

Counter Loopholes with Vicente Lesser, Ingo Niermann and Paula Santomé.

Their works tend towards an activist stance, proposing ideas and ambitions to help and support their fellow human beings and address different social classes, and places, without losing an edge of self-reflection.

In this way, the exhibition juxtaposes different aspects and spheres of action, through visions, politics and the idea of the city, and their places of retreat, load and recreation.

Paula Santomé

It is in many different cultures around the world where we can find the snake as a symbol: of the Great Mother, of wisdom and power for the Aztecs, of the divine in India, of the eternal cycle of life, or the Goddess of the Serpents of the Minoan culture, for whom the combination of breasts and snakes symbolized feminine power...

But cultural history is a history of impositions. Christianity for instance, contributed to demonize the image of the snake to impose its patriarchal rules: Eve, tempted by the serpent, condemned all humanity. Or Medusa after, a beautiful maiden turned into a "female chthonic monster" by the goddess Athena, who transformed her hair into snakes after being raped by Poseidon (her actual crime), only to be beheaded by Perseus. A myth that does not seem so far from today's perception of a free, independent woman who enjoys her sexuality.

Ecdysis is the name given to the molting process in snakes. Since the skin of reptiles does not develop with their body, molting is a necessity for growth. Ecdysis therefore refers to a crucial moment of major change.

Ingo Niermann

Narrated over 25 episodes by actor Mavie Hörbiger, "Deutsch Süd-Ost" is a Who's Who of prominent "last White men": representatives of the New Right, Reich citizens, controversial artists and intellectuals. After retreating to a "bastion" in southeast Germany they let their imaginations run wild and develop revolutionary trends in music, fashion, sex, food, tourism, and terrorism. Deutsch Süd-Ost is a tragicomic laboratory of the mind in which Niermann's own role as a White man and the radicalization of some of his own acquaintances are subject to playful experimentation.

World Revolution Fund (WRF) is a venture capital enterprise that doesn't reward investors with tokens of change – money – but with actual change. The rate of return promises to be immeasurably high, as all projects funded by the WRF are easy to repeat on a global scale. A rather moderate amount of 1 Mio. CHF/EUR yields world revolution.

Positive Terror is one of the projects selected by the World Revolution Fund. While protesters are used to shouting their demands to be heard, this makes it easy for those attacked to take offense. Instead, Positive Terror – 7 Tutorials trains anti-capitalist protesters to become sirens who haunt the rich, singing "Share with us!". With Charlotte von Engelberg, Hannah Weinberger, Mario Espinoza, and Virginia Schoch-Andrews.

Vicente Lesser

Translation from the interview with Ana Maria Gutierrez, from "Nexo", EG, entrance hall:

Ana Maria: I don't know, I think we were lucky in a way. Because Latinos do not have the right to enter Switzerland with their children and I entered with my son. I don't know how. You're not allowed to come with children. You can come and study here, but you can't bring your son. In the end, after a long struggle for which we had to find a lawyer, I was accepted to come study here, and with my son. So it was really great!

For my son it was very difficult because neither of us spoke French. It was a shock, an intense shock. At the beginning I felt very guilty about coming to this country, because there he had everything and here we arrived in a place where we only knew one person. In reality we were confronted with a completely different society.

Ana Maria: After a few months we managed to become a little bit independent. But not enough to rent a flat for ourselves, we didn't have enough for that! But enough to be able to live in a place, in a room—to live well, with dignity.

It lasted I think two or three months. It was very hard, because our door didn't have a key, I remember. People would come up to where we lived—well, where we slept. We had no privacy. Above all, it was hardest for him, because as an adult, you try to calm things down and adapt. So it was the hardest for him, I think. After being used to having his own room, his own house, everything! In Chile he didn't lack anything!

The landlady paid very little for this flat, and she obviously charged us a lot more... We paid 500 francs for a flat that had no heating, and we only sometimes had hot water.

Ana Maria: Afterwards, we went to the California squat. My son was the only child. He must have already been ten years old. And we lived well there. We had a flat all to ourselves, independent and locked. There were people from many countries. We lived there for a year, it was very good for my son and me. But then they closed the squat and we had to leave again.

Why did it close?

It closed because the government didn't want any more squats! And they made us leave in a such a way...

And then I realized that here in Switzerland it was very different. In Chile, when you fight for something, you fight to the end. If you fight for something, everybody gets together, and you fight to the end, to the last consequences. Not with weapons or anything like that, but... Here it was students. Everyone went to live at their parents' house, or their grandparents' house. Nobody stayed. It was a three-day struggle. But a struggle that lasts three days, you're going to be thrown out in exactly the same way! Here people don't have that strength, that strength of uniting to achieve something.

Ana Maria: During that time, my salary was so low that no one would rent me a flat. And then the property management companies swore to me that they were going to get me something, that I shouldn't worry, that I should present all my papers and that they would get me something and not leave us homeless. All the promises were fake, because they left us on the street.

