

Markues

Installations and Drawings 2014–2024

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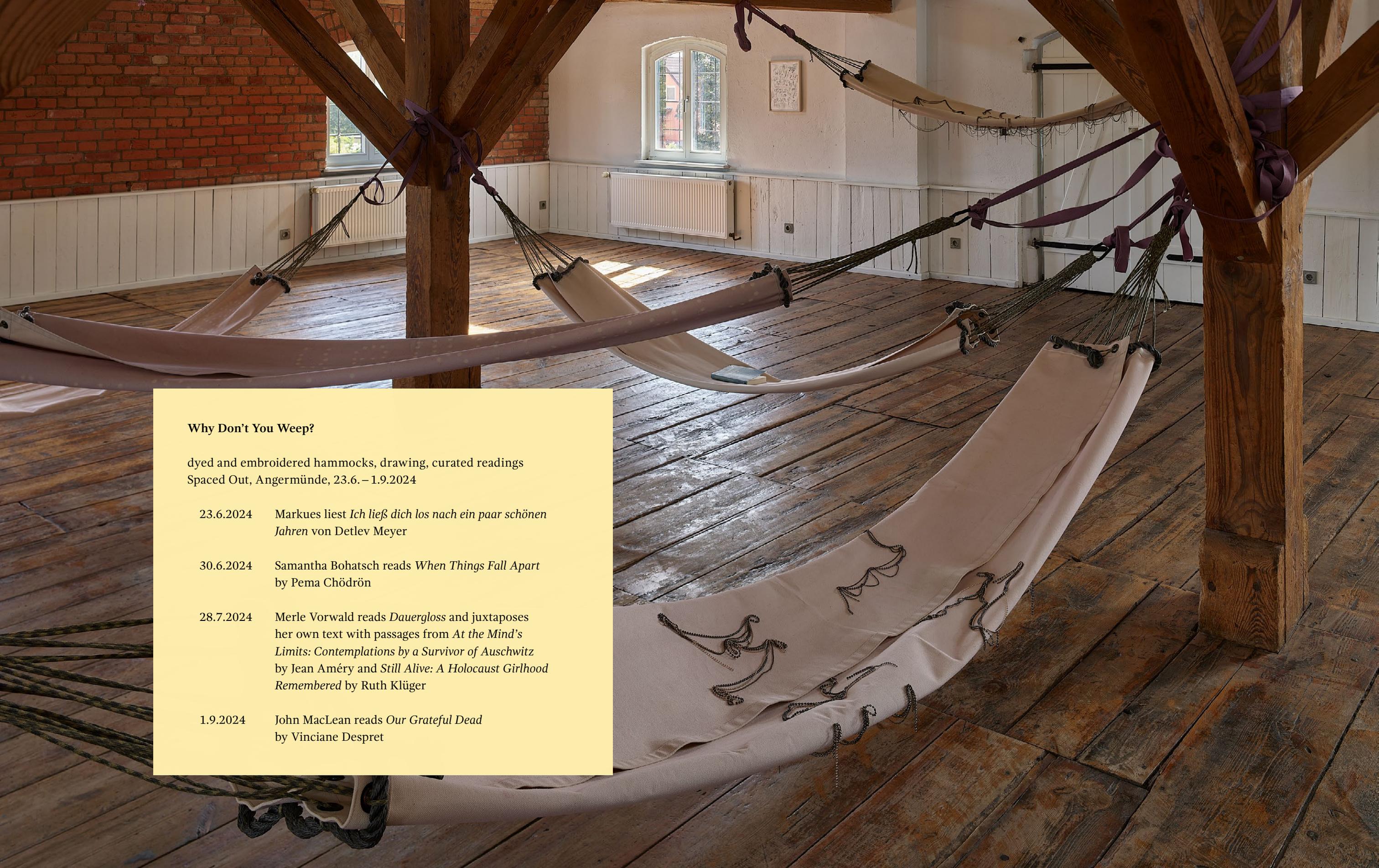


Markues works as a visual artist in the fields of installation, drawing, and text. The realization of their own and others' experiences is at the heart of their artistic work, making the foundations of social coexistence across differences tangible. Markues employs artistic strategies to destabilize subjectivity.

In the installations, often activated by readings, visitors lie down or dangle and listen. These moments of interruption from everyday life create opportunities to engage with the complex interconnections of our world, both collectively and individually, in an atmosphere of openness and calm. The readings extend the simple, almost formless sculptural vocabulary into the social sphere.

In the works on paper and unstretched fabrics, empathic appropriations executed with highly liquefied colors congeal: literary texts, queer social history, and art historical quotations are dissolved, blended, and delicately reworked. These works are meditations on expression and authorship and refer indexically to subjectivity through gestural painterly traces, often reminiscent of stains, dirt, or abrasion.

