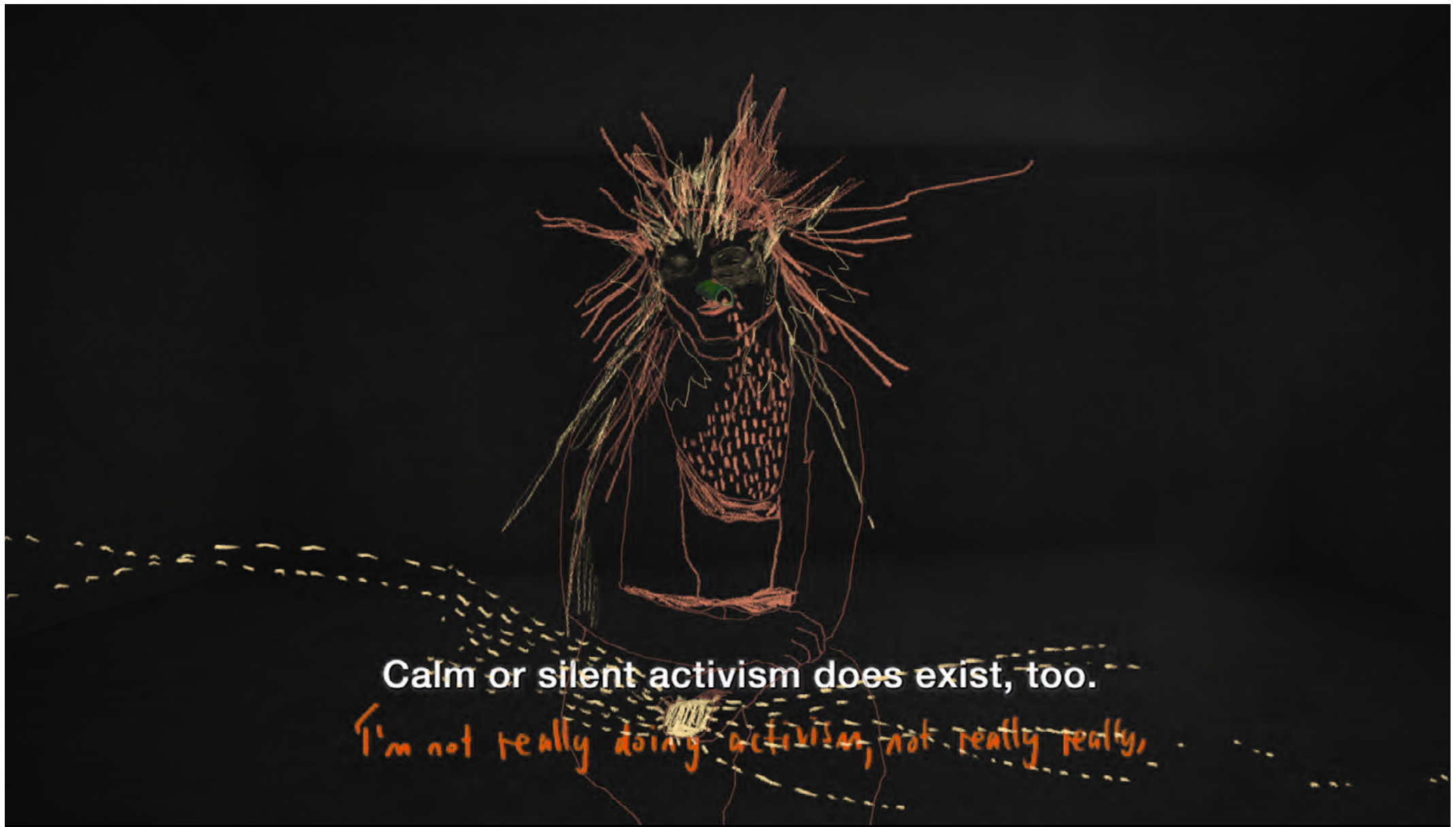
- b-05 «ECHOHALL IM BUNKER: history invades the present» Montabaur, GER, 2024
- Kunstmuseum Luzern «ZENTRAL!», 2024

«(Facing Shame) facing conflict», shown in a repurposed German bunker, addresses the constant failing attempts at personal positioning in the current political climate. What happens inside when the world outside is burning?

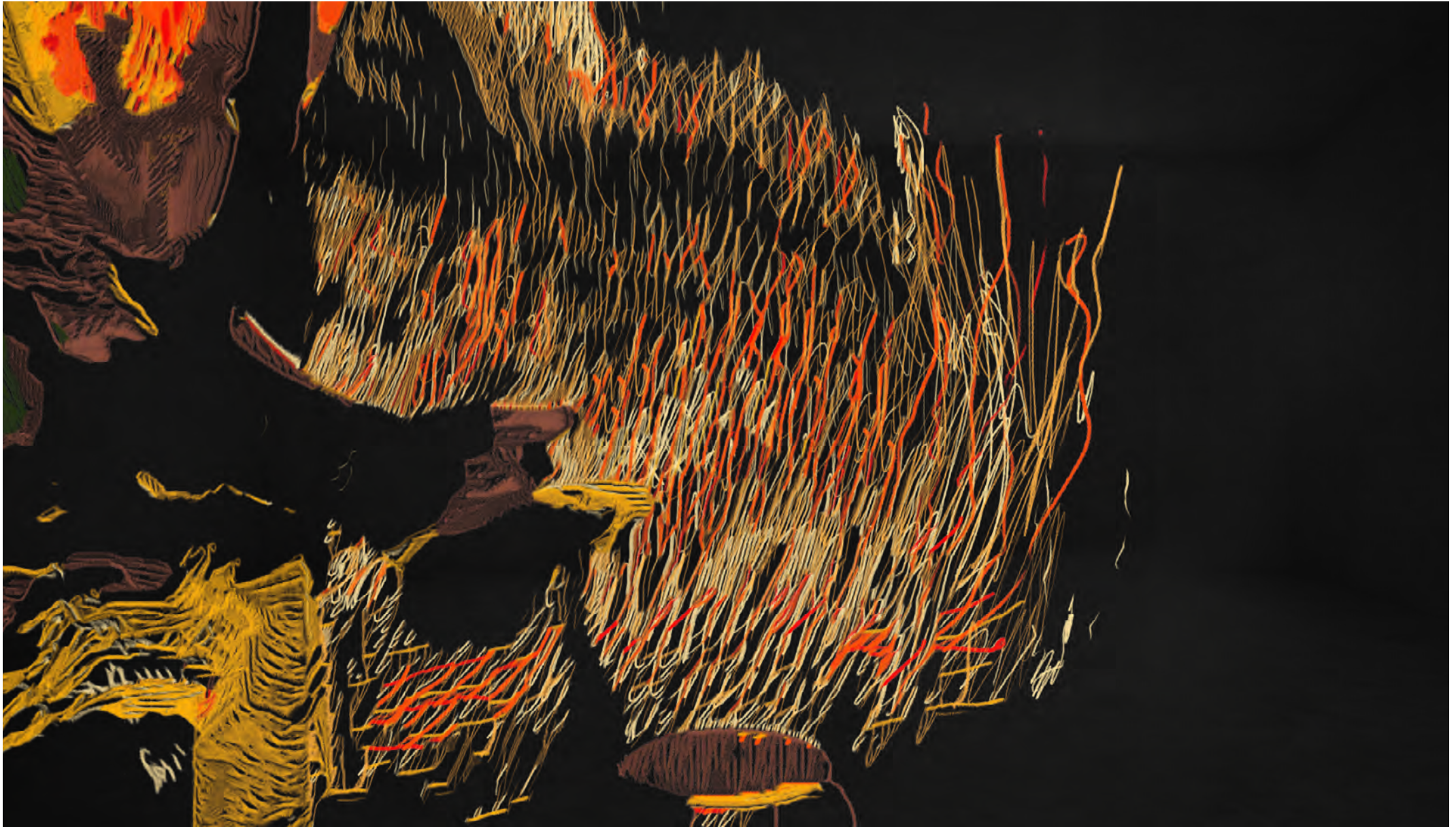
When personal logics are constructed and get caught in contradictions? When the actors in the conflicts are unclear? In this work, countless new, diffuse faces appear, similar to the ever-escalating contradictions in our reality. The work extends the concept of the «bunker» from the architectural to the psychological. In our minds, too, there are thick walls and mechanisms of isolation.

