

Urbane Künste Ruhr

PRESS FOLDER

Monday, 03 April 2023

Please find detailed texts on the individual events, a comprehensive press kit and printable images for downloading in the [Press section](#) of our website.

Ruhr Ding: *Schlaf* 5.5.–25.6.2023

An Exhibition in Public Space Across Germany's Ruhr Area

The *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* (*Ruhr Thing: Sleep*) is an exhibition project in public space that includes 22 site-specific new productions by 19 artists in the cities of **Mülheim an der Ruhr, Essen, Witten, and Gelsenkirchen-Erle**. It is also the conclusion of a trilogy with which Urbane Künste Ruhr, under the **artistic direction of Britta Peters**, is touring the Ruhr region. After the *Ruhr Ding: Territorien* (2019) and the *Ruhr Ding: Klima* (2021) the third *Ruhr Ding* shifts the gaze from questions about the environment and the surroundings to the human body and its need for sleep, reflecting with the means of art the question of how we want to live.

Caught in eight-hour waking and sleeping patterns, flexible working hours, body clocks and the social pressure to be non-stop available, productive and awake, sleep represents an almost resistant state – a phase of non-production and non-consumption. Yet even when resting, our bodies can be digitally measured and optimised by numerous inventions designed to help us sleep better. Sleepless nights are juxtaposed with the creative state of being rested, and fantasy worlds alternate with nightmare scenarios turned into reality. The concept of sleep is as multifaceted as the artistic examination of it.

The ***Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*** marks the end of a three-part exhibition series presented throughout the region by the Urbane Künste Ruhr under Britta Peters' artistic direction. It is curated as a polyphonic dialogue in which different artistic positions relate to each other: They complement and contradict each other, some involve their audience. Some projects are loud and impossible to miss, but alongside them quieter voices and more subtle interventions assert themselves. Whether film, sculpture, painting, language, text, music or sound, whether installations, workshops or performances - they all have one thing in common: they were each created for concrete places and contexts in the Ruhr region.

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Urbane Künste Ruhr

Overview: Cities and Dates

Ruhr Ding: *Schlaf*

5.5.–25.6.2023

Opening Days:

5.5.2023: Opening ceremony in **Mülheim an der Ruhr**

6.5.2023: Opening ceremony in **Witten**

7.5.2023: Opening ceremony in **Essen**

All locations are open from Wednesday to Sunday from 11am to 6 pm from 5.5.2023 until 25.6.2023. For a detailed schedule regarding the opening days please check the separate document in this press kit.

Opening Hours

5.5.–25.6.2023

Wed–Sun 11–18 Uhr

Free admission. For details please visit www.urbanekuensteruhr.de

Artists:

Wojciech Bąkowski, Maximiliane Baumgartner, Cute Community Radio, God's Entertainment, Michel Gondry's Home Movie Factory, Healing Complex, Nik Nowak, Katarina Jazbec, Nadia Kaabi-Linke, Stephanie Lüning, Melanie Manchot, Museum für Fotokopie, Yuri Pattison, Joanna Piotrowska, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Alicja Rogalska, Nora Turato, Viron Erol Vert, The Wig

In cooperation with:

Mülheim an der Ruhr

- Makroscope
- Museum für Fotokopie

Essen

- Astra Theater
- Neuer Essener Kunstverein

Witten

- Kulturforum Witten:
- Märkisches Museum Witten
- Saalbau Witten

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+++ **Press Preview: *Save the Date*** +++

Two-day bus tour for the opening of the *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* for media representatives on Thursday, May 4 and Friday, May 5, 2023

Registration at presse@urbanekuensteruhr.de

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Artists and Projects

Mülheim an der Ruhr

It is perhaps presumptuous to believe that the spirit of a city is decisively shaped by the personality of an artist who lives or has lived there. All the same, in the case of the filmmaker Werner Nekes, who passed away in 2017, it is hard not to acknowledge that he, and his collection of 25,000 optical toys from before the invention of film, influenced other artists in and around Mülheim an der Ruhr. Among his notable companions were Christoph Schlingensief, a native of neighbouring Oberhausen, and Helge Schneider, who still lives in Mülheim. The love for old cultural techniques also links the various associations that founded the socio-cultural art centre Makroscope in central Mülheim, including its Museum für Fotokopie (Photocopy Museum). At the meantime a playful approach to the medium of film and projection is closely linked to dreaming, which is why it plays a central role for *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*. Furthermore, the city of Mülheim an der Ruhr, with its 170,000 inhabitants, is known for its particularly wide gap between rich and poor. Plenty of millionaires live in the idyllic residential areas along the River Ruhr, whereas the city itself has long been subjected to a budget freeze as well as having all the usual problems of Ruhr cities to contend with. The river flows through the middle of the city, and its excursion boats and industrial harbour give Mülheim a special atmosphere.

