

PARTICIPANTS

Ana Hoffner

is an artist, theorist, performer and mentor based in Vienna. Hoffner understands the artistic field as a place of critical knowledge production, mainly with an interest in Queer Theory and Visual Cultural Studies. Through a performative artistic and theoretical practice as well as video, photography and installation Hoffner's work questions persistently both production and presentation, research methods as well as the communication of (arts-based) research results. Hoffner has finished her PhD in Practice Program at the Academy of Fine Art Vienna where she has been also teaching as Senior Lecturer. Recent Exhibitions include: 2014: *Vier mal zwölf*, Neuer Kunstverein Wien; *Opening (Stadt)Parcour* Tanzquartier Wien; *Drowning and Swallowing this Text* LACE – Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions; 2013: *Was ist Kunst?...* Resuming *Fragmented Histories* Künstlerhaus Graz, steirischer herbst; *Up till now* GfZK Leipzig; 2012: *History Lessons* mumok Kino Wien; *Wisdom of Shadow* 4th Sinop International Biennial; 2011: *Performancenite* ViennaFair Wien; 2010: where do we go from here Secession Wien; *performIC* Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen Innsbruck; *This Is Not Walking, It's A Getaway* PM Galerija Zagreb; *Mit uns ist kein* (National)Staat zu machen Kunstraum Niederösterreich Wien; *City of women* Kinodvor Ljubljana; 2009: *Performing the East* Salzburger Kunstverein.



Dragoslava Barzut

(Crvenka, Novi Sad, 1984) is a writer and lesbian activist. She received a degree in comparative literature from the School of Philosophy at the University of Novi Sad, Serbia. Her collection of short stories, *Zlatni metak* (Narodna biblioteka Jovan Popović 2008) was awarded the Đura Đukanov prize in 2012. She received the Carver prize in 2011 for the best short story in the region in the "Izvan koridora" competition. Her poetry and prose has been published in a number of anthologies and journals. She edited the anthology *Pristojan život*: lezbejske kratke priče sa prostora ex Yu (Labris 2012) and was one of the editors of a collection of contemporary poetry from Novi Sad, *Nešto je u igri* (Centar za novu književnost – Neoliti i Kulturni centar Novog Sada 2008). She is the editor of the web portal of Labris (labris.org.rs), a human rights organization that works to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against lesbians and all women in general and to establish a more egalitarian society.



Arundi Sulis

is a lesbian and feminist, she has volunteered and worked at the Autonomic women's centre. For the past three years she's been working in the non-formal group *Consultations for lesbians*.



Urska Sterle

is author of short novels, translator, visual artist and a performer. For her debut, a collection of short stories *Vrsta za kosilo* (Queuing for lunch), published by SKUC-Vizibilija, Ljubljana, 2006, she was nominated for the award *Fabula* for best collection of short fiction in Slovene literature in 2007. Apart from her writing and translating (Sarah Schulman, Djuna Barnes, Audre Lorde) she does political stand-up comedies and other performances. This year she is touring with her monodrama *Lezbicne pravljice, pravljice za lezbijke* (Lesbian fairytales, fairytales for lesbians). She is a woman in love with women. Therefore, love is the true motive for her rebellion against the typical way of living. But, the very moment this burden becomes too heavy for her to carry, she begins to write.



Lepa Mladjenovic

is lesbian, peace and human rights activists. She is especially committed to women's rights and the rights of people whose sexual orientation and gender identity does not conform to majority norms. Focal points of her work are sexual violence against women in war and peace and prevention of violence. Lepa Mladjenovic is active in and a co-founder of many organizations and networks, among them Serbia's *Women in Black*, as well as *Arkadia* and *Labris*, two organizations advocating lesbian rights.



Igballe Rogova

is the first lesbian in Kosovo to come out publicly, she is feminist, anti-war activists, co-founder and executive director Women's Network Kosovo. She has been a human rights and peace activist for decades. She used music to work with women in refugee camps during the war, and continues to use music as a tool for creating mutual understanding and healing.