(Translated, original text: Till Langschied)













# Warm fingers, moving

«Warm fingers, moving»  
2024  
Video  
HD, without sound, loop  
9:16, 17'09''  
[Video Link \(Dropbox\)](#)

The overwhelming sensation of perceiving the hyperspeed and complexity of world events correlates with the rhythms of consuming social media. The eye jumps from war images to fashion ads, to snippets of daily life from friend groups, and then to political educational work.

„Warm fingers, moving“ merges and slows down these seemingly unrelated

contexts and thus makes potential connections graspable.













# weight of a day

«weight of a day»  
2022 -  
ongoing series  
pencil on paper  
21 x 29,7 cm

· La Nef, Sainte-Ursanne «Cantonale Berne Jura»,  
2024

## 1 weight of a day 15.03.2022

Elien slept here. In East Antarctica, the Conger Ice Shelf completely collapsed. Russian troops attacked a hospital in Mariupol and took 400 people hostage. Palestinians Nader Rayan and Alaa Shaham were shot by Israeli forces in the West Bank. My grandmother Rosmarie was buried. I wrote her a letter. I met my cousin for the first time since she transitioned.

## 2 weight of a day 16.09.2022:

Jina Mahsa Amini died in custody, Amélie and I were on a train, I checked a connection, Amélie had a migraine, I bought a queer comic book.

## 3 weight of a day 21.07.2023

The oceans were extremely hot, the hottest on this day. New AI tools for automation and data analysis were released. Barbie and Oppenheimer came out. We had dinner at my parents' place, a storm came.

## 4 weight of a day 26.01.2024

The International Court of Justice ordered measures to protect Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip from

potential genocide. There was almost no snow in the mountains. We debated whether to have vegan or real fondue.

## 5 weight of a day 25.04.2024

Toomaj Salehi was sentenced to death in Iran, I had a minor anal fissure, and I received a call informing me that I won an award.

## 6 weight of a day 11.05.2024

It was the ESC final, Nemo won and broke the trophy. I woke up in a tent with a dry mouth, walked in the hot sun, felt very tired, and canceled attending a festival. There were northern lights.

## 7 weight of a day 31.07.2024

In Darfur, Sudan, a devastating drought and famine prevail. Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh is killed in Iran. S sleeps with B on the bus. In England, asylum centers are attacked by far-right movements. In an essay, I learn the terms: hiatus, maricas, incrustation, and panegyrics.

## 8 weight of a day 03.08.2024

A victory by Algerian boxer Imane Khelif at the Olympic Games is attributed by right-wing groups to her being trans, leading to global online harassment and her exploitation in the culture war. On a sunny afternoon, I watch horror movies with my 14-year-old godchild because they find everything else boring. I randomly run into my metametamour at the train station. Israeli airstrikes not only hit southern Lebanon but also Beirut.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8













## sketches on loving a family

«sketches on loving a family»  
2023

Video

HD, stereo, loop, 16:9, 16'35''

Soundscape: Till Hillbrecht

[Video Link \(Dropbox\)](#)

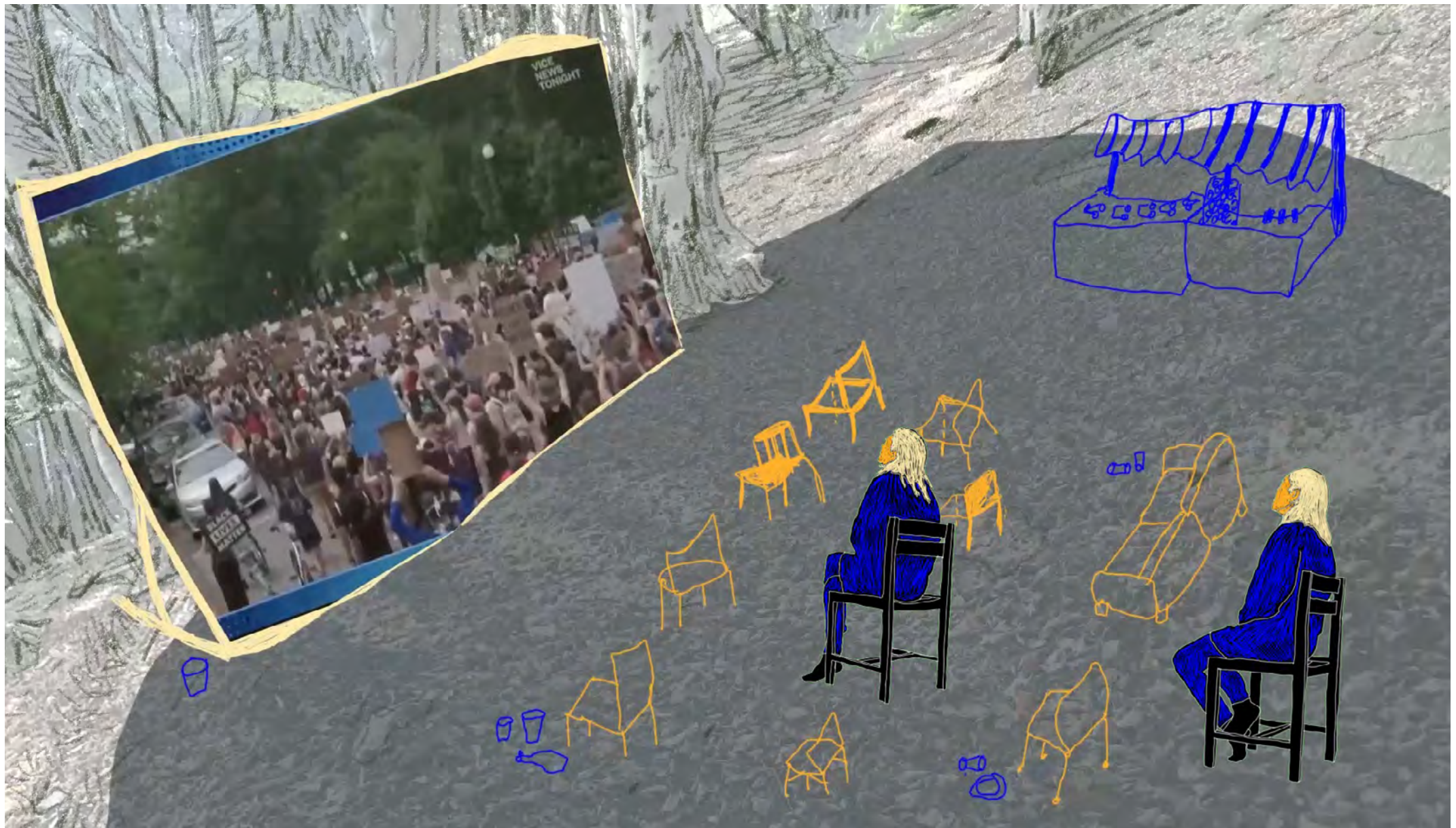
- Kunsthalle Luzern «the center and the other», 2023
- Kunstmuseum Thun «Cantonale Berne Jura», 2023
- Prozess, Bern «on loving a family», 2024

