

Give Rise To
Julius Pristauz
PROPAGANDA

Press talk: 11. 5. 2023, 10 a.m.
Performance & Installation
HALLE FÜR KUNST Steiermark
Burgring 2, 8010 Graz (AT)

With Cæcilie Heldt Rønnow, Fran Klein, Luna Mican, Marie-Claire Gagnon, Paul Ebhart

Performance: 12.05. & 13.05. 8:30 p.m.
Installation: 13.5.–21.5.2023

Curator:
Jan Tappe

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The performance by Julius Pristauz, which is premiered at HALLE FÜR KUNST has the title *PROPAGANDA* and looks at pop culture as an instrument for the dissemination of certain ideas and ideologies as well as their movements and proliferation within our society. It is an artwork that understands the re-enactment of individual, different scenes as a curatorial strategy, and drawing freely on stylistic elements from many different contexts. It is a subjective and queer narrative about the condition of our world, with plenty of humor and camp.

Julius Pristauz's artistic practice includes performances, video works, and installations that are often based around existing spaces. Thematically, his works address the construction of identities in various contexts, which he considers in connection with bodies and also social and economic utilization in the guise of corporate identities. In his performative practice, for example, Pristauz explores processes of movements within normative systems that draw on social trends. Starting with the observation of everyday means of communication such as images in the media, fashion, and language, the artist takes an investigative perspective on the relationship between the private and the public realms and also hybrid spaces between these two poles. Most recently, Pristauz has repeatedly worked in close collaboration with his own environment and close friends, which ultimately reflect and depict our/one's own identity.

The performance *PROPAGANDA* in four acts developed within the frame of the series *Give Rise To...* looks at pop culture as an instrument for the dissemination of certain ideas and ideologies as well as their movements and proliferation within our society. The spoken text discusses politics around capitalism, authority, bodies, gender stereotypes and role models. Four performers, including the artist himself, slip into different figures that change and become abstracted in the course of the nearly one-hour performance. About twenty years ago, the British pop critic and theorist Mark

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Fisher described the interface between capitalism, pop cultural art, and the psyche of the individual through the concept of hauntology. Borrowing from the “hauntology” (Marx), he describes that unfulfilled longing of pop culture that has not only forfeited political consciousness, but also its complete agency. These critical gestures are repeated in the current logic only empty of content and pervade the current culture like ghosts, thus marking above all the absence of something. In this sense, the various characters of *PROPAGANDA* could be understood as ghosts who either exercise power or upon whom power is exercised. During the four acts, a kind of somber four-step program evolves between realizations, observations and dialogs, which is repeatedly interrupted by lip-sync performances.

Following the performance, the stage set will be shown with a textual video work, a sound installation, and four sculptures as an installation. Performance and exhibition are two chapters in a complex narrative that addresses how fluid the boundaries between politics, pop, art, and marketing have become. Pristauz tells all this through bodies, which have become perhaps the best means of protest.

Julius Pristauz (*1998 Judenburg, raised in Graz, lives in Vienna) studied at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and works as an artist and curator. Most recently, he curated the exhibition *SOMETHING IS BURNING* at Kunsthalle Bratislava (2022) and was awarded this year’s Kunsthalle Wien Prize for his artistic diploma.

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