But we really needed to live alone, because we were tired of living with people. You always have to adapt to everything. It's hard to adapt to everybody and to all the different people. But we had the strength. I have no idea how!

At that moment I had a crisis. We really couldn't take it anymore. So I decided. I told my son, and I called his father in Chile and told him that we were going to come back, because we couldn't go on moving again and again. It was too much. I was ready to leave. I said to myself, "I'll leave my studies, I'll leave everything and we'll go back. It's bad for him, it's bad for me, it's bad for everything. We can't go on like this." That week I was determined to go and buy tickets. I was determined.

Translation from the interview with OG 2000, skater crew from Geneve, from "Nexo", in the backyard:

Could you describe the different elements of urban infrastructure and design that you like to skate?

Célian: Well, I would say that it depends on how you skate.

But you can skate anything, really. It's just that there are materials that aren't good because they don't slide or roll well. Like fake marble, that stuff doesn't really glide. It's like marble but it's not marble, it's something that breaks a bit. Or like there are certain places on building sites, it's a bit of mega-smooth concrete, and that means that when you skate the corner, it breaks into pieces, it makes holes—you can't skate it for long. It lasts a year and then you can't skate it anymore.

Louis: I've been motivated lately to try to repair places that we couldn't skate. Meaning, to make patches, to redo the concrete in some places. Sometimes, bits break, so we can't skate them anymore because there are holes. So we try to redo the angle.

Guillaume: The ground is also important! Because to get around you ride a skateboard, so you try to go to places where the road is in good condition. I noticed that in Geneva, the pavement

has grid patterns of little depressions everywhere. I think it's one of the only cities that has that. And so it creates a sound. In skate videos where you hear that sound, you can immediately recognize that it's in Geneva. But I don't really like the ground here, it's a bit shitty.

Louis: What's important in the street and what's crazy is that when you're in the street, there are people passing by, the concrete is rotten, there's a guy who spits, there's a dog who comes to piss on the curb, there's a man or a woman who shouts at you or who applauds you, or who talks to you when you're concentrating, you've got the cop who arrives and says you have to leave, or there's an altercation... In fact, there are so many other things that have nothing to do with what you're doing and that you shouldn't let distract you, that you have to get in your own bubble.... For example, we skate a lot of benches. And sometimes, you skate a bench, and during the five minutes you're not skating it, someone comes and sits on it. And you are very concentrated, so you have to talk to him in a way like "oh yes, sorry, actually I'm skating..." And the person will say "yeah, but that's for sitting on!" And that's where it's incredible sometimes in the street. You have to wait for people to pass...the street is unpredictable.

Louis: The skate-stoppers are to prevent us from skating. The goal is then to find solutions; for me, sometimes my approach is to try to remove the skate-stoppers. Most of the skate-stoppers you can remove with tools. So, if you are motivated enough, you remove them, even if you have to repair the place after. But it's still illegal because you are modifying the street infrastructure.

Guillaume: Yeah, skate-stoppers, they're really a pain in the ass. It's so frustrating, you have the perfect thing and it's just not skateable... Then, there are times when you try to dodge the little bolts. You try to adapt and deal with it, but sometimes you can't because the thing is too much in the way of your skating. But sometimes you can play with it and jump over it.

Célian : I see skate-stoppers as hostile architecture. It's the same thing. What I find crazy is that these people seem to live in another world. Like they build a building or a bench, and they think that nobody will sleep on it, or that nobody will skate on it. It's a really weird vision. Either they've never seen people sleeping outside, or... but it's crazy to build something so that people can't sleep on it, or they can't skate on it. It's as if they hadn't thought about it before, like "ah but people will respect it because I made the building."

Besides, it's not even a solution to the problem because we're going to skate somewhere else and people are still sleeping outside, only sleeping on the ground. So it's really just a way to displace the problem, a bit like many things in society, we just move the problem and pretend it's all good.

There are benches, all anti-skate-ified with bolts, so you can't sit on them. I find that a bit ridiculous. They do everything to prevent people from skating on it, but in the end it prevents everyone from using it. So it becomes an empty place because nobody can sit on it. There are bolts, so you can't sit down and we can't skate. So, in the end, they become sculptures.

This show is the 20th that Palazzina organized on three locations (Schweizergasse, Allemannengasse and Baslerstrasse).

Alongside this show, we are inaugurating "On Foot", this new project is an addition to our exhibition space, made from modular and moveable elements allowing us to think of Palazzina beyond our house.

The structure is made from hempcrete blocks and scaffolding making it interchangeable and opening up to new configurations that could come from the place where is installed, the idea for a show or the artists that are invited.

Its first itinerancy will be in Basel Social Club, from 11-18 June, 2023, with the artists from this show, presenting site-specific works, and a performance, specially for this occasion.