How to deal with political differences or vast ideological gaps within families, how to manage emotional tensions and your own borders of acceptance?

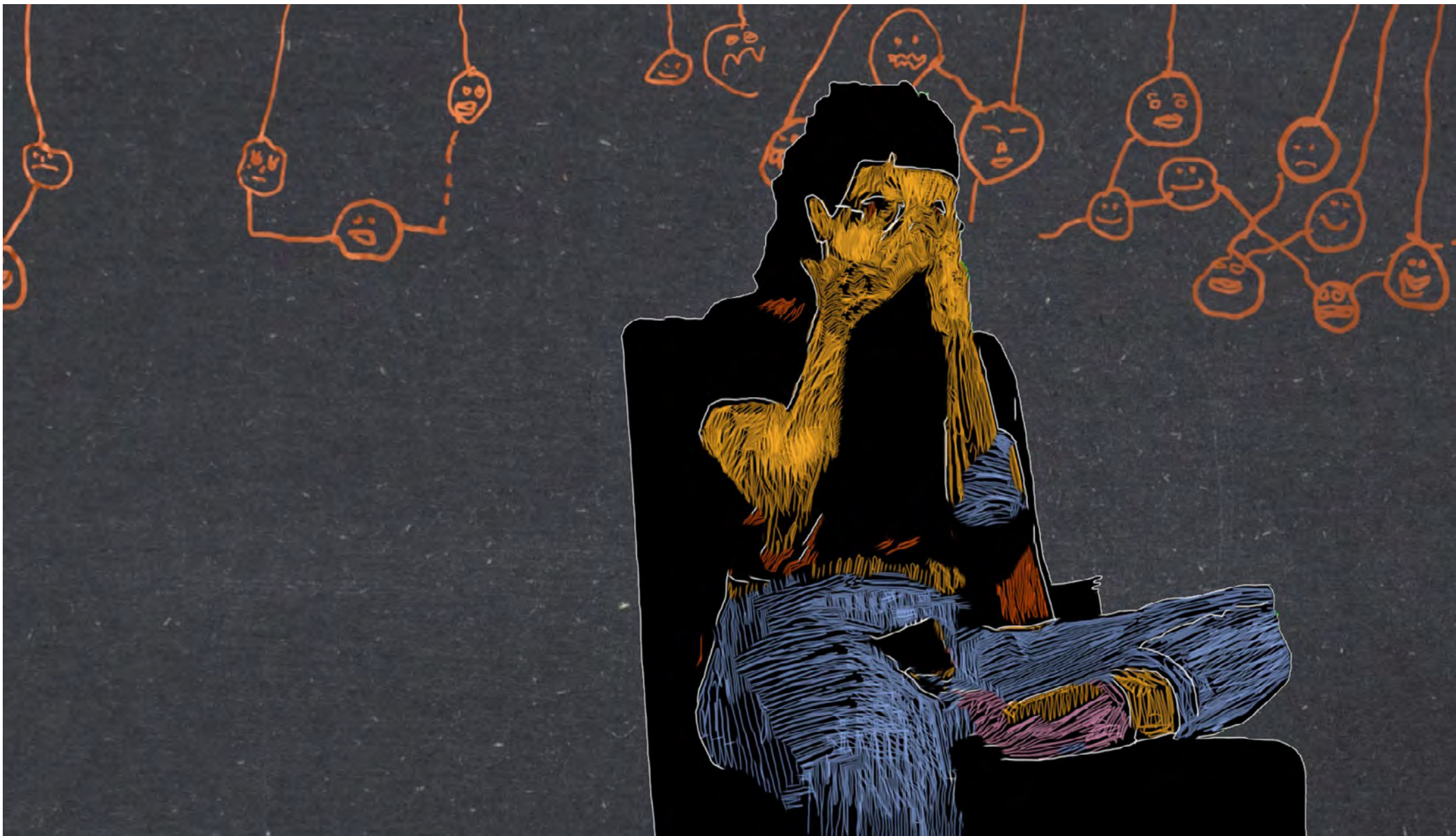
«Sketches on loving a family» contains interviews with 5 people of a diversity of familial, ethnical, class and national backgrounds (Brazil, USA/Germany, Argentina, Lebanon and Switzerland)

who talk about their relationships with politically clashing family members whom they still love in different ways. The video starts with a scene of the US «Daily Show» on political polarizations that is shown in an animated forest cinema. Then, the interviewed persons appear as animated characters that slowly and increasingly become deformed and distorted - visually «torn apart».











