

B A
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Nikolai Nekh

Surrender, Surrender.

Curated by João Silvério

December 4th 2020 - January 19th 2021

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(...)

The clash between the economical, scientific and technological development and the widening social and environmental gap is no novelty in his artistic practice, centered in the “several ways capitalism uses to represent itself”. Examples of this are the Postcards from the city Raduhznyy, a finalist work for BES Revelação award in 2008, in which Nikolai tried to create an image of the oil city in Siberia by “photographing Lisbon as if it was that territory”; and Achilles Heel, 2018 exhibition at the Chiado Contemporary Art Museum (MNAC) in which he analyzed the relationship between the raw materials needed keep the industry in motion and the available energy resources.

(...)

According to the artist, gentrification is “perhaps the most recent expression of class struggle we are witnessing, [since] there are different classes claiming the same territory”. Albeit being a problem experienced in a very individual way by the residents of lesser economic power, that are forced to move out, we are all responsible for it, even if involuntarily, he emphasizes. “My goal is to generate greater awareness of the role we all play in this process.”

However, individual and collective participation in gentrification is not limited to economic and tourist agents, notes Nikolai Nekh. Aesthetics also contributes to this reality, which can be seen, for example, in exhibition photography. “There is a specific type of lights and framing that are used to register contemporary art exhibitions, and you can hardly deviate from it”, he warns, comparing it to the registry of apartments for rent or sale, “almost all photographed in the same way, because that is the type of image everyone wants to see”.

His work ends up being disruptive in that sense, since he seeks to go beyond the invariable formula for capturing and registering images. Besides favoring still life and landscape, his work is distinguished by its focus on the image production process and not only on its purpose. “I work a lot on the issue of image production and distribution narratives, which is the backdrop to what we ultimately see.”

(...)

.... the scaffolds, “more than platforms to paint, allude to the idea of social scale”, and the dais, which serve as a lander to “our unconscious”, accompanied by photography and installation.

In Time Out, 24/11/2020

By Mariana Monteiro

Nikolai Nekh

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[Brief note about the exhibition]

The work that composes this exhibition, because this is about a composition in space, leads us to reflect on the occupation of the gallery as a common space. A sort of shared condominium, fragmented and apparently connected by the symbolic value of the displayed objects: the photographs, the sculptures/scaffolds/bed frames, and a full-scale image, memoir of the experience and of a convulsing place, from a standpoint of the artist in a pool at a hotel rooftop over the city of Beirut. Nothing is left from the look over the city living a revolution, just an image of wellness, yet lonesome, printed on an outdoor vinyl that redefines the notion of presence, memory, and the way that communication can be a political and economic tool that decants for the observer a generic place that can be confused with any other. Just like the light of the images of the desirable apartments for rent that blur the gentrification of the place, its otherness, the social, ethnic, economic and identity differences that apparently attribute its wealth and cultural diversity. But that remains outside of the frame, without visual existence and thus without memory, regardless of the hierarchy of their distribution channels.

An isolated sculpture, composed of a model based on a styrofoam plinth and a photograph of a mold made of synthetic material, confronts us with an utopian model of a construction, which, like the sculptures/scaffoldings/bed frames, reveals in manual execution the labor dimension of work that constitutes a future memory of the project for a gentrification museum.

João Silvério

Nikolai Nekh was born in 1985, in Slavhansk-na-Kubani, Russia. He currently lives and works in Lisbon.

In 2009, he got a degree on Art and Multimedia at Faculdade de Belas Artes, Lisbon. The following year he took part in the Independent Studies Programme at Maumaus, Lisboa.

Nekh's artwork consists of the production and distribution of images that come from capitalism trajectories and their forms of representation.