Michel Gondry's *Home Movie Factory*

French artist and Oscar-winning Hollywood director Michel Gondry gained international acclaim for his feature films, including *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *The Science of Sleep*, as well as innovative music videos for Björk, Daft Punk, and Radiohead. His work – often dealing with themes of dreaming, perception and reality – is characterised by an inspired sparseness of resources, a playful approach, and an aesthetic that focuses on fantasy, self-empowerment, and ingenuity rather than consumerism and glossy production values. His participatory project *Home Movie Factory* – having already toured internationally in New York, Tokyo, São Paulo, and Paris – will be there to experience at *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*. In a three-hour parkour through several different film sets, participants can achieve their dream of making their own film and bringing a self-scripted story to the big screen. The unique concept of the *Home Movie Factory*, inspired by Gondry's film *Be Kind Rewind*, invites participants to unleash their own creativity and imagination at the Alte Dreherei in Mülheim. Since its first edition in 2008, *Home Movie Factory* has created a large archive of site-specific films, which will now be expanded to include viewpoints from the Ruhr region via *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*. Michel Gondry was born 1963 in Versailles.

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Katarina Jazbec

In her works, which are based on long-term participatory research processes, the artist and filmmaker Katarina Jazbec creates new forms of narrative in which she explores vital questions of ethics, identity, freedom, justice, and economic inequality. In her most recent experimental documentary, the award-winning *You Can't Automate Me*, for example, she hauntingly portrays the dangerous working life of Rotterdam dockworkers, who every day risk their lives securing shipping containers and, unlike many other port workers, cannot be replaced by machines.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Katarina Jazbec transfers her interest in rituals of dream-sharing, expressing and communicating dreams, to the Ruhr region. In her new film project, she examines how the processes of change in this former mining region affect the nightly dreams of its residents. How is their relationship with nature reflected in those dreams, and what stories are hidden in them? What significance does the end of the fossil-fuel age carry for the region's possible future? Katarina Jazbec's research and the protagonists of her short film took her to a quarry in Hagen and to the ThyssenKrupp Steel plant at Duisburg-Bruckhausen.

Katarina Jazbec (*1991 in Slovenia) studied in the Faculty for Economics at the University of Ljubljana and completed her master's degree in photography at the St. Joost School of Art & Design in Breda. She lives in Rotterdam.

Nik Nowak

In his multimedia, interdisciplinary work, Nik Nowak concentrates on the affective dimensions and potentials of sound and space so as to redefine the boundaries of form between installations, sculptures, and paintings. With his large-format, mobile sound sculptures, the artist explores sound as an identity source and as an element that influences society. Here, his interest lies particularly in the use of sound systems as cultural transmitters and acoustic weapons in the context of war, and as a global and cross-temporal phenomenon in colonial history.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Nik Nowak transforms an overseas shipping container into a large-format mobile sound sculpture. As a participatory installation, it will be temporarily turning the location into a place of discourse and of musical, acoustic intervention. The project is conceived as an appeal and a megaphone for different voices and sounds of a society that is marked by the migration routes of various generations and by phases of industrial and post-industrial development, as well as digital, local, and global growth. Taking as a point of departure the question of who we as a society really are, Nik Nowak confronts virtuality with materiality and, in the process, thematically explores how the private and public spheres interrelate in the digital age of 24/7. Nik Nowak (*1981 in Mainz) earned a degree from Berlin University of the Arts (UdK) and also studied sculpture at Normal University Shanghai. He has been master student of Prof. Lothar Baumgarten at the UdK in Berlin and his artwork has been exhibited in numerous international contexts. He lives and works in Berlin.

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Viron Erol Vert

In his artistic practice, Viron Erol Vert probes and analyses – against the background of his own intercultural experiences – identity constructs and different aspects and perspectives related to the self and the other. His works are shaped by the state and atmosphere of an in-between existence, with the artist weaving various cultures, materials, languages, forms of expression, and life views into a hybrid, complementary identity.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Viron Erol Vert is transforming a vacant kiosk into a sculpture resembling a mobile by expanding the original architecture through modules, and by creating, through forms, colours, textures, and reflections, a place for encounter, daydreams, and ephemeral moments between everyday life and imagination. In terms of both content and form, he is alluding to the original function and etymology of the kiosk, a word originating from the Persian kūšk (pavilion, garden house) which ultimately made its way into modern Turkish as köşk.

Viron Erol Vert (*1975) grew up between northern Germany, Istanbul, and Athens. He meanwhile lives and works in Berlin and in the Mediterranean region. He studied fashion design at ESMOD in Paris and at HTW University of Applied Sciences in Berlin, as well as visual arts at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, before becoming a master student in textile and surface design at the Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin. From July to December 2021, he was a resident artist in Mülheim at Makroscope – Zentrum für Kunst und Technik (Centre for Art and Technology) in the scope of *Zu Gast bei Urbane Künste Ruhr*.