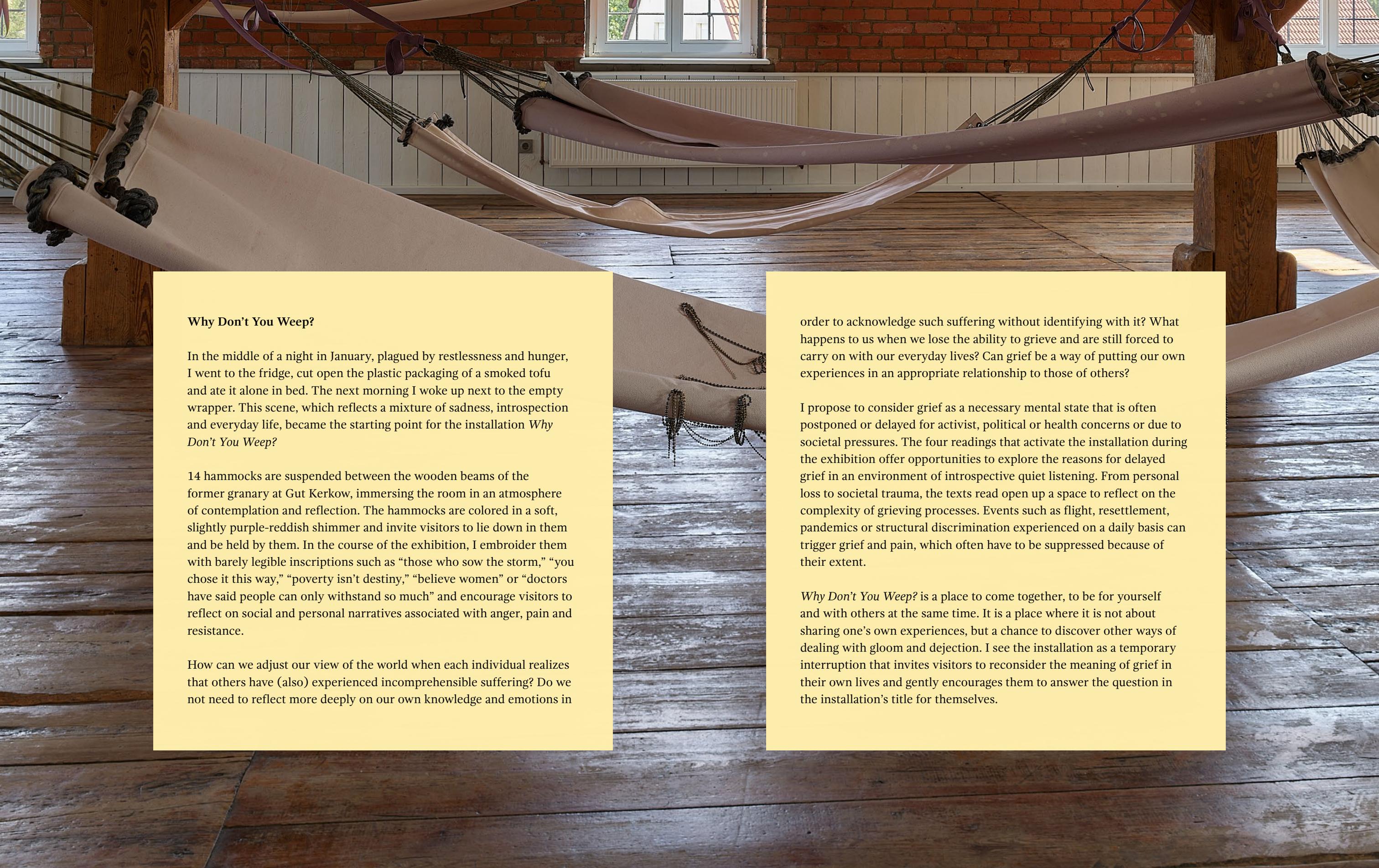
Assembled in atmospheric and immersive installations, Markues' works liquefy the relationship of identity and origin to spoken word, writing, and abstract painting.



Why Don't You Weep?

dyed and embroidered hammocks, drawing, curated readings
Spaced Out, Angermünde, 23.6. – 1.9.2024

- 23.6.2024 Markues liest *Ich ließ dich los nach ein paar schönen Jahren* von Detlev Meyer
- 30.6.2024 Samantha Bohatsch reads *When Things Fall Apart* by Pema Chödrön
- 28.7.2024 Merle Vorwald reads *Dauergloss* and juxtaposes her own text with passages from *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor of Auschwitz* by Jean Améry and *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered* by Ruth Klüger
- 1.9.2024 John MacLean reads *Our Grateful Dead* by Vinciane Despret



Why Don't You Weep?

In the middle of a night in January, plagued by restlessness and hunger, I went to the fridge, cut open the plastic packaging of a smoked tofu and ate it alone in bed. The next morning I woke up next to the empty wrapper. This scene, which reflects a mixture of sadness, introspection and everyday life, became the starting point for the installation *Why Don't You Weep?*

14 hammocks are suspended between the wooden beams of the former granary at Gut Kerkow, immersing the room in an atmosphere of contemplation and reflection. The hammocks are colored in a soft, slightly purple-reddish shimmer and invite visitors to lie down in them and be held by them. In the course of the exhibition, I embroider them with barely legible inscriptions such as “those who sow the storm,” “you chose it this way,” “poverty isn't destiny,” “believe women” or “doctors have said people can only withstand so much” and encourage visitors to reflect on social and personal narratives associated with anger, pain and resistance.

How can we adjust our view of the world when each individual realizes that others have (also) experienced incomprehensible suffering? Do we not need to reflect more deeply on our own knowledge and emotions in

order to acknowledge such suffering without identifying with it? What happens to us when we lose the ability to grieve and are still forced to carry on with our everyday lives? Can grief be a way of putting our own experiences in an appropriate relationship to those of others?

I propose to consider grief as a necessary mental state that is often postponed or delayed for activist, political or health concerns or due to societal pressures. The four readings that activate the installation during the exhibition offer opportunities to explore the reasons for delayed grief in an environment of introspective quiet listening. From personal loss to societal trauma, the texts read open up a space to reflect on the complexity of grieving processes. Events such as flight, resettlement, pandemics or structural discrimination experienced on a daily basis can trigger grief and pain, which often have to be suppressed because of their extent.

Why Don't You Weep? is a place to come together, to be for yourself and with others at the same time. It is a place where it is not about sharing one's own experiences, but a chance to discover other ways of dealing with gloom and dejection. I see the installation as a temporary interruption that invites visitors to reconsider the meaning of grief in their own lives and gently encourages them to answer the question in the installation's title for themselves.



Samantha Bohatsch reads Pema Chödrön
Spaced Out, Angermünde, 30.6.2024



Step Away

Camouflage nets, parasols, outdoor furniture, towels,
paintings by Juwelia St. St., drawings, curated readings
PSM, Berlin, 1.9. – 23.10.2022

- 3.9.2022 Juwelia St. St. and Markues read *The Cherries of Freedom* by Alfred Andersch
- 17.9.2022 Craig Teatime reads *The Naked Civil Servant* by Quentin Crisp
- 24.9.2024 Monilola Olayemi Ilupeju reads texts by Akwaeke Emezi and Rose Allatini
- 1.10.2022 Esra Nagel reads *Time Is a Thing the Body Moves Through* by T Fleischmann
- 8.10.2022 Jayrôme C. Robinet reads *Notes from the Underground* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky
- 15.10.2022 Nine Yamamoto-Masson reads texts from the history of Japanese anarchism and antimilitarism

Step Away

Formless piles covered with camouflage netting can be found within the gallery's rooms. Under the camouflage are objects from the realm of exurban recreation: ribs of patio umbrellas, stacked chairs, folded-up sunloungers, sleeping bags, and forgotten beach towels. These tucked away relics can be found on boardwalks, terraces, and in Schreber gardens. In the semi-public sphere of the beach, one sizzles lightly dressed among strangers; a Schreber garden is only a private idyll if one manages to ignore one's fifty neighbors. Through the camouflage netting, these objects confront the visitor in a strange state of alienation. Camouflage works only through adaptation to a site and its environment, but at the same time it shows the desire to escape or overcome this environment. At this juncture between site and non-site, Markues presents their own watercolors and paintings by Juwelia St. St.