His works have been presented in several film festivals and exhibition venues, such as: Três cartazes para o Museu da gentrificação. Maus Hábitos, Oporto (2020); Achilles' Heel. Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea do Chiado, Lisbon, Portugal (2018); Magic and Rituals. Museum Villa-Rot, Burgrieden - Rot, Germany (2018); COSMO/POLÍTICA #1: A Sexta Parte do Mundo. Museu do Neo-Realismo, Vila Franca de Xira, Portugal (2017); Silent Spring. Syntax, Lisbon, Portugal (2016); Bes Photo Revelação 2008. Serralves Museum, Oporto, Portugal. (2008) 13th VIS. Vienna, Austria. (Half-cut) (2016) 32nd Kassel Dokfest. Kassel, Germany. (Metaphorical Container) (2015) 19th Jihlava IDFF. Jihlava, Czech Republic. (Tidal Restlessness) (2015) CPH:DOX. Copenhagen, Denmark. (White Wind) (2009). He was part of following residency programs: Ashkal Alwan (with Calouste Gulbenkian grant), Beirut, Lebanon (2019); With Criminal Energy - Art and Crime in the 21st Century. ACC Galerie, Weimar, Germany. (2013); What Happened to God? Halle14, Leipzig, Germany. (2011).

He was part of Bes Photo Revelação 2008 award.



Alexandra Trejo Berber <alexandratberber@mog.org>

Re: Zoom Call

Kahraman Kent <kkent@surenderhotel.com.tr>
To: alexandratberber@mog.org>

Dear Mr. Berber,

I have sent you several e-mails, and still received no response. I have hoped you were well in every first sentence of all of them, but if we are to be honest, I now just hope this e-mail finds you in any form. I will not accept the excuse that my attempts of reaching out have collectively resided in your spam folder. And that you missed them. Or that you are sorry. I am writing to inform you of legal action we are taking against your institution effective immediately. We are well aware that you are a small operation, but your negligence is unacceptable. Perhaps the world would be a better place if your museum becomes a hotel. May I remind you that we value our clients and find great pride in the responsibility they put in our hands to continuously present to them art that reflects the reality of the world in our rooms and common spaces.

Needless to say, we are cancelling your show in our lobby, and have confiscated the art and the artist. An auction to dispose of the work and cover the expenses of your artist which you seem to have also forgotten in our premises will be announced soon. You will be barred from purchasing or reclaiming your work. The board will meet our lawyers tomorrow morning to decide the fate of the artist you sent us instead of the one we selected. Besides producing work that does not fit our décor, your artist has been inappropriate with our staff, and had to continuously be reminded of our society's culture and values.

Kahraman Kent

Programming Manager
Hotel Sur Ender

Sirinyali Mah. Lara Cad.
Museum District, Beirut, Lebanon

I've missed you so much. I know how hard it must have been to make the contract work for this show at Sur Ender with everything going on in the world for that matter. I really appreciate it. The staff here is very friendly, and everyone is making me feel at home. It's been quite inspiring so far, and work is going well. There's a lot to work with here, and so many stories to tell about the transformation of the neighborhood. The first day I arrived, I noticed something super interesting that kind of orchestrated the theme of the show. The original metal signage for the hotel is now part of the garden's landscaping. The programming manager calls it a sculpture, but I don't know how I missed this detail before, you know I love these mundane accidents. It's like the world is telling me something. So random, yet so precise. Kahraman still doesn't understand why I'm that excited about this, and says he's setting up a video call with you soon to discuss the details of my work.

On the other hand, one of the bartenders here seems to appreciate my humor. He even made a drink called "Surrender," screams "Surrender!" every time I jump into the rooftop pool, and brings me a glass. He's cute. He tells me the horses roaming around the race track below are all losing horses that have no more racing value. They look so free, trapped in this place, yet ousted from possible futures and speculation. I drink and stare at them from the pool all day, and spend my nights working. Most of the sculptures are done, and Kahraman seems impressed, he told me he has a proposal for me. Let me know when you have a time to chat.

Wish you were here, xoxo

Dearest Alex,

NIKOLAI NEKH

Nasceu em 1985, na Slavhansk-na-Kubani, Rússia. Atualmente vive e trabalha em Lisboa.
Born in 1985 of Slavhansk-na-Kubani, Russia. He currently lives and Works in Lisbon.