Makroscope | Museum für Fotokopie | The Wig

The Makroscope in Mülheim an der Ruhr is a vibrant site situated downtown: the house for artists and art studios is devised as a sociocultural centre. Members of the Makroscope include the founders of the cassette label *Anna Ott* and of the *Shiny Toys Festival* for time-based experimental culture, and also organisers of a comprehensive and diverse programme of concerts, readings, and exhibitions held in rooms on the ground floor, a former hotel lobby. What is more, Makroscope hosts the M.F.F. Museum für Fotokopie (Photocopy Museum), an internationally renowned collection documenting the history of photocopying, including works of Copy Art and numerous photocopiers.

At *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, together with the group *The Wig* the Welsh artist Angharad Williams will be showing one of her pieces in the Makroscope rooms. Angharad Williams is an artist and writer who, in her poetic and quasi political works, investigates the individual in a capitalist world. Her works of art combine elements that are sculptural, installative, text-based, and performative, taking a distinctive and unsentimental look at the present: “Questions are a burden to others, answers are a prison to oneself,” as is asserted in one of her pieces.

Angharad Williams Williams (*Ynys Môn, Wales) lives in Berlin and Wales. She most recently had solo exhibitions at the Kunstverein für die

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Rheinlande und Westfalen in Düsseldorf and in the exhibition space of MOSTYN in Wales (both in 2022). As part of the artist group *The Wig*, she moreover works collaboratively much of the time. In 2020, the artist spent three months in Essen as a resident of the program *Zu Gast bei Urbane Künste Ruhr*.

Essen

The Steele district in Essen at the river Ruhr was an independent city until 1929. The history of Steele, which was founded in 1578, is still tangible. Although Steele, unfortunately, became best known in the 1960s and early 1970s for its radical urban development policy. Planning measures to restructure the district saw entire streets of half-timbered houses and buildings from the Gründerzeit period torn down, even though large sections could have been saved, as documented, among other publications, by Tim Schanetzky's study *Endstation Größenwahn* in 1998. The new cityscape, which characterizes the Steele district to this day, is made up of low property developments from the 1970s, giving it the feel of a seaside tourist resort – except that the Ruhr stands in for the sea in Steele and the beach promenade is modest. The renovation of the city was accelerated in particular by the scandalous construction of a branch of the Wertheim department store, which opened in 1972 and was closed again in February 1979 due to mismanagement and badly planned traffic rerouting. The Steele archive, which helped us with our research, has shelves full of files and photos tracing the city's history. Although the conversion of the Ruhr region to a car-friendly area in the 1970s was not unusual at the time, Steele's fate remained an isolated case. From then on, no further political majorities could be found for such drastic urban reconstructions. In the 1970s, the self-assurance of German citizens grew in general, which meant that protests against similar projects were expected.

Wojciech Bąkowski

Memories, dreams and visions influence the often melancholic, dark works of the artist, filmmaker, musician and poet Wojciech Bąkowski. He is particularly interested in psychological processes, the spatial form of our imagination, and the possibility – for example, through lucid dreaming – of pushing one's consciousness to the limits. Born and raised in the Polish city of Poznań, the atmosphere and visual style of Bąkowski's work has been shaped by the surroundings of his childhood – 1970s high-rise housing estates with never-ending rows of cramped flats and labyrinthine, shadowy corridors as well as elevators and railway tracks.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Bąkowski has developed an installation in an empty kiosk next to a loop of a tram track. Here, deep in urban space, an enchanting, dreamlike scenario unfolds, which, in its simplicity, awakens existential feelings. In addition to this work, the Neue Essener Kunstverein is opening a solo exhibition by the artist in cooperation with Urbane Künste Ruhr on the occasion of *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*.

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Wojciech Bąkowski (*1979 in Poznań) lives in Warsaw. He studied Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznań. In 2007, he joined forces with other Polish artists to form the legendary group PENERSTWO. He is an internationally successful visual artist as well as a musician for various bands.

Maximiliane Baumgartner

Based on her interest in how public space is created and the urban conditions associated with it, Maximiliane Baumgartner's actional spaces and conceptual painting series are influenced by a research practice. From the perspective of an artist and art teacher her mobile architectures and performative installations explore emancipatory possibilities of critical and feminist pedagogy as well as forms of learning. The correlation between artistic production and communication is central to her work.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Maximiliane Baumgartner has developed a mobile, in-situ architecture for the Steele district called *Das Sprechende Eck* (The Speaking Corner). Children, adolescents and adults will be given free rein and a framework to develop artistic actions. The motto 'Wir nehmen Aufträge an' (We accept orders) is essential to the 'game': a commissioning office, managed by participating children and teenagers, takes orders from local shops and public services, such as hair salons, internet cafés, bakeries, cinemas and district libraries, and then implements them in *Das Sprechende Eck*. Orders include advertising, window dressing and commissioned art. The local public in the district is thus actively involved.