# Dear grandfather (grandfather's face)

«Dear grandfather (grandfather's face)»

2021

Video

HD, stereo, loop

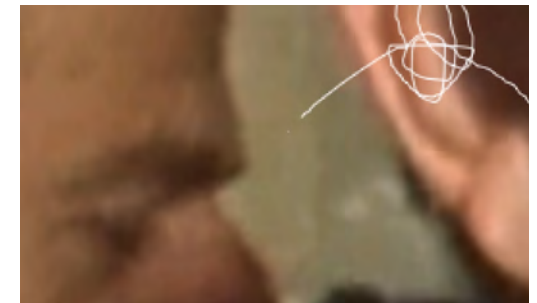
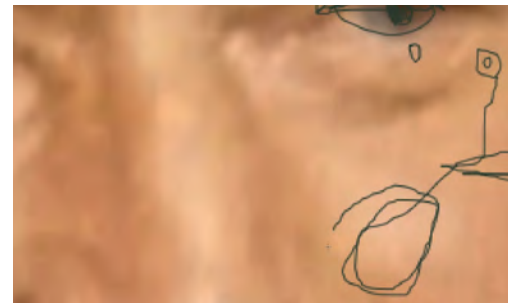
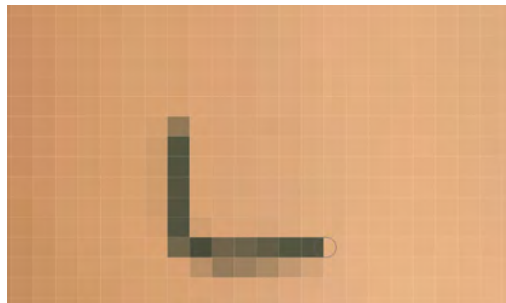
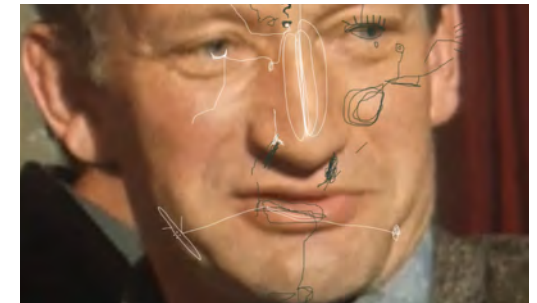
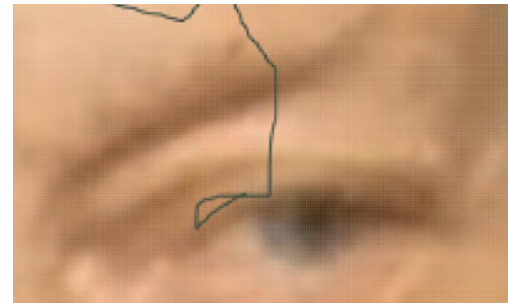
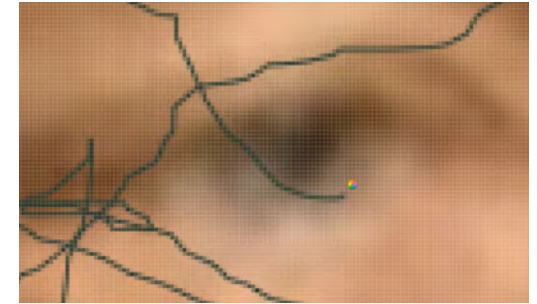
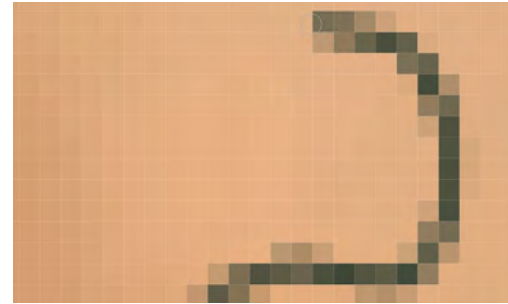
16:9, 03'07''

[Video Link \(Dropbox\)](#)

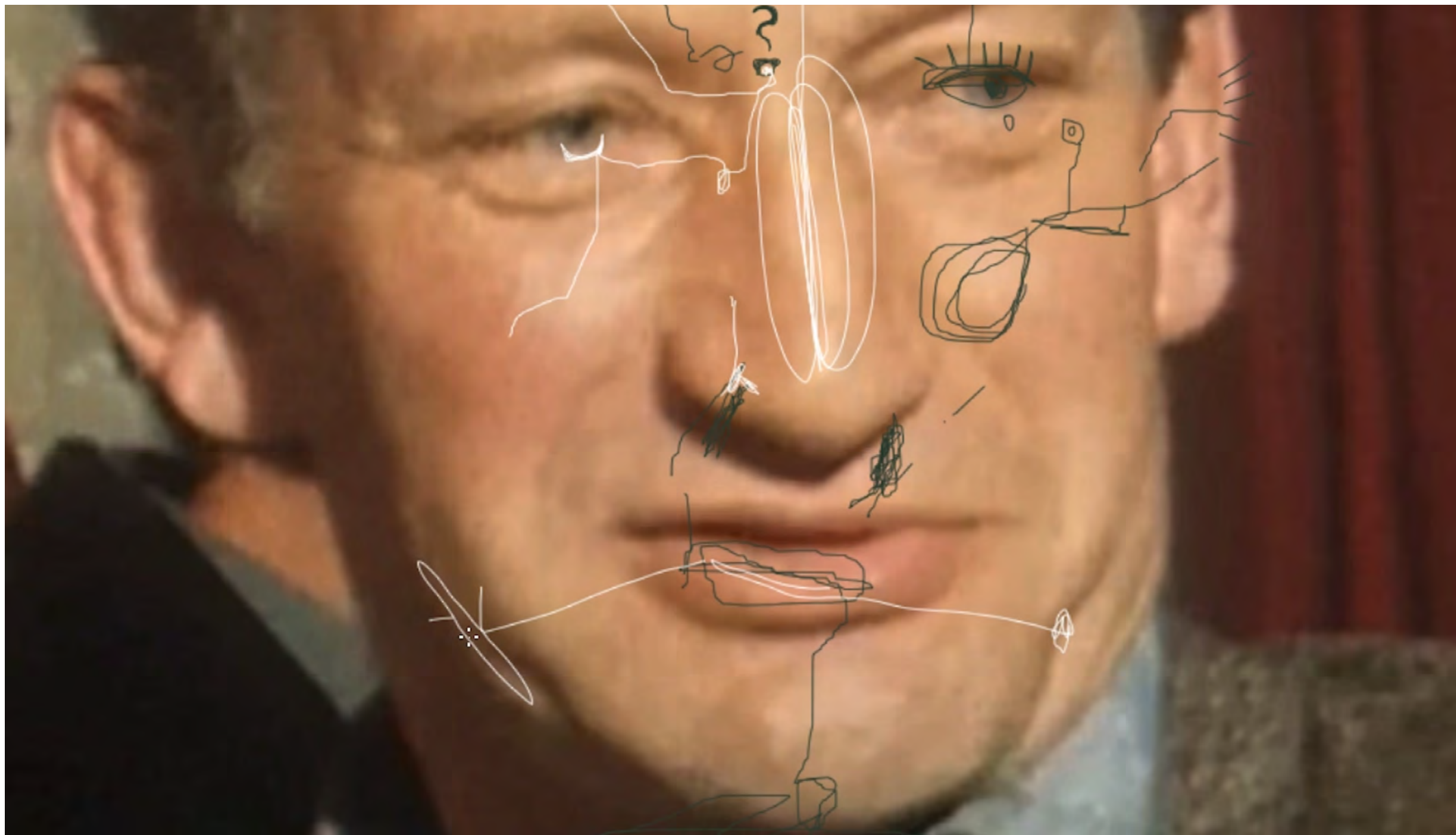
- Kunstmuseum Luzern «ZENTRAL!», 2022
- EAC (les halles) «Cantonale Berne Jura», 2022
- CAN Centre d'art Neuchâtel «Video Show & The Blind Pigeon», 2022
- Videokunst.ch: Showroom PROGR, Bern / Houdini Kino, Zürich / Klibühni, Chur, 2022
- Cité Screenings, Cité internationale des Arts, Paris, 2022

«Of course I'm against it, too» – In 1975, the artist's grandfather has been stating his opinion on the women's right to vote on Swiss national tv.