Jovana Ananievska

has a Master for International and European Law. She finished her undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Law Justinian Prvi University St. Cyril and Methodius. She continued her education on a Master program from Erasmus Mundus studying International and European Law at the School Louis Pasteur at the University of Rouen, France and Lisbon Law School in Catholic University of Portugal. She volunteered at different organizations that cover the topics of discrimination of people with disabilities. Her first work experience was at the LGBT Center, a branch of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia, as a legal advisor and coordinator of LezFem- lesbian feminist group for support. She starts working in HERA in October 2015 and works there as a coordinator for the youth group that includes three different projects.

Ana Brakus

(Split, 1990) graduated in Political Science at the Faculty of Political Sciences on the topic *LGBT rights and foreign policy of the European Union*. In 2014, she coordinated the Organizing Committee of the Pride Parade in Zagreb. She is also a member of the editorial team at the portal Libela.org since 2012, and from 2015 worked as a professional associate at CESI - Center for Education, Counseling and Research. The briefest description is available on her Twitter - novinarka igrom slučaja, LGBT activist and feminist of her choice.

Zoe Gudović

is a feminist, lesbian, artactivist and the PR Manager of the Reconstruction Women's Fund of Serbia. In addition to her work with the Reconstruction Women's Fund, Zoe is engaged in the research and practice of non-formal and engaged theater forms. She has been a member of the feminist group Women at Work since 1998. She connects her art and activism with the aim of changing social relations. Co-founder of Act Women, a feminist theater group started in 2003, and the activist group Queer Beograd, she has brought her unique form of street theater to many festivals, around the world. Lecturing on issues Feminist Art in public space. Zoe has also organized various street performances as part of the 16 days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign.

Dragana Garic

Lesbian feminist activist.

Uranija Pirovska

is Executive Director of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia from May 1, 2012. As Executive Director she manages the Executive office which aims to protect, promote and advance human rights and freedoms in the country. Her previous work experience includes the long-standing work in the office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia as head of public relations and international cooperation. Besides the practical work in the field of human rights, Pirovska as a lawyer has contributed to several analysis on the situation of human rights and legislation in the country.

Biljana Ginova

is a human rights activist and an active member of the civil society in Macedonia since late 90's. In the past decade and half, she has advocated for minority rights and has devoted to strengthening different marginalized groups. Since three years ago, she is a co-founder and member of the Lesbian and Feminist Activist Group - LezFem aiming to point on the problems faced by lesbians as well as to impose the lesbian feminism to the LGBTI and women's movements in Macedonia. Since March 2013, she is a financial manager of Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of Republic of Macedonia and LGBTI Support Center in Skopje.

Barbara Gregov

was born 1991 in Zadar. She is a student in her final year of comparative literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb and last year she attended the educational program of the Centre for Women's Studies. She is a member of the editorial web portal voxfeminae.net. She participates in LGBT IQ activist initiatives - AUT.

Marija Vuletic

is a feminist activist lesbian from CURE Foundation from Sarajevo. Marija has an MA in English language and literature and is a freelance translator. She has been in activism for more than a half of decade and works in empowering young women especially lesbians. She also works with women soccer players and is a Board member of the best team in BiH SPK 2000 Sarajevo. Marija is vegan, plays piano and is a half marathon runner. She loves her job, her life and all of her identities and is actively running away from negative people.