Maximiliane Baumgartner (*1986) lives in the Rhineland. She studied Art and Art Education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and has been interested in settings for games and archives since 2014. She initiated the mobile art project *DER FAHRENDE RAUM* (THE TRAVELING SPACE), a place for art education and artistic action in an urban context in the Freimann district of Munich and was its programme director from 2015 to 2019 in alternating collaborations.

Nadia Kaabi-Linke

Nadia Kaabi-Linke grew up between Tunis and Kyiv and has lived in Dubai, Sharjah and Paris. Her personal experience of different cultural environments has a direct influence on her work. She is particularly interested in the correlations between political, economic and sociocultural contexts as well as the constructions of identity, memory and perception. The tensions inherent in identity are often reflected in her works. Kaabi-Linke alienates objects, functions and environments, works with optical illusions and explores the threshold between the beautiful and the disturbing. In her work *Inner Circle* (2021), for example, she inserted needles into a public bench that made it impossible to sit down. With her work for *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Nadia Kaabi-Linke approaches the illusory fiction of 'astro-mining' – asteroid mining. She has developed an analogue installation in the former Wertheim department store and thus ironically relating the transfiguration of space as a potentially unlimited supplier of raw materials to the mining past in the region.

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Nadia Kaabi-Linke (*1978 in Tunis) received her doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris and lives in Berlin.

Stephanie Lüning

Stephanie Lüning's artistic work often intervenes in urban infrastructures and creates dreamlike scenarios. For her current actions, she uses a machine to produce large quantities of coloured foam from biodegradable detergent and food colouring to temporarily flood squares, bridges and objects. This coloured mass of foam briefly transforms the city into another world before it disappears, without leaving visible traces. For the viewer, only the impressions and experience of witnessing her art remain.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Stephanie Lüning has developed a performance and temporary installation in Steele. This work raises the question of the subversive potential of her ephemeral, playful foam landscapes.

Stephanie Lüning completed an apprenticeship as a typeface artist and printmaker before studying Scenographic Art and Fine Arts at the Dresden Art Academy. In her process-oriented approach, she uses a wide variety of materials, explores physical states and, in doing so, questions the limits of fine art as a genre.

Stephanie Lüning (*1978 in Schwerin) lives in Dresden.

Kameelah Janan Rasheed

The artist Kameelah Janan Rasheed considers herself a learner. In her interdisciplinary practice, she explores technologies and rituals used to generate, share, store and conceal knowledge. Working mainly with text she creates various forms of work, such as sprawling collages and large-scale installations in public space, lecture performances or video.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Kameelah Janan Rasheed is developing a large-scale work composed of text fragments, photographic elements and film stills. The façade of the former Wertheim department store will be transformed into a large image visible from the Essen-Steele train station. This appropriation of space in a built environment subtly renders visible the architectural and historical layers of urban space – and raises the question of how interpretations of urban settings can be shifted and transformed.

Kameelah Janan Rasheed (*1985 in East Palo Alto) lives in Brooklyn. She holds a BA in Public Policy from Pomona College in California and an MA in Social Studies Education from Stanford University.

Alicja Rogalska

Dealing with the social structures and political subtexts of our everyday lives is essential for Alicja Rogalska's interdisciplinary practice. With a research-oriented approach that includes theoretical and archival research as well as interviews and discussions, this Polish artist usually develops her works for specific environments and contexts. One of the main thrusts of her performances, installations, videos and situations, which often arise in collaboration with other people, is the joint development of emancipatory visions for a different future.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Alicja Rogalska explores the history of the Essen

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district of Steele. She poses questions, such as: do architecture and social life depend on one another? Which needs, especially those of women, are not met by certain architectures and how can a safe urban space be created in which to enable reflections on the present and future?

Alicja Rogalska holds an MA in Cultural Studies from the University of Warsaw and an MA degree in Fine Arts from Goldsmiths College in London. She is currently working on her PhD project, which deals with visions of the future in social art practice.

Alicja Rogalska was born in Poland and lives in Berlin. The first version of her project for *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* was produced in 2022 under the title *Sister Flats* as a co-production with Manifesta 14 in Pristina.