FORMAÇÃO | EDUCATION

2012

Everybody Is an Artist, EU granted Grundtvig Workshop, Documenta 13 | Kassel, Germany

2010

Spanning the Ocean(s), Seminar of ISP of Maumaus at 29ª Bienal de São Paulo | São Paulo, Brazil
Programa de Estudos Independentes na Maumaus, Lisboa/ Independent Stydy Programme Maumaus | Lisbon, Portugal

2009

Licenciatura em Arte e Multimedia, na Faculdade de Belas-Artes da Universidade de Lisboa.
Graduated in Art and Multimedia, at Faculty of Fine-Arts of University of Lisbon, Portugal

PRÉMIOS | PRIZES

BES Photo Revelação 2008

RESIDÊNCIAS ARTÍSTICAS | ARTISTIC RESIDENCES

2019

Ashkal Alwan | Beirut, Lebanon

2013

With Criminal Energy, Art and Crime in the 21st Century, ACC Galerie | Weimar, Germany

2011

What Happened to God? Halle14 | Leipzig, Germany

2010

La Belle Alliance (Metropole). Goethe-Institut | Lisbon, Portugal

2009

Galeria Zé dos Bois | Lisbon, Portugal

EXPOSIÇÕES INDIVIDUAIS | SOLO EXHIBITION

2020

- Three posters for the Museum of Gentrification, curated by João Beata, Saco Azul - Mupi Gallery Project | Porto, Portugal

2018

- Achilles' Heel. MNAC | Lisbon, Portugal
- gás porumdia/ gas foraday, Balcony Gallery | Lisbon, Portugal

2016

- Silent Spring, Syntax, Lisboa | Lisbon, Portugal

2015

- Shoplifting CAN Get you Killed. A. Trindade & F. Cordeiro, Lisboa | Lisbon, Portugal

EXPOSIÇÕES COLETIVAS | GROUP EXHIBITION

2020

- Deflatable Aesthetics, presented by HAWAII - LISBON at Balcony Gallery | Lisbon, Portugal

2019

- Cabra Cega, Curatorship Tiago Alexandre, Balcony Gallery | Lisbon, Portugal

2018

- Magic and Rituals, Museum Villa-Rot | Burgrieden, Germany

2017

- COSMO/POLÍTICA #1: A Sexta Parte do Mundo, Museu do Neo-Realismo | Vila Franca de Xira, Portugal

- New Work, Balcony | Lisbon, Portugal

- THEM OR US! Galeria Municipal do Porto | Oporto, Portugal

- Is a Bone a Stone? Museu Geológico, Lisbon / Galeria do Sol | Oporto, Portugal

2016

- Magician's Right Hand, Futura | Prague, Czech Republic

2015

- Nocturnal Measurements and the Invisible State of Shine, Syntax | Lisbon, Portugal

2014

- With Criminal Energy - Art and Crime in the 21st Century, ACC Galerie | Wemar, Germany

2012

- Os Relatos de um Fotógrafo Famoso, Museu do Neo-Realismo | Vila Franca de Xira, Portugal

2010

- ESCAPE, Lunds konsthall | Lund, Sweden

- Lisboa como Metáfora, Galeria Quadrup | Lisbon, Portugal

2009

- Startpoint Prize 2009 | Klenová, Czech Republic

2008

- Bes Photo Revelação 2008. Museu de Serralves | Oporto, Portugal

FESTIVAIS DE CINEMA | CINEMA FESTIVALS

2019

- Meio Corte, Acoustic Geometries, City Gallery | Wellington, New Zealand

- Concordância de Marés, Corpora Aliena at IKLECTIK : 'Dreams and Shadows' | London, England.