Ana Miškovska Kajevska

is a freelance researcher, translator and activist. She holds a PhD degree in Social Sciences and a MSc degree (cum laude) in Sociology and Gender Studies from the University of Amsterdam. Her PhD dissertation on the war-related positioning of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the 1990s won the 2015 Gender and Politics PhD Prize of the European Consortium for Political Research. Ana has also finished Women's Studies and Peace Studies in Zagreb, and has an extensive experience in environmental and human (women's, reproductive and sexual) rights activism

Tatjana Greif

(1966) holds PhD in Archaeology. She's involved in theory and activism in the area of culture, arts and politics of LGBTI. She is coordinator of Lesbian Section SKUC-LL, editor of book edition "Vizibilija" and the "Journal for the Critics of Science and New Anthropology", and leader of cultural, awareness raising, and human rights programs, programs for equal opportunities, non-discrimination and diversity management in employment. She served as member of the executive board of "ILGA-Europe (1998-2005)", was delegate to "European Economic and Social Committee" (2005-2006), member of the "Governmental Council for Equal Opportunities of Republic of Slovenia" (2005-2009), etc. In 2014 she was candidate for European Parliament elections.

Dragana Drndarevska

(Skopje 1988) is a feminist, activist and she is part of the team of the *Coalition Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities*. In 2009 she graduated on the Faculty of Law in Skopje and she continued her studies in the master studies program on international law. In the focus of her work are the human rights, protection from discrimination and health rights of marginalized communities (LGBTI, sex workers, drug users and people living with HIV). She has started her work in the National Council for gender equality. She is also, currently working as a project coordinator in the Community Center of municipality Center. Dragana is part of the lesbian-feminist activist group LezFem and she is secretary general of the *National Network against homophobia and transphobia*.

Irena Cvetkovic

(1982) has MA in Gender Studies. In the moment she is writing her PhD thesis from the field of gender studies. As young researcher she has worked in many research projects in the field of social sciences, gender studies, media, women rights, LGBT rights etc. Her public engagements started with her blog- Femgerila and she was regular weekly columnist in the daily newspaper Dnevnik. She is activists for human rights of marginalized communities, with focus on LGBT, drug users and people living with HIV. She is active in numerous formal and informal activist groups. In the moment she is executive director of the *Coalition Sexual and Health Rights of Marginalized Communities*.

Blerta Morina

was born in 01/03/1990 in Gjakova. She finished high school in Sami Frasheri Prishtina. She is studying for Sociology in public university of Prishtina. She started actively activism since 2010 within the LGBT organizations, but she officially started working at CEL in September 2015. In October of this year, she together with another activist did a survey for Intersexuals, Queer and Transgender. As a member of LGBT community Blerta is continuously trying to raise an awareness for LGBT issues in the University where she is studying.

Vera Kurtic

is radical feminist, leftist and Roma woman. She is an activist and one of the coordinators of the organization Zenski prostor from Nis. She is one of the founders of the Roma women network which brings together all Roma women organizations and initiatives from whole Serbia into one and only force for improvement of status of Roma women. She is part of the Organization for lesbian human rights - Labris, Belgrade. She studied sociology and communication. She is author of the book *Džuvljarka - lesbian existence of Roma-women*. She lives a happy lesbian existence.

SISTERS OUTSIDERS

26-29.XI.2015
GEM CLUB



26TH NOVEMBER
THURSDAY

17:00

Opening of the forum and

Lecture by Ana Mishkovska Kajevska

THE IMPACT OF THE (POST-) YUGOSLAV WARS ON THE COMMUNICATION AND FRIENDSHIPS AMONG AND BETWEEN THE BELGRADE AND ZAGREB FEMINISTS IN THE 1990S

Since the end of the 1970s, a small, but theoretically and practical-ly very active, feminist movement develops in Yugoslavia's three largest political and cultural centres (Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana). These feminists typically observe the society only through a gender lens, without attending to the other markers, such as, e.g., those regarding sexuality (a lesbian, a bisexual...) or ethnicity (Muslim, Slovene...). The war violence on the territory of Yugoslavia would profoundly affect the relations between the feminists. In Belgrade and Zagreb alike opposing views would appear on whether the purely gender lens was still applicable when discussing the victims and perpetrators of (sexual) war violence or whether their nationality should be taken into account, too. Besides this key hot potato, other disagreements would appear too, even among the feminists who would decide to continue communicating.

