



## Transitioning Spaces

—Hugo Canoilas, Christoph Meier and Simon Mullan—

02 December 2016—15 January 2017

Opening: 01 December 2016, 7pm

Press Preview: 01 December 2016, 6pm

ART+TEXT BUDAPEST

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Hours: Tues to Fri 12—6pm and by appointment, free entry

Curated by Jade Niklai

Art+Text Budapest is pleased to present *Transitioning Spaces*, an exhibition of site-specific artworks by three contemporary artists from Vienna: Hugo Canoilas, Christoph Meier and Simon Mullan.

The exhibition re-imagines the gallery's premises through installation art, which comprises four architecturally unique rooms in one of Budapest's original Art Nouveau buildings. As the premises of the former Bedő Residence, where an esteemed family of art patrons and members of civil society lived throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the physical features and historical context of the gallery are a defining factor of the exhibition. Each of the four rooms was conceived as a tribute to the Modern, Baroque, Rococo and Renaissance epochs, which also determined their distinct design, furnishings and originally exhibited artworks.

The artists in *Transitioning Spaces* are each commissioned to produce a new site-specific artwork, which challenges the physical perimeters and historical predisposition of the gallery and facilitates the transition of a former private space in to a public arena dedicated to supporting the production and mediation of new contemporary art. Their unique approaches represent the diversity of today's installation art and showcases the best of Vienna's burgeoning arts community.

**Hugo Canoilas** presents a large floor-based installation based on the perimeters of the Rococo Hall. Made of foam and fabric, it is positioned off-centre to interrupt the other spaces and enter in to discussion with the works. Here visitors are invited to sit, to lie and to immerse themselves in the surrounding environment and the accompanying video work. The installation is—in the words of the artist—“made between the head and the stomach” i.e. the rational and the instinctive to provide an encounter that is first experienced and only later interpreted. Their abstract expressionist motifs, made from ink and bleach on canvas, bring an aesthetic quality that is further enhanced in the dramatic setting of the Rococo Hall and offer new ways to experience and interpret the medium of painting, its immediate surroundings and the broader cultural context of the gallery.

**Christoph Meier** takes the Modern Hall as the departure point for his *Untitled* installation, which is a 6x3 grid of intersecting poles and fixtures, occupying each of the four spaces. By pursuing a spatial intervention with architectural precision, Meier draws attention to the in-between spaces of a gallery, where meaning is often implied by the absence not the presence of an artwork. The work alludes to the increasing role of temporary structures that occupy contemporary life, such as market halls and camping sites, and continues the spatial discourse of the work's earlier manifestations, which include Austrian and international public institutions and private galleries since 2012. By literally connecting four architecturally distinct rooms with his unifying formal language, Meier's work becomes the visual node of the exhibition.

**Simon Mullan**'s contribution is a large-scale panel work in the Renaissance Hall made from high visibility material, which is commonly worn in cities as safety gear for pedestrians, cyclists, children and construction workers. It captures contemporary life's simultaneous obsession and complacency with the issues of security and safety. Made from bright yellow fabric with silver reflective strips, the installation prompts the timely question: *What is security: from what and for whom?*

The exhibition is completed by a selection of new and recent artworks, made from untraditional materials, including metal scraps, foam and tiles. These paintings, sculptures and other installations, offer an expanded view to each artist's practice and continue to challenge contemporary expectations of the space and purpose of an independent gallery space.

*The opening event is marked by a site-specific sound installation by Nicola Pecoraro, also a Vienna-based artist.*

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Hugo Canoilas** (b.1977) is a Portuguese artist based in Vienna. His residency at Hungary's Budapest Galéria (2003) introduced him to the region of Central Europe and as a consequence of his residency at Vienna's Lenikus Collection (2010), Vienna became his chosen place for work and life. This will be the artist's first exhibition in Budapest in over 10 years, where he maintains close ties with the local arts community. Canoilas holds an MA in Painting (RCA, London UK, 2006) and a BA in Visual Arts (Academy of Fine Arts, Caldas da Rainha Portugal, 2001). Recent shows took place at Workplace Gallery, Gateshead/London (2016) and Galerie Andreas Huber, Vienna (2015).

**Christoph Meier** (b. 1980) is an Austrian artist with a strong connection to his hometown of Vienna. He brings a sophisticated reduced aesthetic to his art installations. Based on a background in architecture, Meier holds a distinct appreciation for the distinct formal characteristics of each location. His practice also extends to drawings and sculpture and with artists Ute Müller and Nick Oberthaler, he produces *Black Pages*: an artist-fanzine (ed. 300) made in Vienna to promote the work of fellow artists. Recent exhibitions include the Portland Institute of Art (2016), the MAK Schindler House, Los Angeles (2015), the Austrian Cultural Forum, New York (2015) and previously at the Secession, Vienna (2011).

**Simon Mullan** (b. 1981) is a Vienna-raised and trained multimedia artist, currently based in London. Continuing his signature aesthetic of segmented and coded utilitarian materials (tiles, bomber jackets, high visibility fabric), his visual language is often monochrome and non-figurative. With a background in performance art and video art, his installation pieces are underscored by a sense of performativity. Recent shows took place at Galerie Nathalie Halgand, Vienna (2016) and Dittrich & Schlechtriem, Berlin (2015).

## ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

**Art+Text Budapest** is a for-profit gallery founded in 2014. Focusing on contemporary art, post-war modernism and photography, it is a key member of today's Eastern European arts community. [artplustextbudapest.com](http://artplustextbudapest.com)

**Jade Niklai** is a Hungarian-born art historian and curator. She is founding director of Blood Mountain Foundation and an independent curator, consultant and writer based in Vienna. [jadeniklai.com](http://jadeniklai.com)

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