How to deal with contradictory feelings towards beloved family members with whom one dissents fundamentally about basic worldviews? Writings and drawings are directly being marked on the footage, on the grandfather's face, onto the surface of the very moment of his «painful» statements. Thereby, the core question processually shifts from „How to relate?“ towards: „How to deal with non-relating?“







# «Ibu Silla»

## Iterations:

- «Ibu Silla» (Video), 2022
- «Ibu Silla» (Book), 2024
- «this is my landscape, this is my landscape for you» (VR video installation), 2021



# «Ibu Silla»

2019-2021

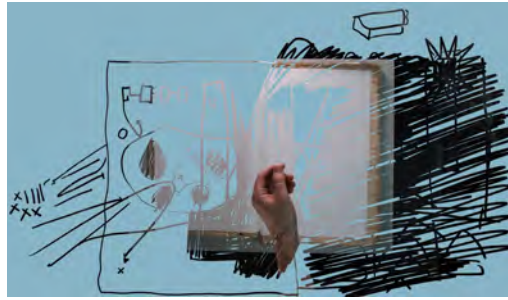
Video

HD, stereo, loop

16:9, 48'40''

[Video Link \(Dropbox\)](#)

- Galerie Hofmatt, Sarnen «Ibu Silla», 2021
- Kunstmuseum Thun, «Cantonale Berne Jura», 2022



The State Archive of Nidwalden holds 15 boxes of diaries belonging to the mercenary Alois Wyrsh («Borneo Louis»). From 1816, Wyrsh was stationed in Borneo (Banjarmasin) under Dutch colonial rule and returned to Nidwalden in 1832 with two of his children, whom he had with an Indigenous woman. This woman, referred to in the documents as Johanna, Ibu Silla, or Belle, was left behind along with another child. In the diaries, the passages where he writes about her have been meticulously cut out. The reasons for this remain speculative.



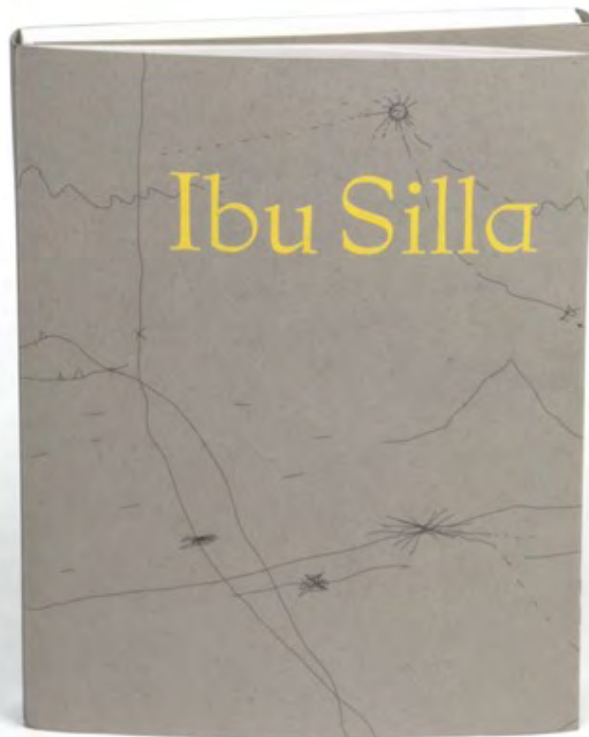
In 14 chapters, this video work now speculates on realistic to abstract biographies. The subtractive drawing process resembles the scraping away of a layer, uncovering documentary imagery and formally referencing the cut-out gaps.



The open questions about Ibu Silla unfold possibilities for multiple biographies. The methodology of this work proposes a way to engage with male-white-dominated historiography: allowing «counter-narratives» or «para-stories» to emerge in the «mental archives» thereby fostering a multiplicity of perspectives.







«Ibu Silla»  
2024  
Book project  
edition fink, Contemporary Art  
publishers

The book project consists of the fictional  
text on the speculative biography of Ibu  
Silla, an explanatory essay, and a fold-  
out drawn map.



