

un|heimlich
Cana Bilir-Meier

22.06-06.08.2017

Exhibition and events at
Lothringer13_Florida

un|heimlich
Cana Bilir-Meier

curated by Katja Kobolt, Colin Djukic and Alex Wissel
Lothringer_13_Florida

Opening: Thursday, 22 June, 7 pm,
feat. performance Ses Alma Rehberi

Open: 23 June – 6 August 2017
Saturdays & Sundays 4–8 pm (first Saturdays 12–8 pm)

Program of events: Sunday 25 June, 7 pm
Walk&Talk with the artist and curators Katja Kobolt,
Colin Djukic and Alex Wissel

Saturday 22 July, 7 pm: Screening NSU Tribunal spots
(National Socialist Underground) + talk by/with activist
and culture worker **Ayşe Güleç** (documenta 14, Cooperation
with Communities) and **belit sağ** (video-maker)

Sunday 23 July, 5:30–6:30 pm: Semra Ertan/her own voice
audio work excerpts + artist talk with Cana Bilir-Meier,
curator **Katja Kobolt** and artists **Manuela Unverdorben** and
Ralf Hohman on **Haidhausen ON AIR**, participatory radio
installation at Postwiese Haidhausen.

Cana Bilir-Meier's work accesses the archive, which both inquires into something that claims to be Universal – history – and digs up the Singular – memory – puts it back together again and revitalizes it. But Cana Bilir-Meier balances the proportions between the supposedly general and the personal beyond a (formal) golden ratio. Looking for reconciliation or sublation (Aufhebung) in her work would be an exercise in futility. On the contrary, her family's story documents the force field surrounding (im)migration in personal-is-political style, interrogating the relationship between (geopolitical, economic, social, everyday/ideological) background and the figure and their mediality.

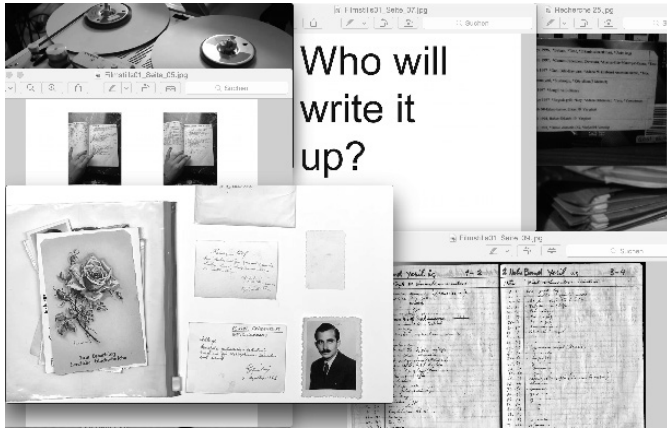
"When she says she is unheimlich [eerily] happy, it means she is heimlich [secretly] unhappy, because she has no heim [place to call home]," writes author Semra Ertan in one of her 350 poems. Ertan was a so called "guest-worker" from Turkey and, in protest against racism in West Germany, she immolated herself at the age of 25.

Un|heimlich is Cana Bilir-Meier's first solo show in her city of birth, Munich. Aside from the video/text/sound collage about her aunt Semra Ertan, she shows other older and recent work in which research, media reflexivity and the search for the poetic intertwine.

The german title un|heimlich doesn't only refer to that which is hidden or secret (as in Heimlichkeit) and issues of (non-)belonging (as in kein Heim haben), it also signifies the uncanny in aesthetic theory.

To the extent that the eerie sensation is provoked by a sense of uncertainty toward something that is strange or new – toward something one is unable to classify as living or machine – the shadows of (class-based) racism can also be cast in a new light. Whose language gets coded as comprehensible, who gets listened to, and who gets left behind in silence? In that sense, Cana Bilir-Meier's work also plumbs the unsettling side of representation. Where and in what way can people talk about certain things in a society? Who speaks for whom? Does anybody profit from that, and if so, who? And what are the consequences of the preset framing – of Art? Can art generate politics or does what is framed as art necessarily defuse political emergence and contribute to the societal status quo (of the spectacle)?