Witten

With its population fluctuating around 100,000, the town of Witten, idyllically situated in the Ruhr sandstone mountains, had been reaching for recognition as a city for decades. It managed it most recently in 1975. But its birth rate is probably much higher than the number of actual residents might imply, because many inhabitants from surrounding towns give birth in the Witten-Herdecke anthroposophical hospital. The influence of the private university can also be felt from the presence of the alternative stores and cafés in the city centre. Witten offers itself as an apt resonance space for meditations about the body in an increasingly digitalised world, and about its need for rest and its potential, while the River Ruhr gives the city a high recreational value. Witten has become internationally known for the *Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik* (Witten Days for New Chamber Music), a festival for experimental contemporary music that – surprisingly enough since new music was then often considered degenerate – was founded during the National Socialist era in 1936. Since 1969 it has been organised in conjunction with the broadcaster WDR. There is also the Saalbau Witten, an imposing, terraced theatre and concert hall from the 1970s that seems somewhat oversized for current needs – but it certainly can also be deemed a potential asset.

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Melanie Manchot

A white horse is standing in downtown Marl amid deserted architecture at the crack of dawn. The animal moves but slowly, seeming almost like a sculpture itself. In her video work *Cornered Star* of 2018, the artist Melanie Manchot portrays, through intense black-and-white shots, the urban landscape and this unusual visitor that she had brought into town for the piece. Melanie Manchot's projects operate at the interface of documentary and staged form, approaching certain sites, public spaces, and groups or communities with great sensitivity. The artist's interest is focused on building individual and collective identity, and she works with video, film, and photography.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, she has developed a video piece, which is devoted to life at night. With her movie camera in tow, she accompanies nine protagonists from the region – who are, in the broadest possible

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sense, night workers – to different places throughout the Ruhr Area. The female protagonists, amongst them an employee from the Bogestra transport authority, a pole dancer, a baker, a bouncer, and a cleaner each meander alone through the nocturnal rooms of the Tresor.West club, through the cellar of Villa Hügel, and behind the scenes of a bowling centre in Dortmund.

The video work is being shown in the disco room at WerkStadt in Witten. In addition, the Märkisches Museum Witten is presenting a solo exhibition by Melanie Manchot in collaboration with Urbane Künste Ruhr.

The artist studied at New York University and at the Royal College of Art in London. Melanie Manchot (*1966 in Witten) lives in London.

Yuri Pattison

The multimedia works of Yuri Pattison are complex while their aesthetics often seem anti-illusionistic and poetic. For example, the Irish artist programmes artificial sunrises, thus making the materiality of digital technology visible. Using a research-based approach, he grapples with the elusive realms between the virtual and the physical – and, in doing so, with our present. Yuri Pattison explores how new technologies – such as the digital economy or online communication – fundamentally affect and modify the conditions of social life. How do these technologies influence our everyday lives and the perception of our environment? How do they structure our perception of space and time? For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Yuri Pattison has developed an installation in the decommissioned pump station of a drinking water plant directly on the Ruhr. A generative video showing the course of an artificial river in a gaming landscape is combined with on-site recordings of a floodplain model and an electric piano. External live data sequences shape the individual elements of the installation. The data stems from measurements such as water quality, air pollution and the atmosphere. Yuri Pattison (*1986 in Dublin) lives in Paris. The artist recently exhibited his art works at Kunsthall Charlottenborg (2022), the Douglas Hyde Gallery in Dublin (2021) and Kunsthalle St. Gallen (2017). The project for *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* is being co-produced with Temple Bar Gallery+Studios (Dublin) and supported by the Arts Council of Ireland.

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Joanna Piotrowska

The staged black-and-white photographs by the artist Joanna Piotrowska often show people in their private surroundings and in intimate poses that appear ambivalent and enigmatic. The works possess a dream-like atmosphere, leaving the viewer feeling moved and with a confusing, sometimes eerie sensation. Inspired by contemporary dance, Joanna Piotrowska choreographs these scenes and in doing so allows the human body to speak. From a psychoanalytical perspective, she is interested in the domestic, the familial and the position of women within society. This allows the political dimension and the structural environment in which the depicted protagonists are embedded to speak from the photographs as well.

At *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Joanna Piotrowska is showing photographs or

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elements of photographed images of various sizes in the shop window display cases of the former Galeria Kaufhof on Bahnhofstrasse. The choice of location reflects the relationship between the private and the public. In opposite to the usual promises made by the world of fashion and commodities the bodies in the shop windows of the former department store open up a surrealistic perspective of the world. The artist studied in Krakow and at the Royal College of Art in London. Most recently she had solo exhibitions at the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover (2022) and the Museumsinsel Hombroich (2020). Her work was exhibited at the 59th Venice Biennale and the 16th Biennale of Contemporary Art in Lyon (both in 2022). Joanna Piotrowska (*1985 in Warsaw) lives in London.

Nora Turato

show personality, not personal items or *ri-mEm-buhr THuh mUHn-ee* are two of the titles among Nora Turato's performances in which she makes use of precision and obtrusiveness to disassemble and reassemble letters, words and sentences using her voice.