Step Away means to move aside, to renounce a duty, to desert, or retreat. For the writer Alfred Andersch, freedom lies in these brief moments: "One is never free when one fights against fate. One is never free at all except in those moments when one allows oneself to fall out of fate." This notion of freedom as momentary and related to one's own fate permeates the six literary readings that, over the course of the exhibition, activate the space. The protagonists of the texts recount different ways of letting the expectations placed on them come to nothing. They remind us of the effects of war and nationalistic thinking on the individual. They make clear that—beyond instrumentalized symbolic politics such as homonationalism—queer and marginalized people are absent from the nationalist narratives of the West. They know, therefore, that queers are not part of the body politic. The selection of texts also brings to light which sensibilities and attitudes are undermined when thought revolves exclusively around militaristic categories and obligatory values.

Watercolors from Markues's series *Für die Männer & die Anderen* (For the Men & the Others) adorn the walls as remnants of spoken language and visual equivalents of these brief moments of freedom. The sentences cannot be spoken, at least not in the way they are written. They withdraw from the sphere of political communication and approach the limits of legibility. The letters turn into blobs and

formless gestures, searching for another form of rhetoric that defies the logic of the overbearing masculine. The title *For the Men & the Others* is a fractured address, a summons held in abeyance. *We Don't Need Another Hero* echoes the song from Tina Turner; it tells the men that we their heroism, but for the others it contains an egalitarian vision of a society without leaders. *Leben und lieben lassen* (Live and Let Love) is a quotation from Heinz Heger, who wrote about how he managed to survive imprisonment in a concentration camp by allowing himself to be used sexually. The watercolors remind us that in a moment of increasing armament, art does not necessarily have to make an offer of unambiguous sense.

The gallery's loggia is devoted to small-format paintings by Juwelia St. St. From her broad artistic oeuvre, PSM shows a selection of gardens and seascapes. They are scenes of minor happiness, real and imaginary retreat, because "when I paint from memory it becomes even more fantastic." Even though, as a sort of Schreber-garden-Hockney, Juwelia invites the viewer to bid farewell to the harsh everyday life of the city, she does not fall into glorified country living. The scenes remain indirectly connected to the city: an entertaining getaway, a weekend at the North Sea, an afternoon in a community garden, rather than an attempt to find Eden in the Uckermark. Juwelia's painting style is mannerist and anarchist at the same time. Foliage and flowers fill the picture plane in a millefleur style, plants grow as they please, sometimes winding around lovers, champagne bottles, and little cakes. Her painterly activity defiantly yet self-determinedly asserts the possibility of a better, yet fleeting, world. The beauty of her paintings lies in the fact that she does not modulate; the individual hues stand side by side, do not merge, do not care about a reality beyond themselves. They do not coalesce into a painterly or political program. Juwelia's strength lies in creating a world according to her standards despite adversity, as exemplified by her Gallery Studio St. St. in Neukölln's Sanderstraße, where every Friday and Saturday she serenades, paints, entertains, beguiles, and snubs her guests.

Markues and Juwelia both envisage spaces and places that are not completely abandoned. They are places where notions of the present can be left behind, places that are often just a step away.





