



PRESS INFORMATION: VIENNA CONTEMPORARY 2023

PRESS INFORMATION FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIENNA CONTEMPORARY PRESENTS ITS SPECIAL PROGRAM STATEMENT 2023: “POLITICAL HOMELESSNESS AND CONTEMPORARY CITIZENSHIP”

viennacontemporary (VCT) is proud to announce the highly anticipated return of its acclaimed program, VCT STATEMENT. Established in 2022 as a response to Russia’s war against Ukraine and following the need to address this traumatic event - both through artistic and intellectual means - STATEMENT is evolving into a vital platform that brings together the worlds of contemporary art, societal practice, and political development.

In its second edition, **VCT STATEMENT 2023**, titled **“Political Homelessness and Contemporary Citizenship”**, invites guests to an exploration of the question of belonging in contemporary Europe. To kick off the program, a high-level panel discussion will take place at The Atrium of Hotel Almanac Vienna on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, on the eve before the official opening of viennacontemporary, followed by the opening of the exhibition “Not Either Or, But And” at das weisse haus.

Today, Europe is home to millions of migrants from various regions, including Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, and more recently, Ukraine and Russia. However, a vital question arises: How can individuals make their voices heard in a country that isn’t quite their own? And is true belonging possible without the ability to participate in the political process? Does the lack of political rights drive our communities apart, and can culture serve as the binding agent to mend these divisions?

Panel 1, titled “Citizenship and Belonging,” will delve into the complexities of building a community based on shared values when a significant portion of its members feel estranged and excluded from the political landscape. The panel will explore the existence of two types of citizens in Europe today: those who enjoy political representation and those who lack such rights despite their contributions. With Austria as a typical European Union country where non-Austrian citizens make up 17.1% of the population, questions will be raised about sharing prosperity without sharing power. The artistic positions presented during the panel will offer unique insights into the human condition caught between the realms of belonging and non-belonging.

Panel 2, titled “Inclusive Europe,” will focus on Ukraine’s journey since the Maidan revolution in 2013 and Russia’s subsequent invasion. The panel will highlight Ukraine’s enthusiastic support for the European Union and the solidarity demonstrated by Europe in response to the aggression. It will examine the lessons that can be learned from the history of EU integration in the Western Balkans and explore the challenges faced by both donor societies and those receiving migrants in the wake of out-migration.

Following the panel discussion, VCT STATEMENT 2023 will feature a **special exhibition titled “Not Either Or, But And”** at the esteemed venue “das weisse haus.” **Curated by Laura Amann**, curator at Kunsthalle Wien, the exhibition will showcase the works of multiple Austrian-based and international artists. Through their artistic contributions, these artists will unsettle the politics of citizenship, especially of diasporic and temporary residents, as well as migrating citizens. The exhibition aims to challenge unquestioned thinking and invites viewers to confront themselves with the underlying, internalized structures of white supremacy in order to pave the way for genuine freedom, democracy, and equality.

The exhibition will commence with opening speeches by curator Laura Amann, VCT Artistic Director Boris Ondreička, VCT International Development Director Yana Barinova, and Director of das weisse haus, Alexandra Grausam, followed by the exhibition itself, which will run from September 7 to October 21, 2023, at das weisse haus.

We cordially invite you to join us at **VCT STATEMENT 2023: Political Homelessness and Contemporary Citizenship**. With its panel discussions and thought-provoking exhibition, this event is essential for anyone interested in the intersection of art, politics, and society. By critically examining the concept of political homelessness and exploring the role of culture and art in fostering a sense of belonging, STATEMENT aims to ignite meaningful conversations and inspire positive change.

VCT STATEMENT 2023 is made possible with the kind support of ERSTE Foundation.

EVENT DETAILS: VCT STATEMENT 2023: "POLITICAL HOMELESSNESS AND CONTEMPORARY CITIZENSHIP"

Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Venue: The Atrium, Hotel Almanac Vienna, Parkring 14/16, 1010 Vienna
Admission: 3:30 pm

Panel 1: Citizenship and Belonging, 4:00-5:30 pm

Panel 2: Inclusive Europe, 6:00-7:30 pm

Curated by Dessy Gavrilova, Vienna-based Bulgarian cultural entrepreneur and co-founder of The Red House Center for Culture and Debate

Participating Speakers:

- Luiza Bialasiewicz, Professor of European Governance at the University of Amsterdam;
 - Nicolo Milanese, Founding Director of European Alternatives;
 - Kristof Bender, Deputy Chairman of the European Stability Initiative;
 - Kateryna Mishchenko, Ukrainian writer, publisher, and translator;
 - Veronica Anghel, Lecturer at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; and many more.
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EXHIBITION "NOT EITHER OR, BUT AND"

Curated by Laura Amann

Participating Artists: Olga Balema, Sharif Baruwa, Tony Cokes, Maximiliano León, OMARA Mara Oláh, Wendelien van Oldenborgh, Aykan Safoğlu, Miriam Stoney

Venue: das weiße haus, Hegelgasse 14, 1010 Vienna

Doors Open: 6:00 pm

Opening Speeches: 8:00 pm

Duration of Exhibition: 7 September – 21 October 2023

Opening hours during the fair: 1:00-9:00 pm

Daily curator tour, 7 – 9 September: 3:00-4:00 pm

QUOTES

“As part of this year’s panel discussion on political homelessness and contemporary citizenship, we seek a deeper understanding of the human condition entangled in the dichotomy of belonging and not belonging. Through artistic perspectives, we aim to gain new insights that can redefine our understanding of identity, representation, and the pursuit of an inclusive society.”

– Yana Barinova, International Development Director

“The discussion of whether art has real social and political value is an endless one. But one thing is for sure: art does have the capacity to think and make us think differently. Art is capable to furnish our world anew, to make the invisible appear and silenced voices be heard. And in so doing art may change the way we understand ourselves and our relations in the world. The artistic positions shown in the exhibition ‘Not Either Or, But And’ are intended to do exactly that: subvert our own ways of thinking, opening up room for presences that would challenge what we know and the ways we know it.”

– Curator Laura Amann

“What is a just society and how can its ideal be achieved is a haunting question at least since it was first posed by Plato and John Stuart Mill. In the contemporary multicultural societies of Europe where millions of newcomers are given shelter, but are rejected access to its political community, it is gaining a new actuality. What would it take for Europe to open both inward (to its newcomers) and eastward (to include new member states – Western Balkan countries, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia)? Let us find out at the VCT STATEMENT panel discussions.”

– Dessy Gavrilova, STATEMENT Panel discussions curator

**FOR PRESS INQUIRIES, INTERVIEW REQUESTS, OR FURTHER INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:**

Salomea Krobath
Communications Manager
krobath@viennacontemporary.at
+43 699 19 3333 22

Manuel Brandl
PR & Communications
brandl@viennacontemporary.at
+43 699 19 3333 23

For images, additional information, or press passes, please visit our press page at www.viennacontemporary.com/press or contact the provided press contact.

ABOUT VIENNA CONTEMPORARY:

Taking place from 7 – 10 September 2023 in Kursalon Vienna, viennacontemporary is Austria's leading art fair, renowned for its commitment to showcasing the vibrant world of contemporary art, bridging the art worlds of the East and West, and facilitating meaningful dialogues. With STATEMENT as one of its central programs, viennacontemporary continues to push boundaries and bridge the gap between art, society, and politics.

SAVE THE DATE
7-10 September, 2023
Kursalon Vienna
Johannesgasse 33, 1010 Vienna

PRESS CONFERENCE:

7 September, 9:00 – 10:00 am
Kursalon Vienna, Main Terrasse

10:00 – 11:00 am – Press tour through the fair and presentation of the VCT SCULPTURE PROJECT

11:00 – 11:30 am – Q&A with Artistic Director Boris Ondreička

Opening Hours:

Preview: 7 September, 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

Public Days: 8-10 September

VIP Hours: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Public Hours: 8 & 9 September, 1:00 - 7:00 pm; 10 September, 1:00 - 6:00 pm

STATEMENT 2022

The program point STATEMENT was added to the program of viennacontemporary in 2022 as a response to Russia's war against Ukraine and the need to address this traumatic event through artistic means. It consisted of a high-profile panel discussion with speakers such as Oleksandr Tkachenko, the Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Halyna Hryhorenko, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, and a special exhibition at das weisse haus, curated by Katherina Filyuk, in which thirteen artists dealt with the themes of war, homesickness, and loss. STATEMENT UKRAINE took place under the patronage of Austrian president Alexander Van der Bellen.

STATEMENT UKRAINE took place with the kind support of ERSTE Foundation.

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

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STATEMENT	with the kind support of ERSTE Foundation
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