Katja Kobolt – Lothringer13_Florida



Ses Alma Rehberi

Lecture-Film-Performance, Video, 15 min., 2016

The lecture-film performance premiered in Tanzquartier (TQW) Vienna in Austria in January 2016. It part of a disputation with the personal archive of Mr Gani Bilir, who came from Turkey to Germany in the 1960s as so-called „guest worker“. The performance in the TQW was designed as follows: a stage in the Centre wrapped in red and green light (the colors refer to the Gani Bilir archives), the audience sits around the stage, additionally a film and text performed live as voice-over. A second performance has been delivered in the course of the exhibition Anti*Colonial Fantasies. That consisted of the public review of my archives and a live performed text-collage.

„Whose research is it? Who owns it? Whose interests does it serve? Who will benefit from it? Who has designed its questions and framed its scope? Who will carry it out? Who will write it up? How will its results be disseminated?“

(Linda Tuhiwai Smith in: Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples. Zed Books, London 1999

Text: „Nachdenken über das Archiv. Notizen zu Ses Alma Rehberi“.
In: Stimme. Zeitschrift der Initiative Minderheiten, Nr. 96/2015:
Men-schenrechte. Editor Gamze Ongan, Wien.

Cana Bilir-Meier

Semra Ertan

Her Own Voice | Kendi Sesi | Ihre eigene Stimme

Semra Ertan - Ihre eigene Stimme

Audio, Transcription, Book 70 pages, 39:47 min.,
turkish, german, english, Image: Introduction

Introduction

In 2012, in Mersin, Turkey, I found a notebook in a cupboard at the house of my grandparents labelled "Gani Bilir. Ses Alma Rehberi" (Gani Bilir. Audio Tape Index). Below this title, the years - 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, and 1982 - noted in careful handwriting. The tapes and cassettes contained recordings of the voices of their daughters and grandchildren, of the family at lunch, of telephone conversations between Turkey and Germany, news, and music from the

two countries. I found a tape with the inscription: "Semra Ertan. Her own voice. Recordings about her death. Vehbiye and Zühal speak with radio and television reporters in Hamburg. Recordings from 25. 5. until 29. 5. 1982". (Gani Bilir, 1982).

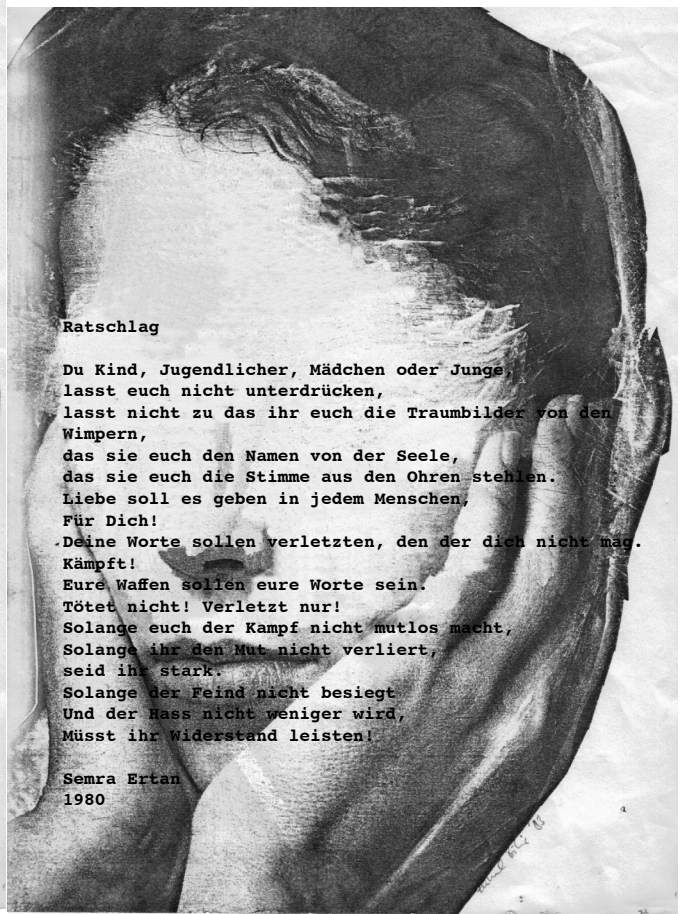
My family collected objects, documents, music albums, and photographs from different times. The collection also contains poems and political satires