Juwelia St. St. reads Alfred Andersch
PSM, Berlin, 1.9.2022

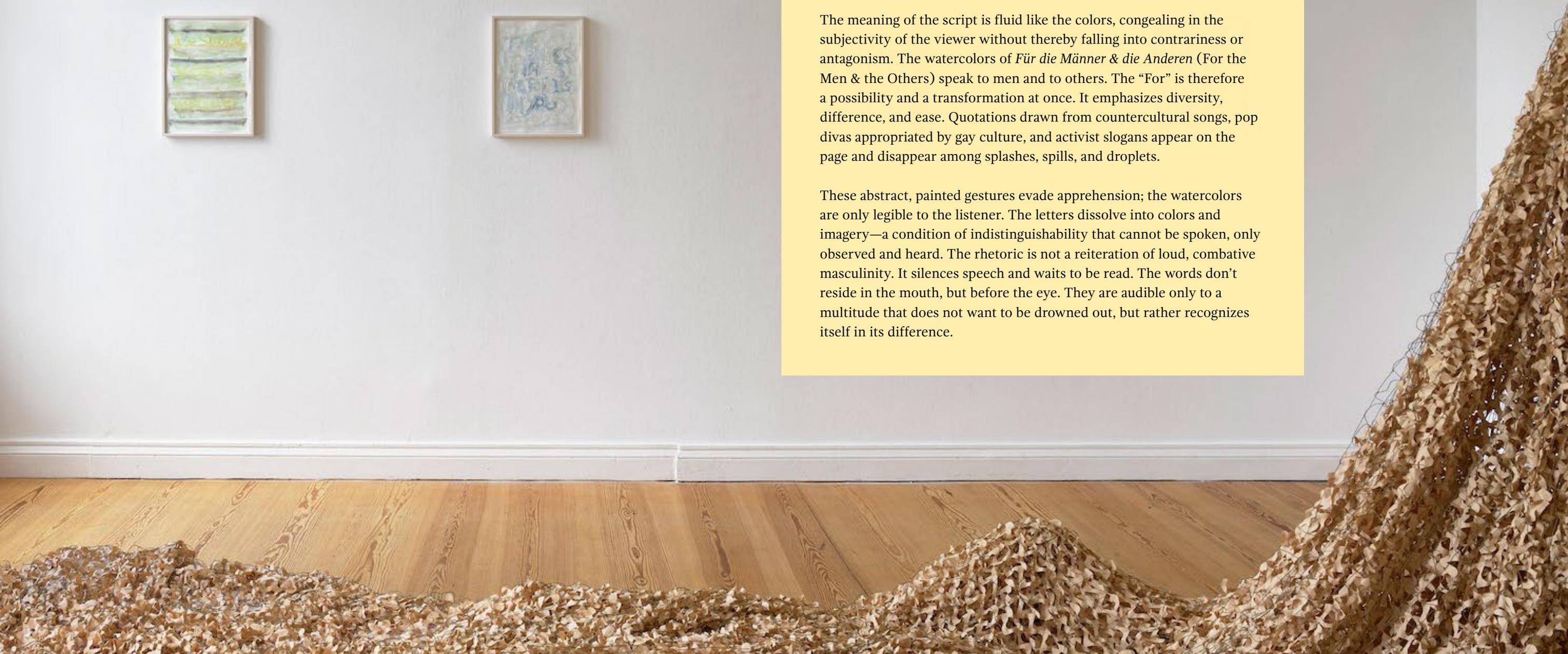


For the Men & the Others

ongoing series of watercolors, each 40 x 30 cm, 2014 – 2024

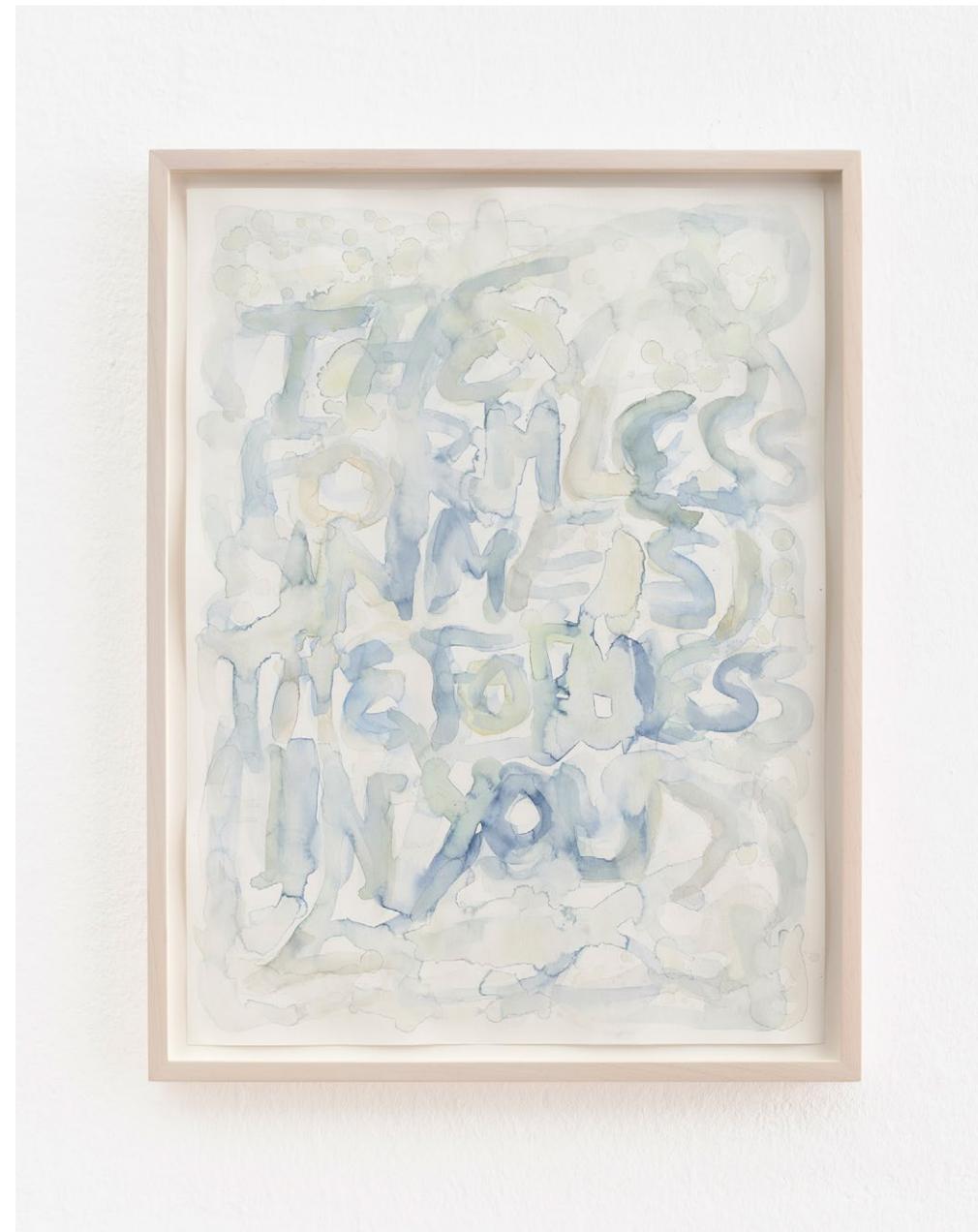
The meaning of the script is fluid like the colors, congealing in the subjectivity of the viewer without thereby falling into contrariness or antagonism. The watercolors of *Für die Männer & die Anderen* (For the Men & the Others) speak to men and to others. The “For” is therefore a possibility and a transformation at once. It emphasizes diversity, difference, and ease. Quotations drawn from countercultural songs, pop divas appropriated by gay culture, and activist slogans appear on the page and disappear among splashes, spills, and droplets.

These abstract, painted gestures evade apprehension; the watercolors are only legible to the listener. The letters dissolve into colors and imagery—a condition of indistinguishability that cannot be spoken, only observed and heard. The rhetoric is not a reiteration of loud, combative masculinity. It silences speech and waits to be read. The words don’t reside in the mouth, but before the eye. They are audible only to a multitude that does not want to be drowned out, but rather recognizes itself in its difference.





Liberté Egalité Fragilité
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2022
from the series *For the Men & the Others*



The Formless in Me Is the Formless in You
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2022
from the series *For the Men & the Others*



No Father No Mother
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2024
from the series *For the Men & the Others*



Step Away
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2014
from the series *For the Men & the Others*



All Is Well
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2022
from the series *For the Men & the Others*



Grace Under Pressure
watercolor on paper, 40 x 30 cm, 2022
from the series *For the Men & the Others*