27TH NOVEMBER
FRIDAY

12:00

Panel

LESBIANS IN TRANSITION-THE ROLE OF THE LESBIAN STRUGGLE FROM SOCIALISM TO POST-TRITIONAL CAPITALISM AND EU-INTEGRATION PROCESSES

Speakers:

Tatjana Greif (Slovenia) Ana Brakus (Croatia), Lepa Mladjenovic (Serbia), Igballa Rugova (Kosovo), Jovana Ananievska (Macedonia)

Moderator: Uranija Pirovska

The panel's goal is to raise the issue of the historical differences and lines of continuity in lesbian activism in the Region. Taking into consideration the beginnings of the movement in socialist Yugoslavia, its specificities, political programmes and forms, as well as its relations with other subcultural scenes and critical practices and spaces, the panel will try set it into a comparative perspective with the current forms of activism and transformations that have taken place in the so-called period of transition after the fall of the previous state.

Having the historical perspective as a leading thread the panel aims at:

- Reconsidering the radical and utopian energies of the first forms of lesbian activism in Yugoslavia as a source for contextualizing and revisioning our contemporary struggles;
- Archiving the traces of past struggles of fellow activists and emphasizing its specificities in relation to mainstream Western lesbian movement;
- Thinking over the merits and limitations of the historical transformations and the lines of development of current struggles, and
- Considering the influence of EU integration process on today's lesbian activism, and its gains and losses.

15:00

Workshop 1

COMING OUT AND LESBIAN RELATIONS
DRAGANA GARIC

Welcome to a workshop about our coming out experiences. We will discuss our coming out experiences and what they mean to our lives, and to what instance coming out is important to us and others. We will also discuss the obstacles we encounter during our coming out experiences, as well as how the coming out affects our relationships with the others, and with ourselves. Which are the joys, the challenges and the risks regarding the outside world? How does coming out affect the relationships with our partners? Together we will provide answers to these question, we will support and empower each other, and laugh, rejoice and simply have fun together. The workshop is intended for those who have experience with lesbian relationships or strive towards them.

Workshop 2

EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP
MY ENCOUNTER WITH VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
LEPA MLADJENOVIC

16:30

Coffee break

SISTERS OUTSIDERS PROGRAM

17:00

Video/Lecture

HEAVY IMAGES – PROPOSALS FOR WORKING WITH VISUAL MEMORY THROUGH QUEERNESS
ANA HOFFNER

Images of traumatic events affect us tremendously. How can we work with these images and turn the burden they produce into something productive? On the basis of my own work I will introduce art practices which deal with visual memory, war and transformation using performance, video and photography. The focus is thereby on queerness as a quality of memory and the possibilities it opens for different relations of individual biographies and historical events.

20:00

Book launch of A Decent Life

published by Templum

TALK WITH URSHKA STERLE
AND DRAGOSLAVA BARZUT

The book A Decent Life, which is sixth in line in the Queer Square edition of the Templum Publisher, contains 23 short stories by 15 authors from the countries of former Yugoslavia, revolving around the theme of lesbianism. The short stories vary in terms of style and poetics, but what is common to the authors, despite all of them fostering diverse sensibilities, is the awareness about the act of writing stories on this subject: perceiving the position of the LGBT population is an exceptionally important kind of social engagement of writers. Therefore, an anthology like this, especially in environments such as Macedonia, is important, necessary, even indispensable!

A Decent Life features the following authors: Jelena Lengold , Lamija Begagi ,Šejla Šehabovikj , Olja Savičevikj Ivančevikj , Dragoslava Barzut , Urška Sterle , Iva Hlavač , Nataša Sukič , Lejla Kalamuikj , Jasmina Tešanovikj , Suzana Tratnik , Irena Cvjetkovikj , Rumena Bužaravska , Blagica Sekulowska , Nikolina Andova Šopova

21:00

Film screening

RELATIONS: 25 YEARS OF THE LESBIAN GROUP ŠKUC-LL (2012)