Warte auf mich

In den nebeligen Morgen
Ich bin müde und hilflos
Verfluchte Vergesslichkeit
Ich hab den Stift nicht dabei
Und habe noch so viel zu erledigen
Gut, ich komme auch ohne Hilfe zurecht
Sicherlich der Nebel wird sich verziehen
Wenn nicht heute dann morgen
Sehr bald werde ich wiederkommen
Das Gesicht strahlend und leer
Warte auf mich

Semra Ertan
1979



Ratschlag

Du Kind, Jugendlicher, Mädchen oder Junge,
lasst euch nicht unterdrücken,
lasst nicht zu das ihr euch die Traumbilder von den
Wimpern,
das sie euch den Namen von der Seele,
das sie euch die Stimme aus den Ohren stehlen.
Liebe soll es geben in jedem Menschen,
Für Dich!
Deine Worte sollen verletzen, den der dich nicht mag.
Kämpft!
Eure Waffen sollen eure Worte sein.
Tötet nicht! Verletzt nur!
Solange euch der Kampf nicht mutlos macht,
Solange ihr den Mut nicht verliert,
seid ihr stark.
Solange der Feind nicht besiegt
Und der Hass nicht weniger wird,
Müsst ihr Widerstand leisten!

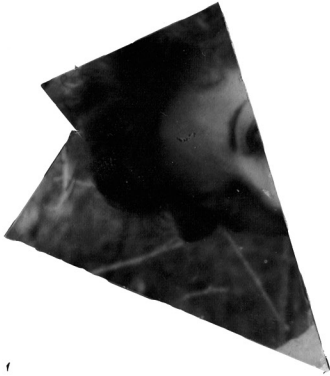
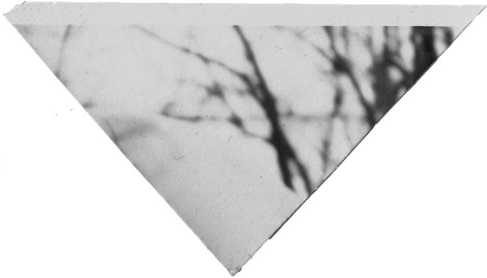
Semra Ertan
1980

A Portrait, An Image, A Description

Collage, Work-in-Progress, 2016

Starting point of the collage are historical documents and photographs out of the family archive and poems by Semra Ertan.

History, memories, and stories are interpretations. Remembering is not only looking back and understanding the summary of a lifetime. Biographical processes are the continuous narrative of one's own life in the present, in which images of the past, present, and future are carefully assembled in a biographical construction. On the one hand this construction got a Individual-fictional and therefore mysterious touch, on the other hand It raises questions which are essential in society as a whole. Who has to power to speak and make one-self heard? It also Is all about giving the audience the space and freedom to find its own thoughts on the subject and to encounter with one's own biography in a new perspective.