Prima Quallerina

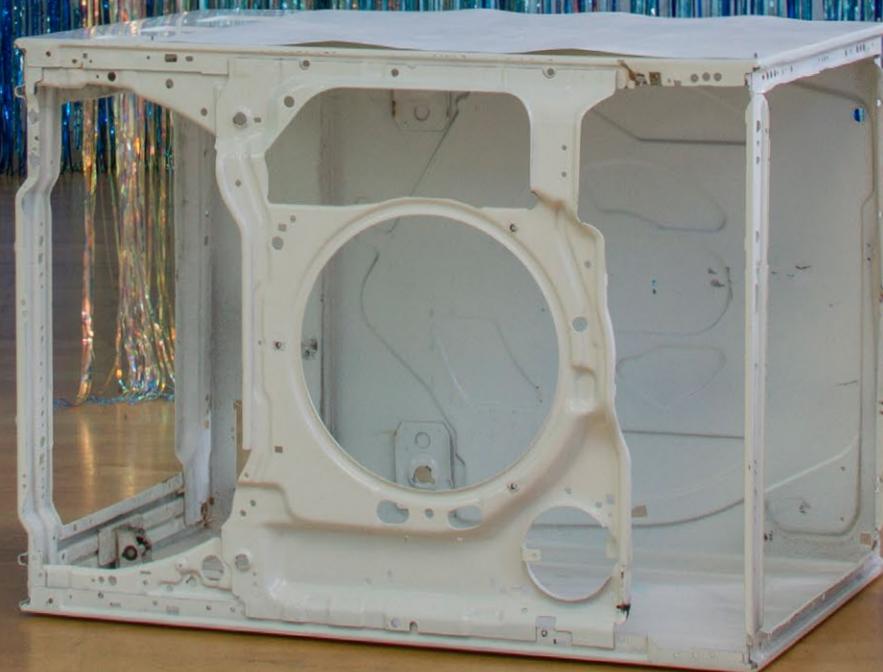
tinsel curtain, washing machine housings, drawings, curated readings
Kunstverein Braunschweig, 29.9. – 18.10.2020

29.9.2020 Nadira Husain and Markues read *The Bastard*
by Violette Leduc

1.10.2020 Ulrike Bernard reads *Beside Myself*
by Sasha Marianna Salzmann

8.10.2020 Alicia Agustín reads *The Artificial Silk Girl*
by Irmgard Keun

18.10.2020 Thomas Love reads *Dawn (Xenogenesis)*
by Octavia E. Butler



Prima Quallerina

Themes of drifting and placelessness pervade Markues's exhibition *Prima Quallerina* – a portmanteau combining “prima ballerina” with the German word for jellyfish, “Qualle” – in the Remise of the Kunstverein Braunschweig. Disemboweled washing machines lie on the floor of the exhibition space like shipwrecks. Robbed of their domesticity and function, their reinforced side panels, perforations, and apertures stand out as meaningless decorations. On these wrecks, watercolors have settled like polyps. Markues proposes a formal view of these objects and the drawings upon them, which seem as if they could extend in all directions, liquefying before the viewer's very eyes, flowing beyond the edges of the paper, and spilling over the washing machines.

Jellyfish are exposed to the currents of the sea and have little ability to determine their direction. Like the medusas that a jellyfish polyp forms by dividing itself into new segments, the ornaments in Markues's watercolor series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage* are separated from their origins. The forms in the drawings are borrowed from Westerwald and Bolesławiec pottery, as well as from carpets, curtains, wallpaper, and playing cards, superimposed in translucent layers like washed-out ceramic glazes in pale blue, violet, gray, and green tones. Markues directs the viewer's attention to the ornamental, transforming its supposed uselessness into a method of painterly questioning. The works resist clearly defined stylistic or geographical determinations, but they are reminiscent of the decorations found on functional objects in working class environments, which are often chosen out of necessity rather than considerations of design. While individual decorations may have once been symbols of distinction, they are now erratically accumulated symbols without status.

Instead of an authentic illustration of their own biography, Markues deploys a double displacement: the expectation that the artistic production of minorities should consist of marketing their own biographies is only apparently fulfilled by the drawings, while being unrestrainedly exaggerated by their individual titles. The titles are

marked as quotations, though their exact source remains unnamed. They stem from the milieu of those who were forcibly resettled in Germany between 1945–1950, who, by positioning themselves as “Heimatvertriebene” (displaced persons), uphold a melange of nostalgia and resentment and conceal their entanglement in the crimes of National Socialism behind woeful tales of their own resettlement. The watercolors cannot be explained by way of their titles, however. They stare back stonily when suspected of identitarian fantasies.

How does one deal with ethnic heritage when throwing it overboard is impossible and affirming it is out of the question? *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage* describes such a situation. Through the deployment and superimposition of quotations and ornamental forms, the works manage to find a sense of possibility in the lack of homeland by leaving ethno-nationalism behind. For despite all their ambivalence, the titles have the potential to call to mind various migrant testimonies. The specific context of the quotations as well as the painterly ornaments appear so dissolved that they cannot be conflated with individual experiences nor used to relativize them.

The shimmering curtain *Window*, which runs in several layers throughout the gallery, stages the exhibition as a space where identity and origin deliquesce. The ribbons evoke light refracted by the water's surface, seaweed, or a sea nettle's tentacles. The curtain refers to the technique of radar jamming known as “Window”, in which metal-coated strips are dropped from aircraft to hinder their detection. The curtain's Chroma Blue coloring is used in digital image processing to isolate objects in front of blue screens, freeing them to be inserted into any scene. Markues thus transforms the interior of the exhibition space into a broken projection screen on which origins can no longer be determined.