In these spoken word performances, as well as in her colourful large-format text images and objects, language is the central medium. The artist equally finds inspiration for her scripts in conversations, in communication on social media and in advertising as well as in theoretical and scientific texts; all sources have the same meaning. By appropriating the content, she abstracts it and makes the overwhelming scale of the current flood of information tangible.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, Nora Turato has developed a sound parcours for the Schwesternpark in Witten in which sound fragments can be heard in various areas across the terrain without it becoming evident from where those sounds originate.

Nora Turato studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and earned a master's degree in the Werkplaats Typografie programme in Arnheim. From 2017-2019, she held a fellowship at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. Among other venues, she most recently exhibited her work at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (2022) and at the Vienna Secession (2021). Nora Turato (*1991 in Zagreb, Croatia) lives in Amsterdam.

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God's Entertainment

The Viennese theatre collective God's Entertainment has been working since 2006 in different team constellations on projects in the areas of performance, happening, the visual arts, and sound, and on research about new forms of the performative by combining live acts with installative elements. Their actions, devoted to the social and political themes of our time, are usually held outside traditional theatre spaces and involve interaction with the audience.

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, God's Entertainment developed an overall walkable installation with a maritime appeal. A larger-than-life, blow-up, walk-in spatial sculpture in the shape of an octopus is placed on top of Witten's Saalbau. In the spirit of a versatile 'tentacular thinking', open in many directions, it complements the scenery inside the building in an

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exciting way. The sculpture comes along with a lively indoor setting, to which the artist collective has given the illusion of a cruise ship. Inside the building itself a diverse event programme is being held as usual – as a venue and cultural meeting place for the citizens of Witten. During their visit people also encounter the seemingly anachronistic promise of a precisely structured, sheltered, and carefully timed expedition to distant worlds, including cabin life and an on-deck swimming pool.

In co-production with the Kulturforum Witten a new installation will be created during the exhibition period. With an exciting approach, it aims to challenge and accompany the conceptual reprogramming of the Saalbau, which was built in the 1970s. God's Entertainment has produced shows and events at theatres and cultural venues all over Europe, for instance in Vienna, Hamburg, Berlin, Liverpool, Žilina, Brno, and Prague. Most recently, they were guests at the Impulse Theater Festival in North Rhine–Westphalia with their project *GGGNHM*.

Guy Dermosessian: *Cute Community Radio*

For *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*, the project *Cute Community Radio* – based in the Ruhr Area and co-founded by Guy Dermosessian – loosely emulates the late-night talk show format as a classic radio genre, exploring the question “In what language do you dream?” Each Thursday evening, broadcasts on the topic of language, rest, and sleep are streamed live on the proprietary website, featuring invited artists and international guests from the spheres of pop culture. Totally new compositions and DJ sets are created in collaboration with fellow musicians – from an experimental interpretation of one's own sleep rhythm curves to comatose music for falling asleep. In contrast to site-specific installations, the radio format earmarks the sound waves received globally as a commons, thus permitting even those audiences who are far away to directly participate in local activities.

Guy Dermosessian is a DJ and the founder of the *Kalakuta Soul Records* music label, which he has been running since 2009. For over ten years he has been travelling with his eclectic sets through club landscapes all over the world. As an event organiser, Dermosessian conceptualises various music series, festivals, and interdisciplinary art projects in public space, most recently the *Kalakuta Soul Picnic* staged at different sites across the Ruhr Area. Together with Özlem Avcı and Maral Saremi, he initiated the platform *Cute Community* in Bochum for the production and dissemination of music, art, and knowledge. Their most recent collaborative endeavor is called *Cute Community Radio*, a local broadcasting format with talks, DJ sets, and sometimes a live audience in the local recording studio. The radio shows can be accessed via the *Cute Community Radio* website: cute-community.com

Irena Haiduk: *Healing Complex Phase II - Myconomie*

Since 3 June 2022, Urbane Künste Ruhr has been running the *Healing Complex (2018—ongoing)* project space in Gelsenkirchen, initiated by the artist Irena Haiduk, and based on the model of ancient health resorts that combined art and healing. In her artistic practice, Haiduk calls up imaginings and experiences to bring concrete needs and wishes into

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focus with the use of texts, objects, performances and scenography. The starting point of her idea, developed especially for the Ruhr region, is to heat a public bakery and a sauna area with a shared oven. In this way, a new energy-saving community centre with various uses will be created, whose economy is not based on money, but on the exchange of knowledge and labour. Haiduk's project in the former church and vacant building of St. Bonifatius in Gelsenkirchen-Erle initially began with her designs of 'inviting' workspace furniture and an overall concept for light, colour and spatial boundaries. A central oven in the middle and a countertop adaptable to numerous uses lent the space its special atmosphere. In recent months, this set-up has been used as a local drop-in centre and – thanks to integrated microphone holders – a floor-level podium. The space has been used for a wide range of functions, such as public baking events, workshops, lectures, a holiday programme and an international summer school for students. In addition, regular opening hours allowed visitors to see the project room and ideas, stories and concerns could be shared with the team.