2016

- Meio Corte, 13th VIS | Vienna, Austria

- Contentor Metafórico, Experiments In Cinema v11.T34 | Albuquerque, Novo Mexico, USA

- Concordância de Marés, Fokus 2016. Nikolaj Kunsthall | Copenhagen, Denmark

2015

- Contentor Metafórico, 32nd Kassel Dokfest. | Kassel, Germany
- Concordância de Marés, 19th Jihlava IDFF | Jihlava, Czech Republic
- Concordância de Marés, KLEX | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Meio Corte, Arkipel | Jakarta, Indonesia
- Meio Corte, Experiments In Cinema v10.T36 | Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA
- Meio Corte Fokus 2015. Nikolaj Kunsthal | Copenhagen, Denmark
- Meio Corte, 21th International Short Film Week | Regensburg, Germany
- Meio Corte, Tenderflix. ICA | Londres, United Kingdom

2014

- Meio Corte, Indie Cork | Cork, Irlanda

COLEÇÕES | COLLECTION

- Fernando Figueiredo Ribeiro, Portugal
- Private collections



Nikolai Nekh

Outdoor, 2020

Photo: João Laia. The Smallville Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon. 18/10/2019, 17:3

Inject print on vinyl

Edition 1+1AP

600 x 250 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Museum of Gentrification, 2019

Client: Museum of Gentrification

Architecture: SOLI (Beirut) - winner of international competition

Model: SOLI (Beirut)

Birch, oak, demountable structure

Single Edition

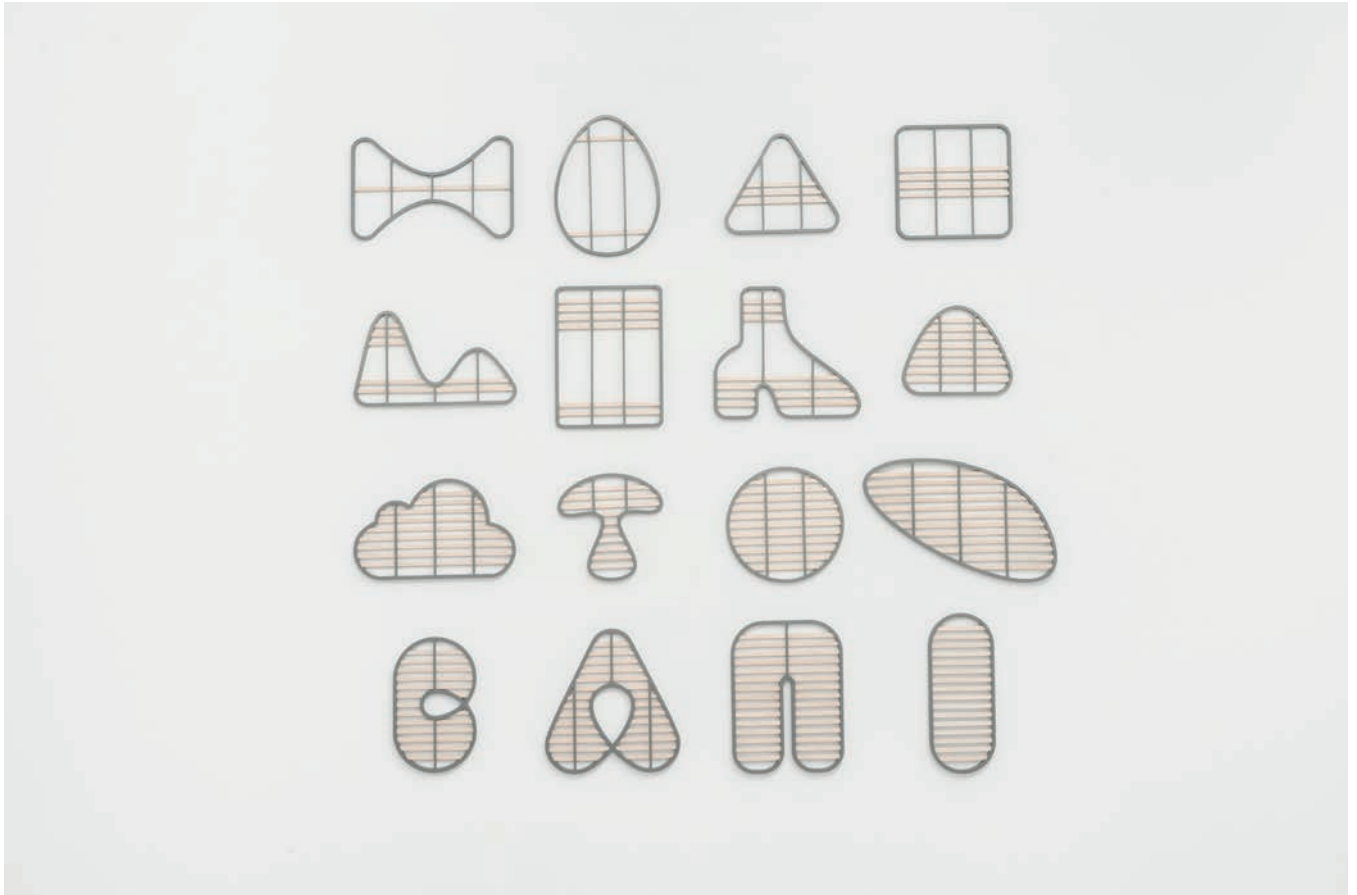
48 x 73 x 33 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Concept for the Museum of Gentrification, 2019