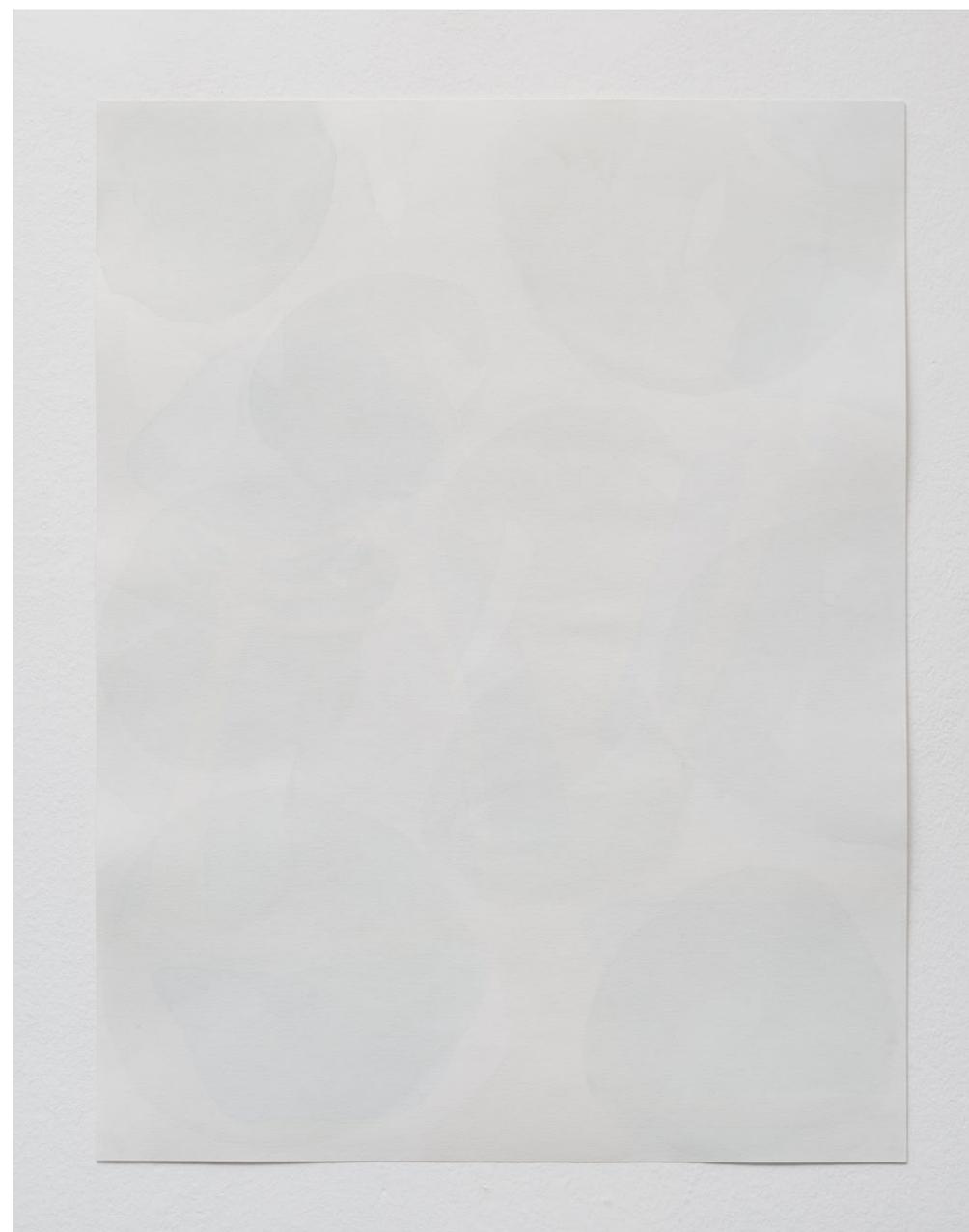
Four readings of literary texts will activate the space during the exhibition. What is common to each of the texts is that the protagonist is leaving their ancestral milieu for the first time. They are first generation drifters – Prima Quallerinas.



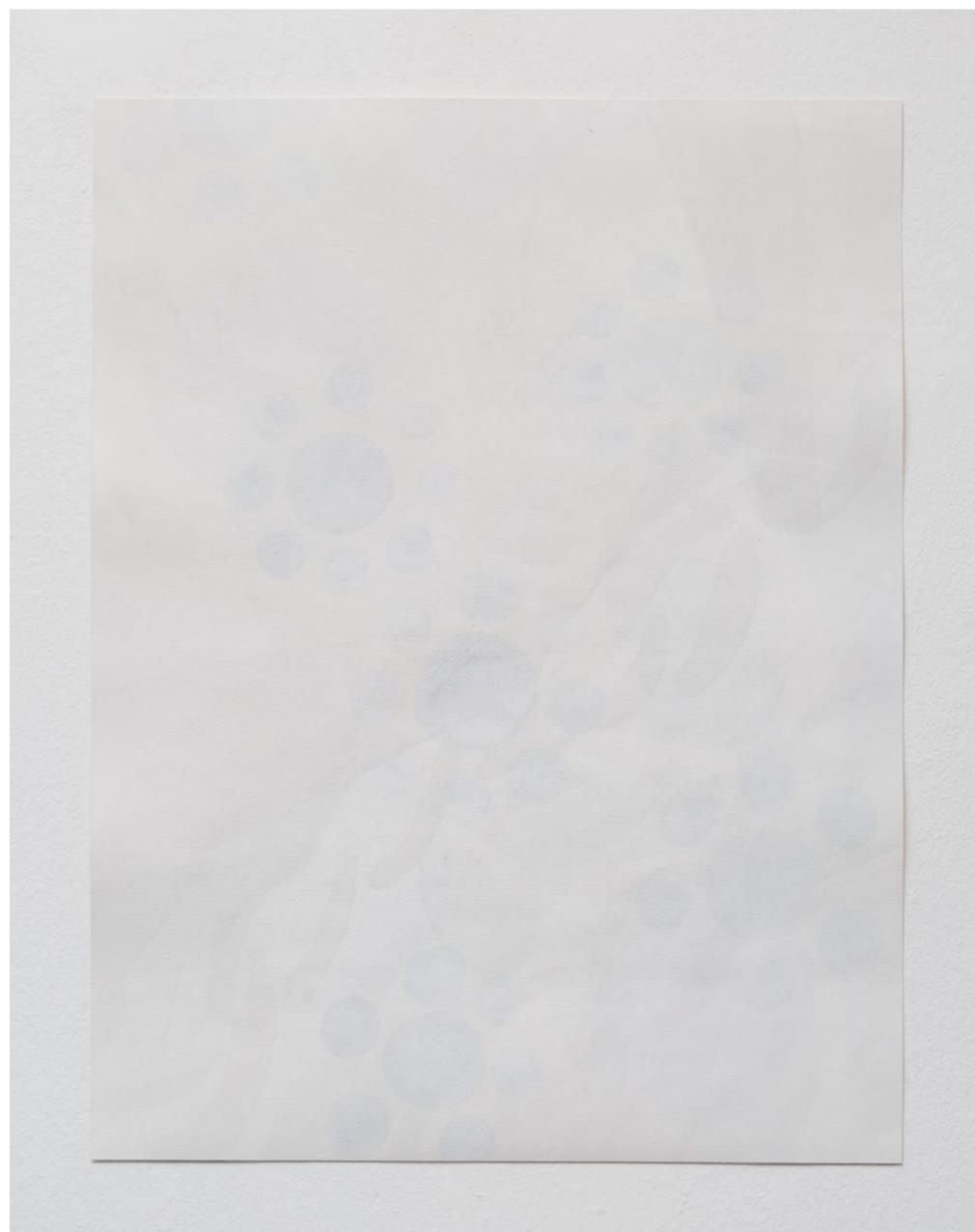
Detail *Prima Quallerina*
Kunstverein Braunschweig, 1.10.2020