«this is my landscape, this is  
my landscape for you»  
2021

Virtual Reality video instal-  
lation

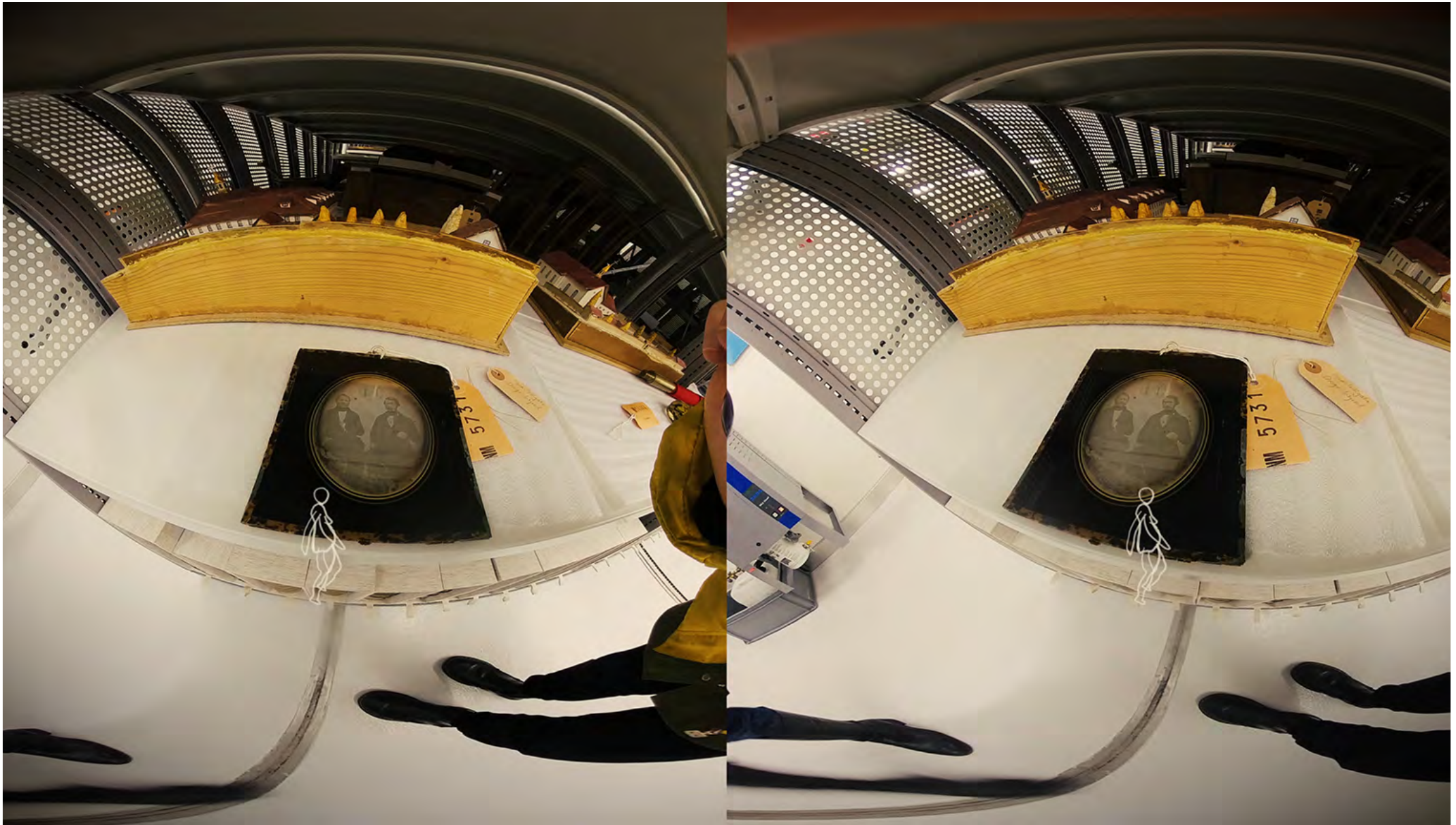
HD, stereo, loop

3D, 180°, 2 x 1:1, 06'42''

• Galerie Hofmatt, Sarnen «Ibu Silla», 2021

As part of the «body of work» on Ibu Silla, this piece addresses the colonial «exploratory» gaze. During the fictional journey through various archives via the virtual reality headset, the outline of an animated dancing figure repeatedly becomes visible, «travelling through time and space,» looking at us, and constantly being reconstructed as we watch it.













↑ Video Still: «Meeting at the border (Les Verrières)»

## Meeting at the border (Les Verrières)

«Meeting at the border (Les Verrières)»  
2023, Video  
HD, stereo, loop, 16:9, 15'01''  
[Video Link \(Dropbox\)](#)

- Kunsthalle Luzern «the center and the other», 2023
- Städtische Galerie Stapflehus, Weil am Rhein, GER, «Grenzen» 2024

Les Verrières is the historic site of the internment of the Bourbaki army in 1871 – the reception of 87,000 partially wounded French soldiers at that time is one of the reasons for Switzerland's self-identification as a humanitarian helping nation.

The catchwords «Humanité, Hospitalité, Neutralité» are still visible everywhere in the village today. At the same time, one

learns of the current prejudices and hostilities of the villagers towards the asylum center in the village, which houses 15–20 people.

The 360-degree footage of the village blends with images behind the screen of the famous panoramic painting, which romantically depicts the historical scene of the internment.





↑ Exhibition view: «the center and the other», Kunsthalle Luzern, Photo: Kilian Bannwart





# Short documentary on real lesbianism

«short documentary on real lesbianism»

2021

Video

HD, stereo loop

16:9, 01'52''

[Trailer Link \(vimeo\)](#)

Password: lesbian

The fictional documentary takes place in the core forest, a dense forest near the village where the artist grew up; a village where the artist experienced her lesbian identity as abnormal during her teenage years, and where the secret, intimate wish arose to live in a society made up only of lesbians. This narrative centers around the absurd fiction of a ‚Swiss indigenous people‘ consisting solely of lesbians. However, this essentialist fantasy of purity and equality within a society could dangerously resemble nationalist or racist images of the ‚purity‘ of peoples; an issue that is part of this exploration.







# neutral background

## Iterations

- «notational system on neutral background» (video installation), 2017 - 2021
- «neutral background» (print on wallpaper), 2020
- «credit of about 420 billion Swiss francs (...)» (laser-cut on paper), 2021





← Exhibition view: «NOW 21», Nidwaldner Museum, Photo: Christian Hartmann

«notational system on neutral background»  
 2017 - 2021  
 2-channel video installation / video  
 HD, stereo, loop  
 16:9, 56'59" / 10'44"  
[Video Link \(long version: Dropbox, 2 files\)](#)  
[Video Link \(short version\)](#)

- Sommerakademie Paul Klee, Online-Publikation «STATECRAFT», 2020 (kurze Version)
- E-Werk Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, Freiburg i. Br., GER «Material Worlds», 2021
- Centre d'Art Pasquart «Cantonale Berne Jura», 2021
- Nidwaldner Museum «NOW 21», 2021
- Kunsthaus Langenthal «Aeschlimann Corti Stipendium», 2022

«Notational System on Neutral Background» evolves from expanded ongoing research on problematic entanglements of Swiss economic policies. Swiss mythologies and self-identifications of neutrality and innocence still (partly) persist when it comes to discussions of colonial histories and racism. Strong economic involvements, be it in the transatlantic slave trade, or, more recent-

ly, human rights violations on behalf of global corporations, have been overlooked. This research focuses on such global involvements, and asks how Swiss policymaking is involved. [...]»  
 (Text: Tirdad Zolghadr)





↑ Exhibition view: «NOW 21», Nidwaldner Museum, Photo: Christian Hartmann









«neutral background»  
2020  
digital print on wallpaper  
series, 3 parts  
size mutable

- E-Werk Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, Freiburg i. Br., GER «Material Worlds» 2021
- Kunsthalle Basel «...von möglichen Welten» 2021
- Kunstmuseum Luzern «ZENTRAL!» 2020

The wallpaper series showcases the development of the visual vocabulary that makes the complex facts of economic policy more visually accessible. It highlights problematic entanglements in terms of their structural form and deep-rooted embedding within the system. The recurring forms of power structures in the trajectories of colonial and post-colonial relationships become

motifs for a reproducible and shareable product: a series of wallpapers, with the drawings / maps / network structures forming their pattern. The patterns use a unified vocabulary of symbols and shapes but are not directly repetitive as is typically the case with wallpaper. Instead, the wallpapers display the process of understanding: the development of the notation system.