Photography of polyurethane foam for plasma screens packaging
Inject print on semi-gloss paper, passe-partout, glass, wengé wood frame
Edition 3+1AP
70 x 56 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Models to the exhibitors of the Museum of Gentrification, 2019

16 miniature bed frames, laser cut card, raft, matte acrylic enamel
Edition 3+1AP
120 x 113 cm



Nikolai Nekh

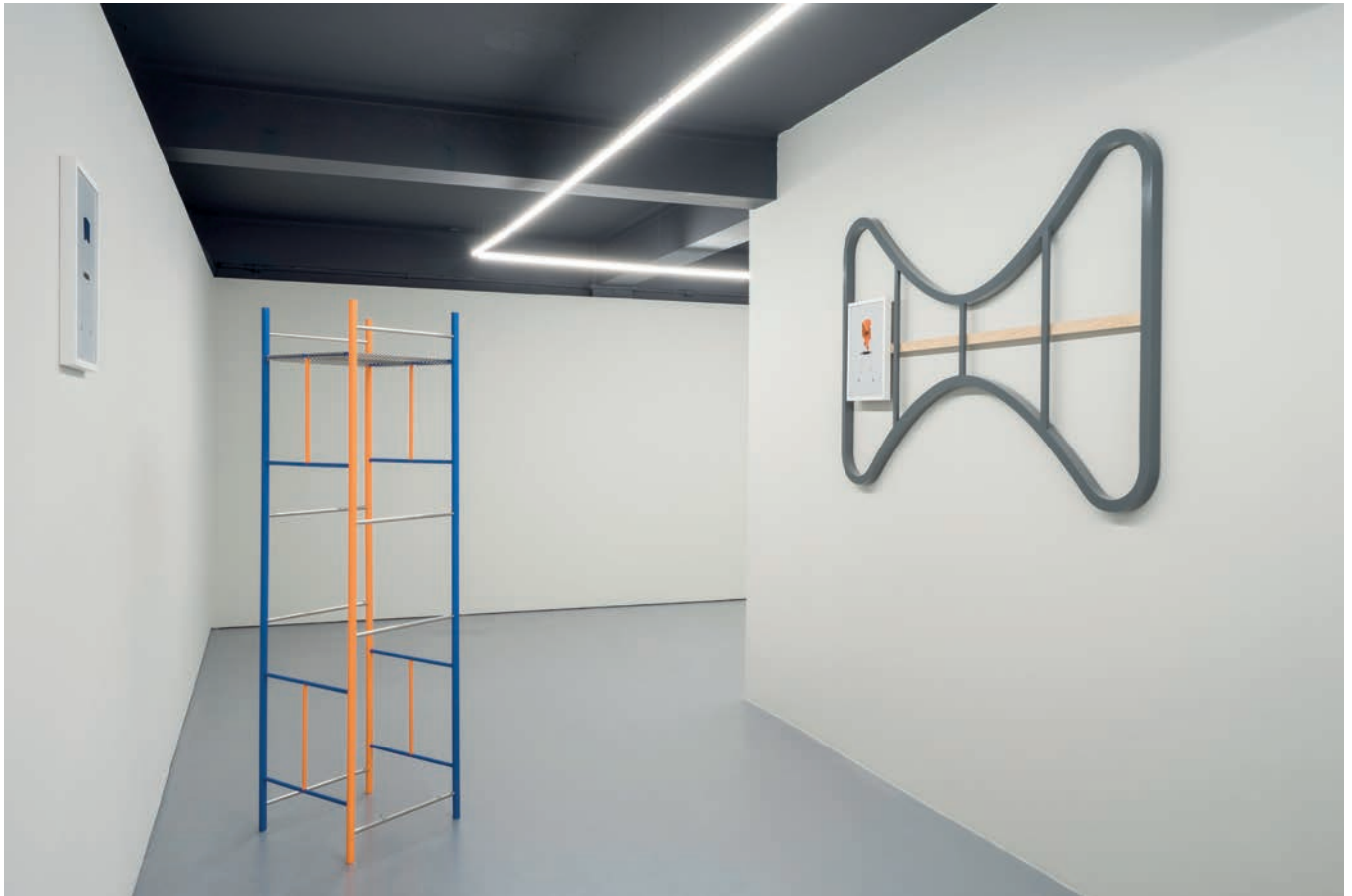
Museum of Gentrification - Display B, 2020