“They stopped and gazed at us; no one wanted these strangers, who also had a different faith”
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*



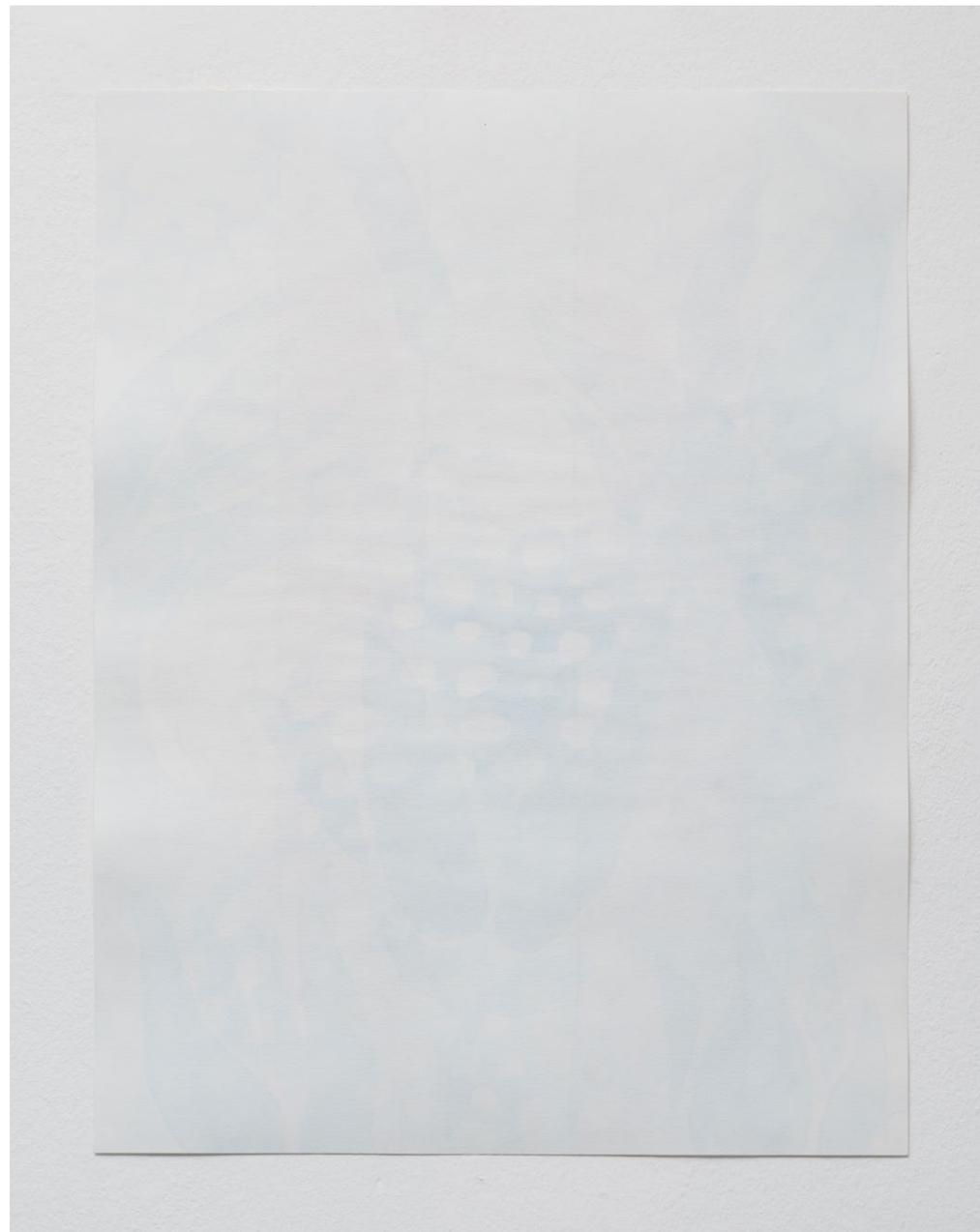
“Today we often ask whether those human destinies that remain on the sidelines have a purpose in life”
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*



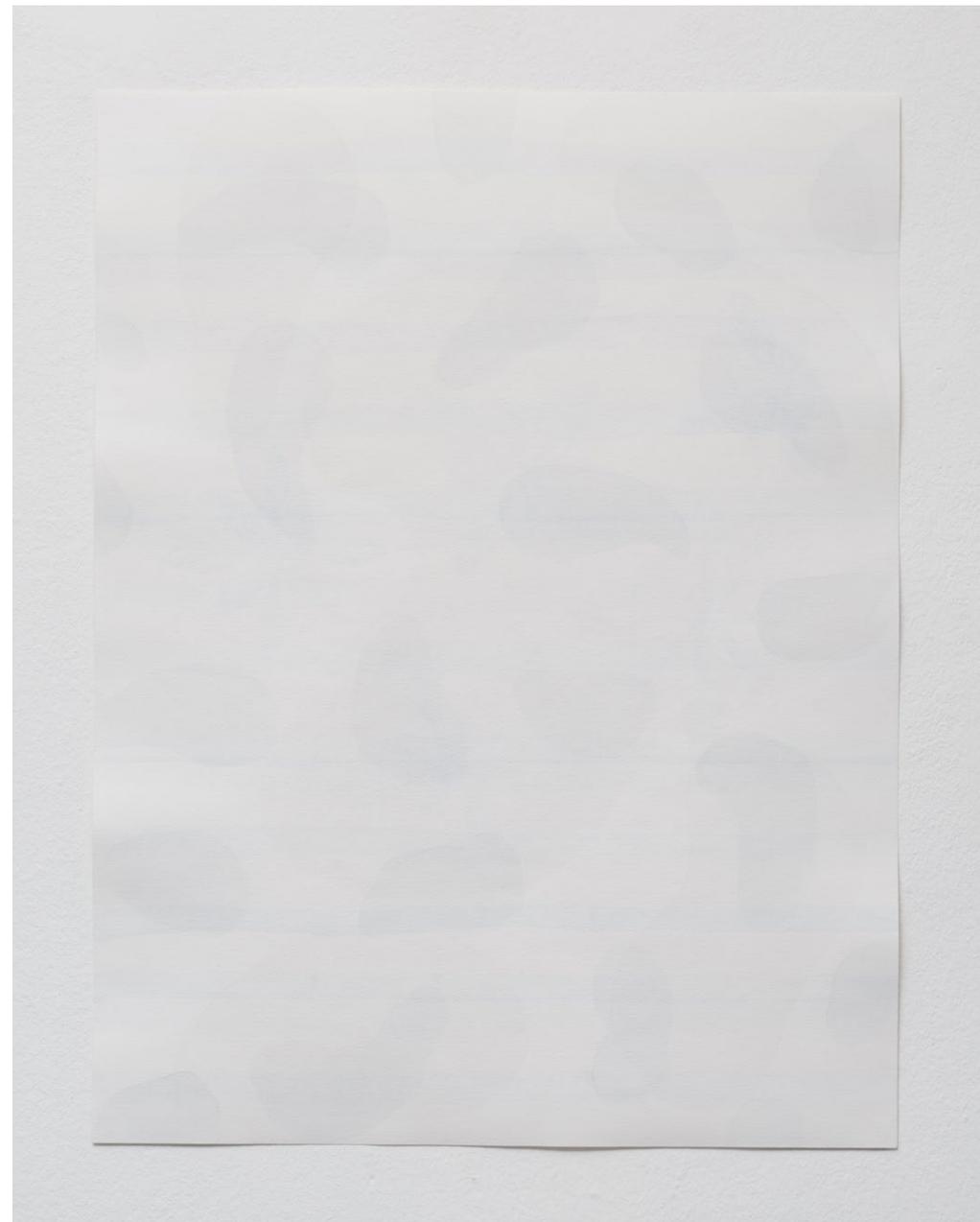
“Absolute freedom – there were many blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, mushrooms, wild cherries, and even more”
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*



