

Exhibition Title: Public Space is a Dirty Dog

Artist: Maruša Sagadin

Curator: Zsolt Petrányi

Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

Duration: 22 Oct 2025 - 26 Feb 2026

Photo: Áron Weber

Tags: @marusasagadin @longtermhandstand @everybodyneedsart @zsoltpetranyi

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Text: Zsolt Petrányi

Public Space is a Dirty Dog

Since the beginning of her career, Marusa Sagadin has been interested in the permeability between personal and public space. She explores how the design elements of rest, leisure, and social communication can acquire function, what formal qualities they must possess to make sense in an urban environment, and how they can become attractive, usable objects for passersby. Humor plays an important role in her artistic language, as does a system of visual codes that endows her sculptures and functional objects with the characteristics of subcultures and personal identity.

Sagadin draws inspiration not only from architecture and applied arts but also from the object culture of communities such as hip-hop and techno. For her, clothing, fashion, and music serve as sources that communicate moods and attitudes through color and accessories, and thus provide a foundation for art as well. In this sense her works are political, as through their system of references they reflect the ideologies of these communities. The artist regards the youth's desire for freedom and the creativity of action as positive values, whose expression is a core goal of her practice.

Even when exhibited in gallery spaces, her works evoke the structures and materiality of temporary architecture, combined with bold colors and simplified forms. Metal frameworks often form part of her sculptures, she paints over cut-out billboard fragments, and uses construction materials such as plywood or cast concrete elements of her own making. A distinctive use of color is central to her approach, and wherever her works appear, their vibrant contrasts stand out strikingly against the architectural environment.

Once she said: "The works are postmodern collages that question architecture, imitate the mechanisms of media and public-space representation. They are works that love publicity and the economic character of the urban sphere. And they are

connected to music.” In this spirit, it is no coincidence that Sagadin installs her complex pieces in urban spaces, in front of buildings or on public squares, where passersby instinctively engage with them. They do not ask whether they are artworks or whether they must be handled with care, instead they sit or lie on them, treating them as benches or resting places, just as visitors did this summer with her bench and ashtray sculpture in the Longtermhandstand garden.

Among the recurring motifs in her works are colorful shapes reminiscent of body parts or fruits. Sagadin always models these ambiguously, as the round, plump forms of fruits refer both to human anatomy and at times evoke erotic associations. Her spatial compositions thus exist between abstract pop sculpture and concrete, object-based systems of form.

Her first solo exhibition in Budapest, presented in the upstairs space of Longtermhandstand, responds to the specific character of the venue, a former apartment that retains traces of domesticity. Sagadin arranges her works as if they were functional or decorative elements of the interior, allowing the project to interpret her sculptures within a unique environment. In doing so, it illuminates the artist's ongoing conceptual inquiry into the relationship between personal and public space.

The Slovenian-born, Vienna-based artist has in recent years been invited by several major institutions to reinterpret architectural environments through her distinctive sculptural language, including solo exhibitions at the Kunsthhaus Graz, Kunsthalle Kiel, and Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt.

Zsolt Petrányi