

*Give Rise to*  
Omsk Social Club & Alexander Iezzi  
*Fucking Hardcore Self-Divinization Weekender*  
Press talk: 10. 6. 2022, 10 am  
Performance & Live installation with Dylan Kerr  
11. & 12. 6. 2022  
HALLE FÜR KUNST Steiermark  
Burgring 2, 8010 Graz (AT)

Meeting point & Singing Performance  
6 & 9 pm, Glockenspielplatz

Live Installation  
6 pm – 0 am, Burgring 2 (HALLE FÜR KUNST)

Curator:  
Cathrin Mayer

Press contact:  
Helga Droschl  
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HALLE FÜR KUNST Steiermark is pleased to present the screening and performance *Fucking Hardcore Self-Divinization Weekender* (2022), a collaboration between Omsk Social Club and Alexander Iezzi. As a radical experiment situated between art, politics and life, Omsk Social Club is also referred to as “Empathy Training Camp.”

The work of Omsk Social Club emerges between two different lived worlds, a world of life as we know it and a world of roleplay. These worlds merge into one, and it is there that Omsk place their speculative fictions. In their immersive installations, they operate in a field that they named Real Game Play (RGP) in 2017. While the collective works closely together with a network of public protagonists, Omsk’s game designs and installations are not rehearsed. They are always unique, which creates their exceptional way of actively questioning distinctions between artist and audience and between art and life. Their installations address rave culture, survivalism, catfishing, positive trolling, and decentralized crypto-currencies.

Alexander Iezzi (b. 1987 Tucson, Arizona, lives in Berlin) is an artist and musician living in Berlin. His practice is based on the transformation of materials into scenes, figures, sound, and moving images, in order to attain the surreal. Work begins with auditive and visual environments in which experiments are improvised and carried out, which then are later redesigned as artworks. Iezzi collects these materials, sounds, and music (sometimes also protagonists, such as his colleagues or stuffed animals) and redeploys them in order to question the typical forms of perception in psychology, identity, and politics.

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In the course of the performance series *Give Rise To*, Omsk Social Club & Alexander Iezzi present a new video installation entitled *Fucking Hardcore Self-Divinization Weekender (2022)*, which is transformed into an immersive stage by means of performances that take place several times a day. This piece is a continuation of the *Self-Divinization Weekender* project, a performance based on the techniques of LARP and a fictitious story. Omsk Social Club & Alexander Iezzi wrote a script that intends to conjure up a new form of reality that opens up transformative ways of living together for its participants.

The artists were inspired by the work of the French dramatist and theater director Antonin Artaud, who joined the surrealist circle in Paris in the 1920s. Artaud coined the term “theater of cruelty,” which represents an attempt to create a form of anti-theater using various strategies including abolishing the border between stage and auditorium, using strong physical gestures, and also non-harmonic sounds and effects. His works and writings often contain apocalyptic scenes that inspired Omsk Social Club & Alexander Iezzi for their own script. In this, a dialogue on Artaud’s theater serves as a starting point, whereby an actor proclaims the end of the world and another actor replies that there are two worlds that collide in the action unfolding.

After this scene, eight characters residing at a secret place called *Mu* are sent out on a journey tasked with collecting “all the sounds of the universe,” which are released when the two fictitious worlds collide. *Mu* stands for a hypothetical or fictitious sunken continent, also known by other names such as Lemuria, and which science fiction and esoteric literature situate somewhere between Madagascar and India. Here, it is claimed, is the place where human civilization really developed. In order to do justice to this idea of a mystical world, over a period of two days each character is played by two people. Right from the beginning, each participant is given to feel that they have the leading role in this play, a situation that leads to each character creating experiences for all the others. The film made of this is the basis material for the installation on show in Graz, and during the performance the camera is a tool that thus facilitates analysis and contemplation of the action. On the first day of the roleplay only sound recordings are made, and on the second day only film without sound.

For the presentation within the *Give Rise To* series, these recordings are merged to form the immersive installation. In order to activate the installation, one of the characters from the roleplay travels to Graz to be the “gate keeper” who opens the “doors” to *Fucking Hardcore Self-Divinization Weekender*. Entrance into the cosmos of this work is initiated by a singing performance for the audience, which takes place at two-hourly intervals between 6 pm and midnight.

The *Fucking Hardcore Self-Divinization Weekender* project not only draws on a subversive and eclectic concept that challenges our concept of reality, but is also an example of how media-specific borders between performance, re-enactment, and video can be transgressed in contemporary art to create complex systems and contexts.

Omsk Social Club (2016 founded in Berlin) has exhibited throughout Europe in various institutions, galleries, theaters and off-sites, including Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin; Haus der elektronischen Künste, Basel; HKW, Berlin; Seventeen, London; Volksbühne, Berlin; Stroom, The Hague; Light Art Space, Berlin. They have been included in CTM Festival (2021); 34th Ljubljana Biennial (2021); transmediale, 6th Athens Biennial (2018); The Influencers (2018); and Impakt Festival (2018). In 2021, they were co-curators of the 7th Athens Biennial with Larry Ossei-Mensah.

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