



Ioana Nemeş

All the Future Ahead

May 30 – July 14, 2024

Opening: Wednesday, May 29, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Kevin Space is pleased to present *All the Future Ahead*, the first solo exhibition by Romanian conceptual artist Ioana Nemeş (1979–2011) in Austria. Highlighting her complex investigations of time and language, the exhibition centers around *Monthly Evaluations* (2005–2010), a major body of work consisting of a diagrammatic system of (self-) observations.

Driven by the desire “to record, dissect, understand and describe intangible things such as life or time”, Nemeş developed a methodology of day-to-day assessments based on a distinct set of parameters: ‘physical’ (abbreviated as P), ‘emotional’ (E), ‘intellectual’ (I), ‘financial’ (F), and ‘luck’ (L). These factors were evaluated and scored on a numerical spectrum from -10 up to +10, with each day then subject to a further assessment, denoted by either a plus, minus, or the equals sign. These daily mathematical equations were paired with idiosyncratic diaristic textual fragments by the artist, which combined speculation and skepticism, poetic registers and deadpan cultural critique, personal accounts and macro-narratives. Her writing in these passages is informed by the stream-of-consciousness style associated with the modernist pioneer Virginia Woolf, whose prose sought to expose the “extraordinary discrepancy between time on the clock and time in the mind”. Finally – and most strikingly – in an act of wilful synaesthesia each day was assigned its own particular color shade. These “chromatic maps”, as the artist referred to them, were inspired by the Lüscher color test – developed in 1947 by Swiss psychotherapist Max Lüscher. His projective psychological test was conceived to enable an objective measurement of subjective states, and in similar vein Nemeş’s maps allowed her to devise an expressive, emotive vocabulary that surpassed linguistic conventions.

Prior to her in-depth investigation of time in “Monthly Evaluations”, a significant period of research and exploration informed the artist’s methodology whose starting point can be traced back to the months Nemeş spent as artist-in-residence in Vienna in 2003. Installed as a non-chronological composition, a selection of ‘days’ from the series is presented alongside early evaluations from her time in Vienna, which have recently emerged after revisiting her notebooks, and trace the artist’s encounters with the city. Strikingly, these proto-evaluations do not (yet) follow the parameters Nemeş would later establish for her series, but are rather assessed through basic indication via plus, minus, or the equals sign.

While Nemeş’s work has historically embraced a variety of material and spatial manifestations and dimensions (including framed prints, epoxide sculptures, cardboard cubes, or even book dustjackets), the exhibition presents the ‘days’ as wall paintings or window plots, as enacted in the so-called *Lost Days* – periods that Nemeş did not, or could not, evaluate but nevertheless remained registered. Nemeş favored this ephemeral

approach in her practice given its capacity to highlight her preoccupation with the very fabric of time, both as subject matter and as a material fact embedded in the display itself. Moreover, two vitrines introduce a range of works and documents that complement the *Monthly Evaluations* series. Put into dialogue with a collage from the *Untitled* (2011) collage series (assemblages of individual chips of paint inscribed with lyrical names from the Benjamin Moore color palettes creating 'ready-made poetry'), a concise roadmap for the development and working process for what would later become the *Monthly Evaluations* series reveal the artist's infatuation with the employment of her daily rituals and regulations, and the expressive potentials of color and language. As a glimpse into the Ioana Nemeş archive, a second vitrine displays a collection of emblematic photographs from the *The Wall Project* (2001–2004), Nemeş's first 'self-evaluative' project which she conceived, performed and simultaneously assessed within the confines of the small Bucharest apartment she shared with her family. Initially organized as a storyboard and divided into different sections, the project allowed her to monitor the changes in her personal and professional desires and aspirations. Nearby, an audio file of Nemeş's first self-interview (2004) is installed, in which the artist assumes the double role of interviewer/interviewee. The interview variously offers insights into the development of *The Wall Project*, the rules and fields of enquiry Nemeş set for herself, as well as the uncertainties of Romania's changing artistic and economic landscape during a period of transformation across the European Union. Nemeş's written self-interviews (2005–2010), disguised as two-person Q&As with fictional critics, have been compiled into a publication for this exhibition, and can be read at the venue. They shed light on her artistic methods, a range of ethical and political viewpoints, and her attitudes towards the cultural sphere and the art industry.

Nemeş's multifaceted circadian evaluations have generated an archive of lived experience, a framework within which the artist could operate, extracting particular 'days' and giving shape to them as murals, objects or sculptures. In doing so she could bind works together as elliptically linked compositions and possible narratives; assessing the intersections between psychological rhythms that were both personal and historical; and transforming abstract notions of time into palpable and affective forms.

Curated with Kilobase Bucharest and Viktor Neumann

Ioana Nemeş. All the Future Ahead was realized in cooperation with tranzit.at and with the support of the Romanian Cultural Institute Vienna, add, Bucharest and Benjamin Moore. With special thanks to Serioja Bocsok, Michael Koch, Janina Weißenberger, as well as Maria Farcaş and Erika Olea for their advice and support.

The exhibition at Kevin Space is part of a string of exhibitions (re)introducing and contextualizing various aspects of Ioana Nemeş's artistic practice: *Times Colliding at Between Bridges*, Berlin (Sept–Nov 2023), Art Encounters Foundation, Timișoara (Nov 2023–March 2024) as well as an upcoming survey exhibition at MNAC – National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest (2024–2025).

List of Works

Window fronts, from left to right

Untitled [*The Lost Days*] series, 2010/11
14.01.2004, 26.08.2006, 30.10.2007
window plots, dimensions variable

Room 1, from left to right

Monthly Evaluations – 13.11.2009
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 03.07.2008
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 18.12.2008
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 16.08.2003
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 29.12.2008
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 07.08.2003
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 12.10.2005
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

(room 1, single wall piece)
Monthly Evaluations – 28 June 2004
vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

(vitrine 1)
Untitled, 2010/11 (series; color chips on cardboard, sizes variable)
Various documentation materials and excerpts from the “Monthly Evaluations” project (series of proto-evaluations; *Monthly Evaluations*, 18.10.2004)

Room 2, from left to right

(room 2, single wall piece)

Monthly Evaluations – 1.01.2009

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 10.03.2008

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 15.07.2003

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 15.01.2008

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 25.07.2008

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Monthly Evaluations – 13.07.2003

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

Room 3 [Office/Kitchen]

Monthly Evaluations [from *Moiré* series, 2011] – 10.08.2006

vinyl on wall color, dimensions variable

(vitrine 2)

Various documentation materials from the *The Wall Project* (2001–2004)

The Wall Project – Self-interview, audio, 24'11"

All works: Courtesy Kilobase Bucharest / Ioana Nemeş Archive

Kunstverein Kevin Space
Volkertplatz 14/3-4
AT – 1020 Vienna

Friday 3:00 – 6:00 PM
Saturday 3:00 – 6:00 PM
& by appointment

office@kevinspace.org
facebook.com/kunstvereinkevinspace
instagram.com/kevinspacevienna

Supported by

 Bundesministerium
Kunst, Kultur,
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport

 **Stadt
Wien** | Kultur