“In my homeland, we didn’t yet have such overbred cows as today”
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*



“A nightwatch was arranged, the patrol set out. Because it was an uncertain time, we were not allowed to leave the camp”,
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*



“Good air, hard work, and utter trust in God did the rest”
watercolor on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2020
from the series *The Troubled Waters of Ethnic Heritage*

Pressure on Boys

parachutes, gym mats, medicine balls, curated readings
SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, 10.1. – 1.2.2019

- 10.1.2019 Magnus Rosengarten reads *Go Tell It on the Mountain*
by James Baldwin
- 12.1.2019 Heike-Karin Föll and Markues read *In Youth Is Pleasure*
by Denton Welch
- 13.1.2019 Pia Chakraverti-Wuerthwein reads *Haroun and the Sea
of Stories* by Salman Rushdie
- 19.1.2019 Alvina Chamberland reads *A Wizard of Earthsea*
by Ursula K. Le Guin
- 20.1.2019 Ulf Aminde reads *Jugend auf der Landstraße Berlin*
by Ernst Haffner
- 26.1.2019 Ahmet Sitki Demir reads *Binali and Temir*
by Murathan Mungan
- 27.1.2019 Xiaoshi Qin reads *Boys' Love Stories*
- 30.1.2019 Thomas Love reads *Dhalgren* by Samuel Delany
- 31.1.2019 Sarah Diehl reads *Vita Violenta* by Pier Paolo Pasolini
- 1.2.2019 Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung reads *Kumakanda*
by Kayo Chingonyi and *If They Come for Us*
by Fatimah Asghar



Pressure on Boys

Pressure on Boys is an installation by Markues examining the pressure society exerts on boys. To highlight the collectivity and polyphony of boyhood, the installation can only be viewed and perceived in the presence of a public reading that warms up the space. As the readings unfold, so do associations that broaden the idea of what boyhood could be.

For Markues, boyhood is not a biological concept but a collective and diverse experience encompassing the different boyhoods of heterosexual and homosexual cis-men, the childhoods of transgender women and non-binary people, the late puberty of transgender men, and also the fetishized boyhood of the twink. In *Pressure on Boys*, these diverse boyhoods become tangible to and shareable by the viewer.

Magnus Rosengarten reads James Baldwin
SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, 10.1.2019



Xiaoshi Qin reads *Boy's Love Stories*
SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, 27.1.2019

Amber

dyed sheets, mattresses, frames, cables, curated readings
Braennen, Berlin, 2. – 23.8.2015

- 2.8.2015 Jörg Markowski reads *River Without Banks*
by Hans Henny Jahnn
- 7.8.2015 Vince Tillotson reads *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf
- 8.8.2015 Eric Jones reads *Close to the Knives*
by David Wojnarowicz
- 9.8.2015 Tucké Royale reads fairytales
by Hans-Christian Andersen
- 14.8.2015 Michaela Meise reads *Pretty Honest* by Sali Hughes
- 15.8.2015 Alicia Agustín reads *How to Be Gay?* by David Halperin
- 16.8.2015 Daniel Cremer and Heike-Karin Föll read the interview
with Jean Genet by Hubert Fichte
- 21.8.2015 Nicholas Courtman reads *Maurice* by E. M. Forster
- 22.8.2015 Dirck Linck reads *Sheeper* by Irving Rosenthal
- 23.8.2015 Raoul Klooker reads *So schön* by Ronald M. Schernikau

Amber

Like ships or floes, three mattresses lie on the floor of the exhibition space. They are wrapped in fitted bedsheets, which have been dyed with quotations using a batik process. Resting on them, visitors can let themselves drift. Folding screens held together by power cords surround the mattresses. During opening hours, attendees are read aloud texts encompassing themes such as ancestry, depletion, cultural entrenchment, class, utopia, and their transgression. Between each reading the space is rearranged, which, along with the different associations provoked by the text, creates a warm but ephemeral atmosphere at the limits of tangibility.

The ambiguities of the installation reflect the ambiguity of the word “amber”, which refers both to the fossilized tree resin gemstone and to ambergris, a substance that used to be important for the manufacture of perfume and is derived from sperm whales’ stomach contents. While amber suggests healing a wound, encapsulating and conserving, ambergris results from the metamorphosis of indigestible bone fragments through weathering and processing into a valuable eroticizing fragrance. Both substances share a connection to the sea, for before their provenance was known, they could only be found washed up on the shore.



Alicia Agustín reads David Halperin
Braennen, Berlin, 15.8.2015



Raoul Klooker reads Ronald M. Schernikau
Braennen, Berlin, 23.8.2015