Authors: Marina Gržinič, Aina Šmid, Zvonka T. Simčič

Length: 84 min, 2012

Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, with English subtitles

The video film presents a variety of processes of marginalization and the struggle for rights of the lesbian and LGBT community in Slovenia and wider in ex- Yugoslavia. It is a struggle for visibility, as well a testimony of the incredible power of the lesbian movement, its artistic and cultural potential, critical discourses and emancipatory politics. The film consists of interviews, documents, art projects, nightlife, political appearances, and critical discourse. The film as well talks about Europe, global world capitalism and the status of lesbians today. Other topics that are covered are alliances, history, the relations and alliances with feminism, gay, transgender and queer, AIDS and the diction of homosexuality. It gives a harsh critique of discrimination, racism, fascism in Europe today.

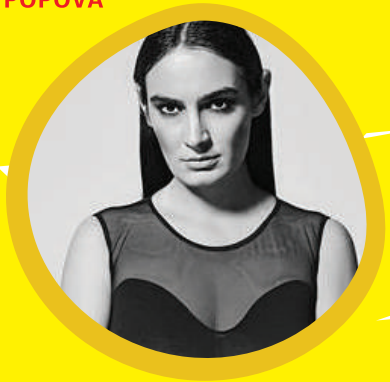
22:30

Joie de vivre! with KATA POPOVA
@ NANO BAR

Fine selection of late

night tales for the

Sisters Outsiders



28TH NOVEMBER
SATURDAY

12:00

Panel

CULTURAL ACTIVISM AND ART AS PLATFORM FOR LESBIAN POLITICS OF RESISTANCE AND CRITICS

Speakers:

Ana Hoffner (Austria/Serbia), Barbara Gregov (Croatia),

Zoe Gudovic (Serbia), Urška Sterle (Slovenia), Biljana Ginova (Macedonia)

Moderator: Dragoslava Barzut

This panel opens the floor for thinking about the role of art, media and cultural production as strong, relevant and necessary agents in the processes of critical, cultural and social reflection of heteronormativity and lesbian oppression. The panel opens the question on what forms of art, media and cultural production can be developed to be platforms whereby political transformation could be enacted and democratic and open forms of sexual and gendered citizenship practiced. Furthermore, we will discuss different and good practices and examples of intertwining between arts, culture and activism staging a critique of heteronormativity and patriarchy in the ex-Yugoslav region. Finally, the panel will question the limits and strategic contributions of art and cultural activism for the wider lesbian struggles, on the one hand, and shortcomings of mainstream forms of political struggles and advocacy that exclude artistic and cultural productions as sites of struggle, on the other hand.

15:00

Discussion

MEETING POINTS

(LESBIAN MANIFEST PHASE 1)

Blerta Morina (Kosovo), Marija Vuletic (BiH), Tatjana Greif (Slovenia), Dragana Drndarevska (Macedonia), Ana Brakus (Croatia), Dragoslava Barzut (Serbia)

Moderator: Biljana Ginova

Meeting points is a facilitated discussion of women from the region who will present their local contexts, experiences and plans in order for a platform for joint action to be created - A Lesbian Manifest. The manifest shall be a joint document containing the values, principles and fields of mutual struggle agreed by participants on the Forum. It will serve as a foundation for further political action in accordance with the principles of solidarity, sisterhood and struggle against the patriarchy, misogyny, homophobia, nationalism and class inequality. Moreover, the Manifest will be a starting point for political action, since politics belongs to us – the lesbians, the feminists, the women workers, the poor, the Roma women, the Muslim women, to all of us!

The Lesbian Manifest shall not remain set in stone. It will be edited and improved at future lesbian and feminist meetings in the region.

