

secession

Vereinigung bildender KünstlerInnen Wiener Secession
Friedrichstraße 12, A-1010 Wien
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Press release

Imran Perretta

tears of the fatherland

8.3. – 9.6.2024

Galerie

Press conference: Thursday, March 7, 2024, 10 a.m.

Opening & performance: Thursday, March 7, 2024, 7 p.m.

Imran Perretta's transdisciplinary practice spans moving image, sound, composition, performance art, and poetry. His works examine questions around power, state surveillance, alterity, neo-coloniality, and the process of identity formation in young people of Muslim heritage in Western countries in the post-9/11 era. His approach to these concerns is informed by his own experience: as a British citizen with Muslim roots, he is familiar with the challenges his works grapple with.

At the Secession, Perretta presents his most recent sound and video installation, *the destructors* (2019), and a new sound piece that was made especially for this occasion. The exhibition's title is borrowed from a 1636 poem by Andreas Gryphius that lament the horrors of the Thirty Years' War. It's the idea of the perpetual conflict it describes that Perretta recognizes in the politics of the War on Terror, the topic that is at the heart of his work.

the destructors explores individual and collective experiences of marginalization and alienation. The film production properly speaking grew out of workshops with teenagers in which participants discussed their shared experience of growing up in a society that perceives them as a both physical and ideological menace. The artist went on to write a series of poems that are performed by professional actors in the film and in which he works through his own personal experiences.

An aging community center in Tower Hamlets in East London, a neighborhood known for its large British-Bangladeshi community, serves as the symbolically fraught architectural backdrop. The work revolves around a group of four young South Asian men with a Muslim background. Projected onto two closely spaced screens, the film is rhythmically structured, and it is with the rhythm of the performers' clapping that it opens. The divided screen is a defining compositional device of the work: the projection alternates between full-screen and split-screen images, setting up a dialogue between the characters and richly metaphorical views of interiors. White and black fog and the rising deluge of water within the building reinforce the film's somber mood and the tonality of the monologues, which veer between rage, grief, and resignation. Meanwhile, the protagonists also suggest possible forms of resistance, of self-assertion and defiance in the face of prejudice. The texts describe a trauma that is inflicted by accusations and absurd generalizations,

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and with which many people with Muslim roots must contend. The line “‘I forgive you’ he said ‘for the bombs’” is a dramatic example of the charges in play.

The title is borrowed from a 1954 short story by Graham Greene that is set in postwar London: a group of youngsters plan to destroy an old man’s house. Perretta read the book as a teenager around the time of the 9/11 terror attacks and recognized parallels between the gang described in the book and the media representation of “young, brown men like myself around the advent of the War on Terror.”*

trying to disappear takes a poem of the same name, first written around the time of the destructors, as its starting point. The text could be seen to serve as an epilogue for the destructors, further probing the effects of fear, alienation, and state violence on the marginalized. A 5.1 surround-sound array delivers a kinetic and multilayered composition comprised of cinematic sound effects, Foley, field recordings, and orchestral motifs commonly used to score war and espionage films. Moving in counterpoint to the poem, the sonic component of the work explores the military entertainment complex, the “politics of frequency” that sustains it, and the cinematic construction of conflict, all without the use of a moving image.

*Imran Perretta in the handout of his exhibition at Chisenhale Gallery, 2020

Imran Perretta was born in London in 1988 and lives and works in London.

A publication will be released to coincide with the exhibition. In an interview with the curator, Imran Perretta talks about his artistic career, among other things. The book is expected to be released in May 2024. The digital publication is available for free at https://secession.at/category/digital_publication.

Programmed by the Board of the Secession
Curated by Bettina Spörr

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Current exhibitions

Hauptraum

Katrin Hornek *testing grounds*

8.3. – 2.6.2024

Galerie

Imran Perretta *tears of the fatherland*

8.3. – 9.6.2024

Grafisches Kabinett

Zach Blas *CULTUS*

8.3. – 9.6.2024

Publications

Collected Heretical Writings of Salb Hacz. Ass of God
Softcover, dustjacket, 96 pages, EUR 21,00

Permanent presentation

Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze*
Beethoven – Painting and Music in cooperation with
Wiener Symphoniker

Opening hours

Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Admission

Regular € 12,00 | Students under 26 € 7,50
Seniors 65+ € 10,00 | Free admission for children under 12

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Werkliste | List of works

der wilhelmsschrei, 2024

5.1 Surround-Sound-Komposition | 5.1 surround sound composition
8 min 40 sec

trying to disappear, 2024

A4-Inkjet-Drucke, Plexiglasrahmen 39,3 x 74,6 x 6,5 cm | A4 Inkjet prints, perspex box frame 39,3 x 74,6 x 6,5 cm
Mango-Pickles-Einmachglas, Basmati-Reis, Oud-Räucherstäbchen | mango pickle jar, basmati rice, Oud incense

Screenshot 2024-02-15 at 12.40.16 (lan nansak), 2024

Handentwickeltes Großbildnegativ in selbst gebautem Leuchtkasten | Hand processed large format negative on custom lightbox
30 x 21,7 x 4,2 cm

the destructors, 2019

Zweikanal-Videoinstallation, 4K mit 7.1 Surround-Sound | Two channel 4K video with 7.1 surround sound
Teppich, blaue Plastikstühle | carpet, blue plastic chairs
23 min 35 sec