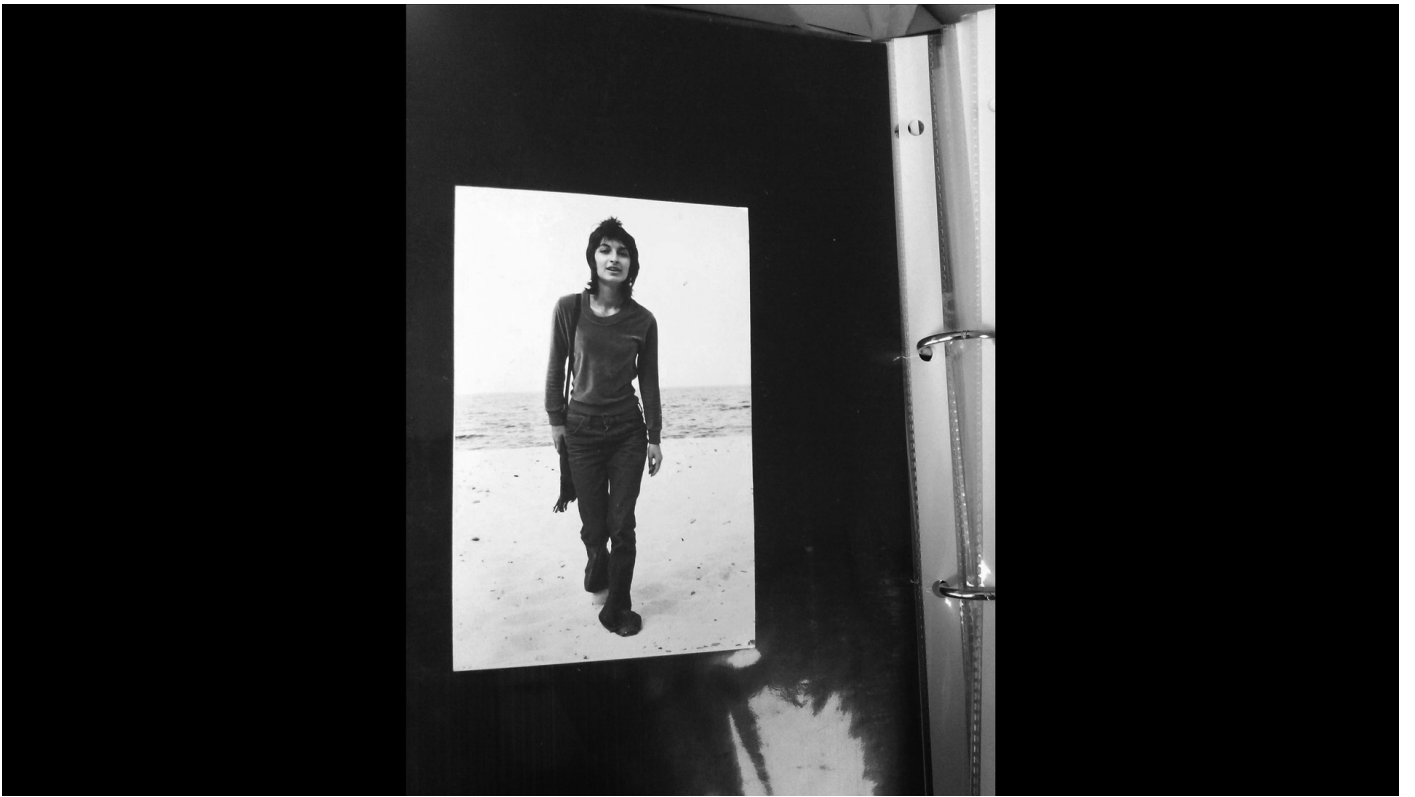


Untitled

Photographie, 2017

Who is the person in this photograph? A friend of the family? Does anyone know her name? In this case, yes. Uschi Müller, an actress in Bertold Brecht's theater company. When and how exactly Uschi Müller left her mark on this company—that's something we don't learn from the "selectively permeable" history of theater. An actress. Like so many others. One who was, in the virile eyes of theater history, apparently insignificant. But Uschi Müller was an artist for someone. Was it her aura as an artist that ultimately saved her picture from the fate that otherwise befalls photographs of (family) friends whose name no one knows (anymore), whose friendship no one experienced: the garage sale bin — at best — or the garbage? Or was the act one of negated destruction, cutting up her own portrait, a performative gesture by Uschi Müller when she sent theater tickets to her friends for the umpteenth time? Is that what kept her picture from really being thrown away?