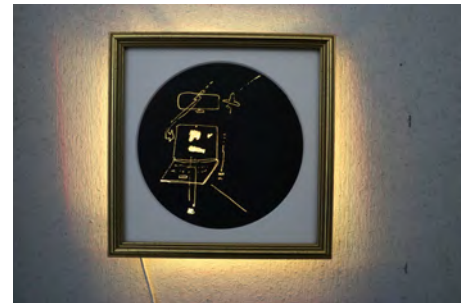


# credit of about 420 bil- lion swiss francs (...)

«credit of about 420 billion  
Swiss francs (...)»  
2021  
12 lasercuts on paper, LED  
strips, framed  
20 x 20 cm

- E-Werk Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, Freiburg i. Br., GER «Material Worlds» 2021
- Kunsthaus Langenthal «Aeschlimann Corti Stipendium» 2022

Laser-cut paper silhouettes of twelve  
morally problematic events in Swiss  
economic history are backlit with LEDs.







↑ Exhibition view: «Material Worlds – Storied Matter», E-Werk, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, 2021, Photo: Marc Doradzillo





↑ Exhibition view: «Material Worlds – Storied Matter», E-Werk, Galerie für Gegenwartskunst, 2021, Photo: Marc Doradzillo





We have found traces of a people that lived without any gravity.

## How Do Stones Grow?

«How Do Stones Grow?»

2018, video

HD, stereo, loop

16:9, 13'43''

[Trailer Link \(vimeo\)](#)

- Stadtgalerie Bern, «Cantonale Berne Jura», 2019
- Nidwaldner Museum, «in cavo: where all the aims cross», 2018
- Baehndlistrasse 86, «Wesen», 2024

The study and staging of the «Other» was often used during the Enlightenment to construct a contrast in order to present and define one's own culture as superior. Olivia Abächerli addresses this in her video «How do stones grow?» by impersonating an anthropologist who discovered a previously unknown past society: beings that move, communicate, and live differently, exposing our way of

existence as just one of many possibilities. (Translation, original text: Karen Amanda Moser)







# If they are a map

## Iterations

- «If they are a map» (mural), 2019
- «If they are a map» (mural), 2019
- «I saw convex equatorial deserts and each one of their grains of sand» (mixed media on canvas), 2022



«if they are a map»  
2019  
oil pastels on wall  
2,2 x 2,2 m

- Grand Palais, Bern «Les Environs (le voisin et son stupide chien)», 2019
- Hot Wheels Projects, Athens, GRC «How it comes to matter», 2018

«If they are a map» is a drawn investigation into how we can orient ourselves, locate ourselves, and contextualize in the complex present. How does anyone orient themselves in a multitude of parameters of time, space, and social contexts? In the large-format drawings, this question is addressed by layering a multitude of subjective cartographies – a variety of perspectives.





«I saw convex equatorial  
deserts and each one of their  
grains of sand»  
2022  
Mixed media on canvas  
each 160 x 140 cm

• Espace libre, Biel «global earth powder trace»,  
2022



↑ Studio shots: «I saw convex equatorial deserts and each one of their grains of sand»

# Companionship Euphoria

«Companionship Euphoria»  
collective: Isabella Beneduci  
(artist, social anthropologist  
and activist from Brasil),  
Line Rime (Illustrator and  
feminist activist from Fri-  
bourg) and Olivia Abächerli.

## Projects:

- Reading group «Unlearning Imperialism», Cité internationale des Arts, Paris, 2022 - 2023
- «You are not here with me in the kitchen right now» (Exhibition project), 2023
- «Companionship Euphoria Letter Reading» (Performance), 2024
- «Companionship Euphoria», (Research project on political agency through feminist friendship), 2024 - ongoing





↑ Exhibition view: «You are not here with me (...)», Galerie Duflon Racz Projekt LINKS, Photo: Line Rime

«You are not here with me in the kitchen right now, but I wish you were»

2023

Mixed Media on wall,  
Print on carpet

Audio

WAC, stereo, 26'58''

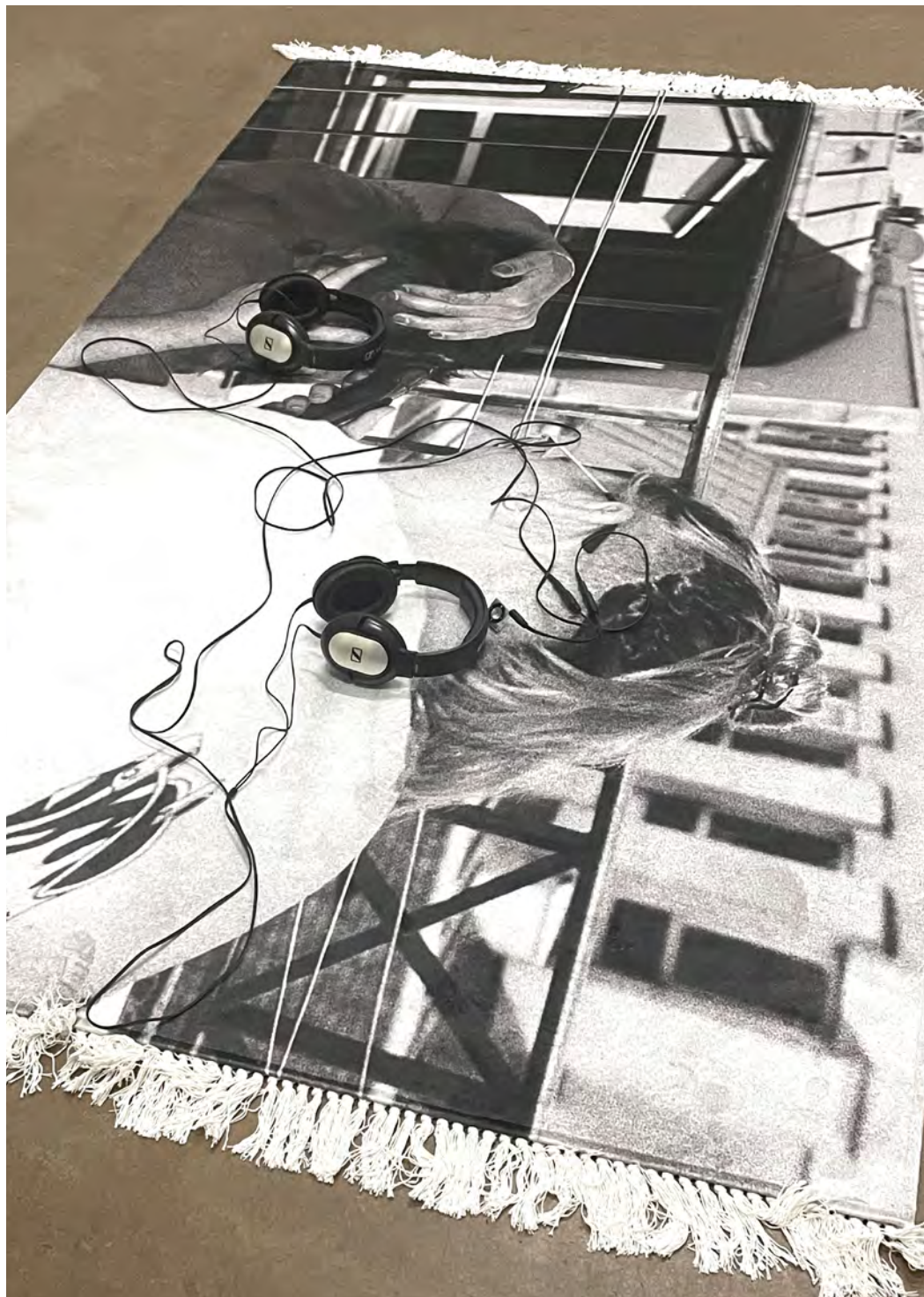
[Audio Link \(Google Drive\)](#)