Black and white scaffold (2020)

Demountable scaffold, glued beech dowels Ø 1,5 cm / 2,8 cm, stainless steel tubes Ø 1,5 cm fit,
gloss acrylic enamel, stainless steel perforated sheet 1,5 mm R8 T11
134,5 x 102,5 x 39 cm

Photographed object #4 (2018)

Inject print on semi-gloss paper, bonded on 5mm PVC, white lacquered wood frame
Edition 1+1PA
160 x 100 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Museum of Gentrification - Display #1, 2020

Bed frame #1 (2020)

3 glued layers of birch plywood, CNC cut, gloss acrylic enamel (NCS S 6502-B), varnish.
120 x 185 x 4 cm

Orange and blue scaffold (2020)

Demountable scaffold, glued beech dowels Ø 1,5 cm / 2,8 cm, stainless steel tubes Ø 1,5 cm fit, gloss acrylic enamel (RAL B40 / NSC S 3060-R80B), stainless steel perforated sheet 1,5 mm R8 T11
199 x 53 x 53 cm

Photographed object #8 (2019)

Inject print on semi-gloss paper, bonded on 5mm PVC, white lacquered wood frame
Edition, 1+1AP, 30 x 42 cm

Photographed object #9 (2019)

Inject print on semi-gloss paper, bonded on 5mm PVC, white lacquered wood frame
Edition, 1+1AP, 30 x 42 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Museum of Gentrification - Display #2, 2020

Bed frame #2 (2020)

3 glued layers of birch plywood, CNC cut, gloss acrylic enamel (NCS S 6502-B), varnish
21 x 164 x 4 cm

Yellow scaffold (2020)

Demountable scaffold, glued beech dowels Ø 1,5 cm / 2,8 cm, stainless steel tubes Ø 1,5 cm fit, gloss acrylic enamel
(NCS S 0580-Y), stainless steel perforated sheet 1,5 mm R8 T11
122,5 x 97 x 47 cm

Photographed object #6 (2018)

Inject print on semi-gloss paper, bonded on 5mm PVC, white lacquered wood frame
Edition, 1+1AP
70 x 70 cm



Nikolai Nekh

Museum of Gentrification - Display A, 2020

Red and turquoise scaffold (2020)

Demountable scaffold, glued beech dowels Ø 1,5 cm / 2,8 cm, stainless steel tubes Ø 1,5 cm fit, gloss acrylic enamel (RAL 3029 / NCS S 0540-B30G), stainless steel perforated sheet 1,5 mm R8 T11
149,5 x 99 x 68 cm

Photographed object #3 (2018)

Inject print on semi-gloss paper, bonded on 5mm PVC, white lacquered wood frame
Edition, 1+1AP
110 x 80 cm

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THANK YOU