In November, the first phase of the project ended with a major event, during which it was possible to have a sauna in the parking lot in front of the building, while in the interior, alongside various project presentations, questions common in public spaces used by different people were discussed during baking sessions.

The second phase, starting in March this year, extends the idea of an alternative economy with a modified experimental phase. Plans include mushroom growing, for example, an activity that requires care and yields a vegetable product. Thus it will become a satellite project for *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* in the northern region. By focusing on different forms of communal care and joint management, the *Healing Complex (2018-ongoing)* also reflects on how to deal with one's own body and resources inherent to the topic of sleep in the broader sense.

Detailed documentation can be found at <https://healingcomplex.net>.

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Britta Peters

I Can't Get No Sleep

It just takes this line from *Insomnia* to start the notes of Faithless's electro anthem ringing in your head. The subject of sleep is a cornucopia of pop-cultural associations, allegories, and theories anyway. You only need to put your computer into sleep mode, and Jonathan Crary beckons: his essay *24/7 Schlaflos im Spätkapitalismus* (24/7 Sleepless in Late Capitalism) describing this form of never really switching off as symptomatic of people today. In the digital world, people communicate, consume, gamble, and work all around the clock. Or, as a kind of antidote, you can pick up Ottessa Moshfegh's novel *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* and experience how the author, intent on spending her life just sleeping (with the aid of lots of pills), rushes closer to the abyss with every page.

The medium of film is also closely interwoven with sleep, if only because of the aesthetic proximity of film to dream images. We are surrounded by films that deal directly with sleeping, dreaming, and waking, from Wes Craven's *Nightmare* franchise to Christopher Nolan's sci-fi blockbuster *Inception*, in which shared dreaming goes on to affect consciousness. Michel Gondry's *Science of Sleep* should be mentioned here, too; we are working with this director on *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* as part of his *Home Movie Factory* project.

The city of Bochum holds the record for the longest run of a musical with *Starlight Express*, whose roller-skating actors embody a dream. Here and elsewhere in the 1980s, people danced to *Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go* by Wham! until, maybe in the course of the morning, the lyrics *Immer wieder aufsteh'n (immer wieder sagen es geht doch)* (Every single time stand up again. (Every single time say, 'It can be done!')), came up on the radio. (The local history museum Unser Fritz in Herne recently dedicated an entire exhibition to the zeitgeist of this Ruhrgebiet classic.) There are many more examples of the political metaphors of falling asleep and waking up, of staying down and getting up, such as the inescapable *Get Up Stand Up* by Bob Marley and the Wailers. However, the image of waking up, always popular with right-wing bodies, is increasingly being appropriated by religious fanatics – *Awake!* being the name of the house magazine of Jehovah's Witnesses – and conspiracy theorists.

Following *Ruhr Ding: Territorien* (2019) and *Ruhr Ding: Klima* (2021), *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf* will take place from 5 May to 25 June 2023 in the cities of Mülheim an der Ruhr, Essen, and Witten, and it will include Irena Haiduk's long-term project *Healing Complex (2018–ongoing)* in Gelsenkirchen-Erle, which opened in June 2022, as a satellite. The centre, and the north of the Ruhr region having previously been favoured, the temporary exhibition thus moves the centre of gravity to the south to conclude the trilogy.

The *Emscherkunstweg* cooperative project (involving Urbane Künste Ruhr, Regionalverband Ruhr, and Emscher-genossenschaft), which connects the region via a permanent sculpture path running from east to west along the River Emscher, is acquiring an opposite pole, not only

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spatially and structurally, but also in terms of content: the long-standing preoccupation with converting the former sewage channel is intensified by tensions concerning the River Ruhr and the question of drinking water. Here it is important to know that the two rivers' histories are directly interrelated: only because of a far-reaching engineering decision at the beginning of the twentieth century – to channel almost all wastewater into the River Emscher, which crosses the middle of the region – could the Ruhr in the south and the Lippe in the north be preserved as relatively clean rivers.

And with this southward movement, Urbane Künste Ruhr goes back to the beginnings of mining, which then, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, chewed its way further and further north. Hence, it is the sometimes hilly quarry landscapes along the Ruhr that today have had more time to recover from the resulting damage. Also, the coal in the area around Witten lies much closer to the earth's surface, so shafts and galleries did not need to be dug as deep as in the north. But it was in the south that the first collieries closed, as early as the 1960s, and even then there was talk of the Ruhr in future becoming a sleeping area. How the working world's adaptation from industrial to post-industrial forms of work affects our dreams, our sleep, and our bodies is a question which can be fruitfully explored in the smaller towns located along the Ruhr. The district of Steele in Essen was a separate small town until 1929.