• Galerie Duflon Racz Projekt LINKS, Bern «You are not here with me in the kitchen right now, but I wish you were», 2023

Through letters and exchanged drawings, the collective engages in dialogue with the respective political contexts – and how these influence personal lives. In a group exhibition, some of the drawings were displayed, while the letters – the connections – were translated into a wall drawing by Olivia Abächerli. A carpet with a photo (by Isabella Beneducci) depicting Olivia shaving Line's hair

formed the centerpiece of the space, where it was possible to listen to spoken passages from the letters.





↑ Exhibition views: «You are not here with me in the kitchen right now, but I wish you were», Galerie Duflon Raczy Projekt LINKS, Photos: Line Rime

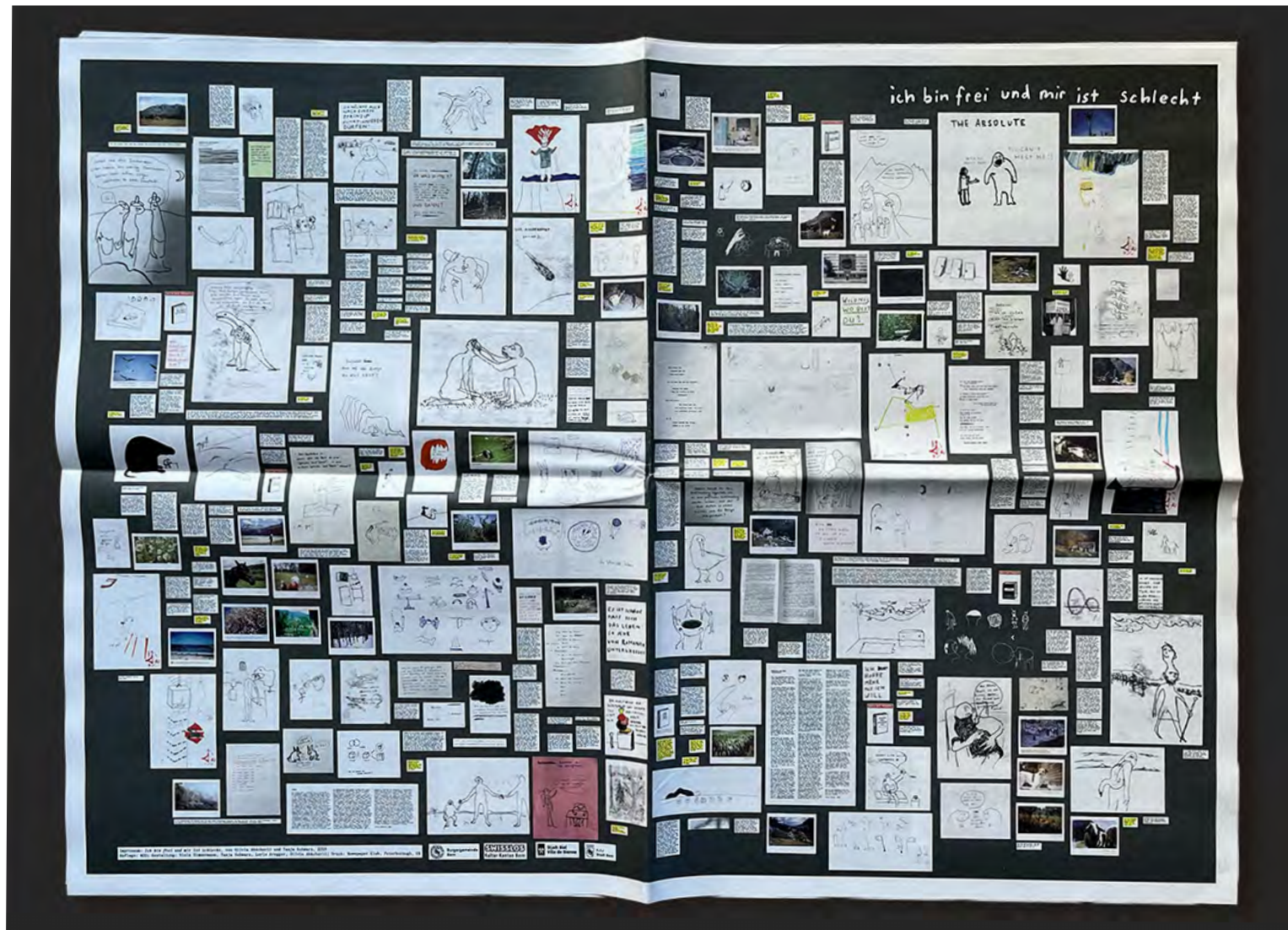


↑ Exhibition views: «You are not here with me in the kitchen right now, but I wish you were», Galerie Duflon Racz Projekt LINKS, Photo: Line Rime









# ich bin frei und mir ist schlecht

«ich bin frei und mir ist  
schlecht»

2023

Publication by Tanja Schwarz &  
Olivia Abächerli

35 x 50 cm

24 pages

- Kunsthaus Interlaken «10+10+1», 2023
- Kunsthalle Bern «Cantonale Bern Jura», 2023









Jelly Sunday  
Zine

«Jelly Sunday Zine»  
2023 -  
digital Zine, released monthly  
[Link \(Bandcamp\)](#)

Collective with:  
Égle Šalkauskyte, Saskia  
Winkelmann, Jasmin Christen,  
Juliette Henrioud, Olivia  
Abächerli





# - - - - - Material flows

## Iterations

- «- - - - - Material flows» (installation), 2022
- «Where do I shoot my arrow», (performance), 2018



«- - - - - Material flows»  
 2022  
 chalk and coal on 4 stone  
 plates  
 each 1 x 2 m  
 Multiple: Offset print  
 78 x 63 cm

What does it mean to own land? What responsibilities or privileges are associated with it? Common lands or corporations («Commons») are historical models for communal property and land management, often of mountains, forests, or water. From the exploration of the meaning of land, territorial, and (agricultural) resource ownership, a visual vocabulary

emerged. Territories, paths, and trails were left as traces of chalk and coal on four local stone slabs. The accompanying map provides insight into the research and serves as an index for the visual vocabulary.





↑ Exhibition view: «Kulturlandschaft Obwalden» Turbine Giswil



↑ Exhibition view: «Kulturlandschaft Obwalden» Turbine Giswil



# Contact

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