16:30

Coffee break

17:00

Panel

BUILDING ALLIANCES:

LESBIAN MOVEMENT, CRITICS OF NATIONALISM AND THE CLASS WAR

Speakers: Ana Miskovska Kajevska (Macedonia), Ana Brakus (Croatia), Vera Kurtic (Serbia)

Moderator: Irena Cvjetkovik

There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives, argued the lesbian and black poet and activist Audre Lord. Starting from this premise, this panel aims to contest the narrow oriented programmes of identity based politics and reconsider the point of overlapping and divergence between different struggles for equality and the lesbian and queer struggles. The panel opens discussion on the possibilities of building coalitions and alliances beyond the confines of identity, yet taking into consideration and not erasing the specificities of each oppression and the different histories of identity formations and struggles. The panel opens floor for discussing the question on how do nationalisms in the Region, new forms of capitalist exploitation and the growing class differences, and patriarchal structures interfere and produce different yet related forms of inequality, as well as how can these different experiences of exclusion result into the production of new forms of collectivities of resistance and political subjects. Finally, we want to question the possibilities for overcoming the existing tensions and discriminations existing between different oppressed groups in society (workers, ethnic and national minorities, and sexual minorities), and establishing bridges for dialogue and solidarity.

20:00

WORKSHOP FOR PREPARING THE BANNERS
FOR THE MARCH
DRAGANA GARIC AND ARUNDI SULIS

Dear all, we are happy to invite you to the workshop for production of political paroles for the Reclaim the Night - Women's march against sexual violence against women. Together, we will creatively produce banners. Similar previous experience is not necessary. We invite you to think why the participation in the march is important to you – we already made a short list of paroles, but please feel free to amend it. We will use acrylics, sprays and brushes. These materials and tick paper, glue and safety knives will be provided by the organizers, but if you want to use different techniques, please bring the materials you need.

You will be guided by Dragana Garic – a lesbian, feminist and activist and Arundi Saulis – lesbian feminist and right after the workshop we are going out on the streets to march!

22:00

RECLAIM THE NIGHT! WOMEN'S MARCH AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

We march because:

Each one of us women has had some kind of experience of male violence in her life! We refuse to keep silent about the male violence against women! We, as women refuse to accept the men's guilt because the violator is responsible for the violence and it is exclusively his fault! There is no excuse for violence! Sexual violence against women is not a private matter, but a political and social issue. We are starting to make difference and to give support with a protest! We must feel free to walk the streets even when we are alone at night! The women who are discriminated on many levels, the Roma women, the lesbians and the disadvantaged women are frequently disposed to violence. The women's solidarity is our power!

Let's remind ourselves that as women we got power and that we are stronger together! Let's remind ourselves of our sisters who survived and of the ones that are not among us anymore! We want to express our wish and need to live without threats nor fear of violence!

29TH NOVEMBER
SUNDAY

10:00

WORKING MEETING

Moderator: Biljana Ginova

12:00

PREPARATION OF LESBIAN MANIFEST,
PHASE 2

Moderators: Biljana Ginova and Dragana Drndarevska

About the forum

The Regional Lesbian Forum provides a platform which serves to connect the experiences and practices on regional level, which by referring to the the past and considering the current social and political context will contribute towards the creation of joint values and building strategies and plans for acting on a national, as well as regional level (Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia). The 4-day Forum that is structured around three key pillars as follows:

- **contextualization**, consisting of three panels, starting from the historical differences and lines of continuity in the lesbian activism in the region, through cultural activism and art as platform for lesbian politics of resistance and criticism to the final panel focused on building alliances between the lesbian movement, criticism of nationalism and the class conflict
 - **working together** based on shared contexts, ideas and visions in order to establish joint values for action as part of the Lesbian Manifest
 - **safe space** for workshops and storytelling that raise the issue of coming out and lesbian relationships, as well as the issue of violence against women
- The Forum also creates space for lesbian art and culture by including the performance Heavy images – Proposals for working with visual memory through queerness, promotion of the book A Decent Life that contains 23 lesbian short stories and screening of the movie: Relations: 25Years od the lesbian group SKUC-LL.

As joint activity with other women's and feminist organizations, the Forum also includes the Reclaim the Night March and the workshop for preparing slogans and banners for the March. The Forum also includes slam poetry and a party.