Most of the participating artists and groups were thus invited on the premise of developing a new artistic production in the southern part of the region under the rubric of sleep. This sounds a bit like commissioned work, but in fact it is a close collaboration with the Urbane Künste Ruhr team, in which research and investigations, along with ideas and places, give rise to something entirely new. The thematic category of sleep provides an orientation aid in the choice of artistic positions – some of which can be experienced for the first time outside classic art institutions – and at the same time invites visitors to engage with the exhibition and its mediation. The point is not to illustrate a theory, but to bring artists' voices to life in the public space in a site- and context-specific way.

The topic of sleep is particularly suitable because not only does it affect all people, animals, and plants all over the world, but it also brings several approaches together. It encompasses dreams and nightmares, night work and club culture, intimacy and scientific survey, control and loss of control, which may subsume both psychological and political dimensions. The eight-hour sleep rhythm as we know it first came into being with industrialisation, and it is now increasingly being called into question by more flexible working hours and workplaces. What do changes in temporal, spatial, and communications infrastructures mean for our everyday lives? Does the new situation allow a chronobiological way back to an intrapersonal clock, and a self-determined working from everywhere, or does it foster a pressure for constant availability that involves every area of life?

In his blog *Salman's Sea of Stories*, the author Salman Rushdie imagines himself in an almost prelinguistic time three thousand years before Christ. He uses a concept—the ù for sleep—from the Sumerian language, thought to be the first language for which writing was developed: "In those early

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days of the world we didn't have words for many things we didn't understand. For example we didn't have a word for the thing that happened in our heads during the nightly unconsciousness. ... The word we made up for the nightly unconsciousness was this: *ù*. Once we started calling it the *ù*, it began to feel comforting, even something to look forward to."

The idea that sleep is only distinguished from wakefulness when specified as a state highlights that what defines the two opposing poles is primarily the degree of consciousness. In between there is a kind of transitional zone of half-sleep, and waking dreams, which can be deliberately influenced by practice or the use of drugs. The close psychic connection between the two worlds parallels the medical acceptance that sleep is vital, not just biologically but also for processing what we experience during the day. Interacting with dreams is lived very differently in different cultures, from Western-influenced psychoanalysis to the dream-sharing rituals of Indigenous groups.

All these things are increasingly being researched, and, even without any special prior knowledge, it is perfectly possible to philosophise about them. But what happens when war, violence, and oppression turn everyday life into a nightmare from which it is impossible to wake up? Three people who have lived with us since Russia attacked Ukraine in February 2021, as artists in residence in the Ruhr, report on that in this issue of our magazine. So we explore the field of content between sleep research, nightlife, and cinema traditions from a current and painful perspective also.

Above all, though, we introduce you here to the artists and collaborations you can look forward to enjoying at *Ruhr Ding: Schlaf*. Please make a note of the dates. As Sseed suggest: *Komm wach auf, ich zähl' bis zehn. Das Leben will einen ausgeben und das will ich sehen* (Wake up, I'll count to ten. Life wants to spend one, And I have to see this).

Britta Peters has been artistic director of Urbane Künste Ruhr since January 2018. The cultural scientist established the temporary exhibition project Ruhr Ding, which travels through the region, and the permanent sculpture trail Emscherkunstweg as central formats of the institution, which works throughout the Ruhr region. Previously, she realized the Skulptur Projekte Münster 2017 in a team with Kasper König and Marianne Wagner. As a visiting professor, she has taught at the Kunstakademie Münster, among other places.

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Irrlichter-Touren (Will-o'-the-wisp tours): The mediation format for the Ruhr Ding

As an accompaniment to the *Ruhr Ding: Sleep*, an extensive outreach programme will be on offer throughout its run from 5 May to 25 June 2023. With the *Will-o'-the-wisp tours* our trained art mediators set out together with the visitors to discover the *Ruhr Ding*. On foot or by bicycle, various art locations are connected with each other and their neighbourhoods are roamed. The *Will-o'-the-wisp tours* invite you to view the art projects from different perspectives, to get to know unfamiliar places, to rediscover the familiar and to exchange ideas about them together.

All information on the exact locations and dates can be found on our website before the start of the exhibition. You can also register there.

Enquiries at kunstvermittlung@urbanekuensteruhr.de

Urbane Künste Ruhr – about us

Urbane Künste Ruhr is a multifaceted, decentralised institution for contemporary art in the Ruhr region. Alongside Ruhrtriennale, Tanzlandschaft Ruhr and Chorwerk Ruhr, Urbane Künste Ruhr is part of Kultur Ruhr GmbH, based in Bochum, whose shareholders and public sponsors are the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Regionalverband Ruhr.

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