Text: Katja Kobolt



Semra Ertan

Video, 7:30 min., 2013

Semra Ertan was born in Turkey, 1956 and moved to her parents to the federal republic of Germany in 1972. She worked as a construction draftswoman as well as an interpreter and wrote over 350 poems. 1982 Semra Ertan burnt herself in Hamburg to give a sign against racism in Germany.

„My Name is Foreigner“ (orig.: Mein Name ist Ausländer) is the title of one of around 350 poems of the writer Semra Ertan. As a symbol against racism in Germany the migrant laborer put herself on fire in 1982 – at the age of just 25. That drastic action triggered a long-overdue debate in the German public about racism. Through the subtle montage of text fragments and footages Cana Bilir-Meier approaches and shares the life of Semra Ertan: scarily happy – secretly happy. (Original title: Unheimlich glücklich – Heimlich unglücklich). The consequently battered collection of material thereby refuses the dull media sensationalism and therefore communicates contemporary history as patchwork.“

(Text: Sebastian Höglinger)

Text: „Nachdenken über das Archiv. Notizen zu Semra Ertan [2013]“. In: Stimme. Zeitschrift der Initiative Minderheiten, Nr. 94/2015: Ins Bild gerückt. Interventionen gegen die dominante Bildpolitik. Editor Gamze Ongan, Wien.



Bestes Gericht / En iyi mahkeme / Best court ever

Video, 3 min, 2017

Audiovisual Micro-Interventions SPOTS for TRIBUNAL Unraveling the NSU Complex and beyond

The following episodes were edited from the court television series ,Alexander Hold' and viewed together with actress Lale Yilmaz:

As the abducted cleaning lady in ,Broken Dreams' and ,Finally the Truth' (broadcasted 2003-2017)

As the abducted daughter in ,Forced Marriage' (broadcasted 2006-2016)

As the threatened girlfriend of a German man in ,Where is Özlem?' (broadcasted 2008-2016)

All of the cases in the series are fictional.

"How can we change the field of the visible so that racist structures can be called out? How can (post)migrant realities and perspectives become visible and audible loudly and clearly?"

From May 17 to 21, 2017 the TRIBUNAL Unraveling the NSU Complex will take place in Cologne-Mülheim. The Tribunal is dedicated to the many open questions surrounding the NSU Complex, aiming at indicting institutional and everyday racism in Germany. Its prime focus is the situated knowledge gained from immigrant people targeted by Nazi terror. This knowledge must become visible and audible clearly and loudly.

(www.tribunal-spots.net)



Ein Raum mit Bildern von Provinzen

Video, 6 min., 2015

‚A Space With Images Of Provinces‘: Eleven-year-old Yağmur Şimşek is telling imaginary/ fictitious fairy tales. Fragments of these stories become part of a chain of associations of found footage material and issues of narration in films. ‚The Library of Babel‘ by Jorge Luis Borges describe the reflection on storytelling and collecting. Just as every portrait is telling a story about its subject a film also creates a story about filmma-king itself.

Cana Bilir-Meier assembles an associative composition made out of fragments of notes, photographs, moving images, tales, tape recordings and movies. Completely in black and white, in total tranquility and harmony, she lets these different fragments get dialogue with, absorb, and change each other, absorb, as well put these into new and different perspectives through variations and iterations. One might think to observe a memory at work: a surreal-lyrical visualization of a process-related construction and formation of history and stories.
(Catalog diagonale – Festival of Austrian film, 2016)

UNHEIMLICH

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Impressum: This booklet is part of the exhibition Un/heimlich by
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(first Saturdays 12–8 pm)

Texts: Semra Ertan, Katja Kobolt, Cana Bilir-Meier

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