



Fete cu idei [Băieți și picturi]

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editors: Delia POPA & Giles ELDRIDGE

BUCHAREST, 2016

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English version

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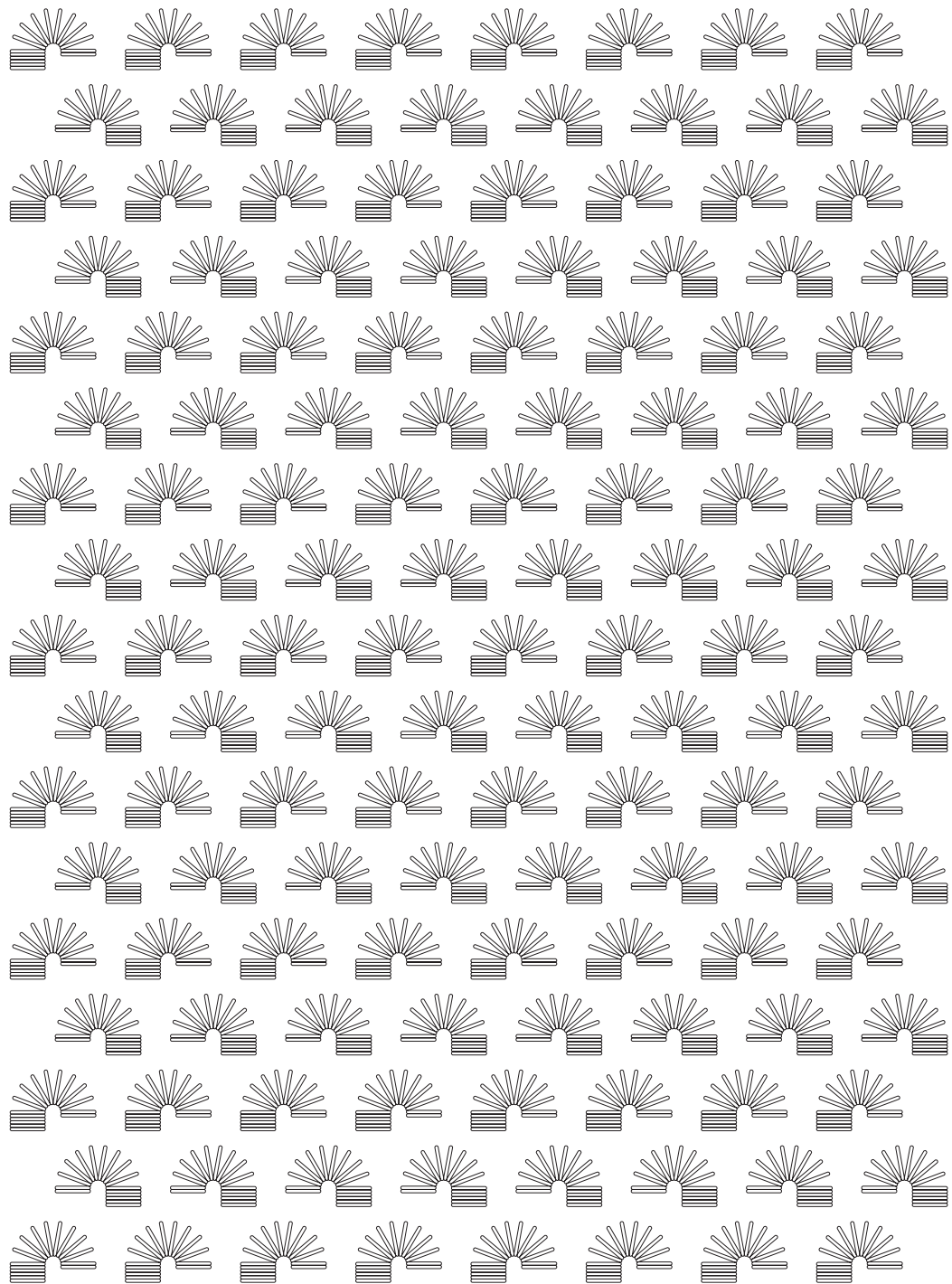


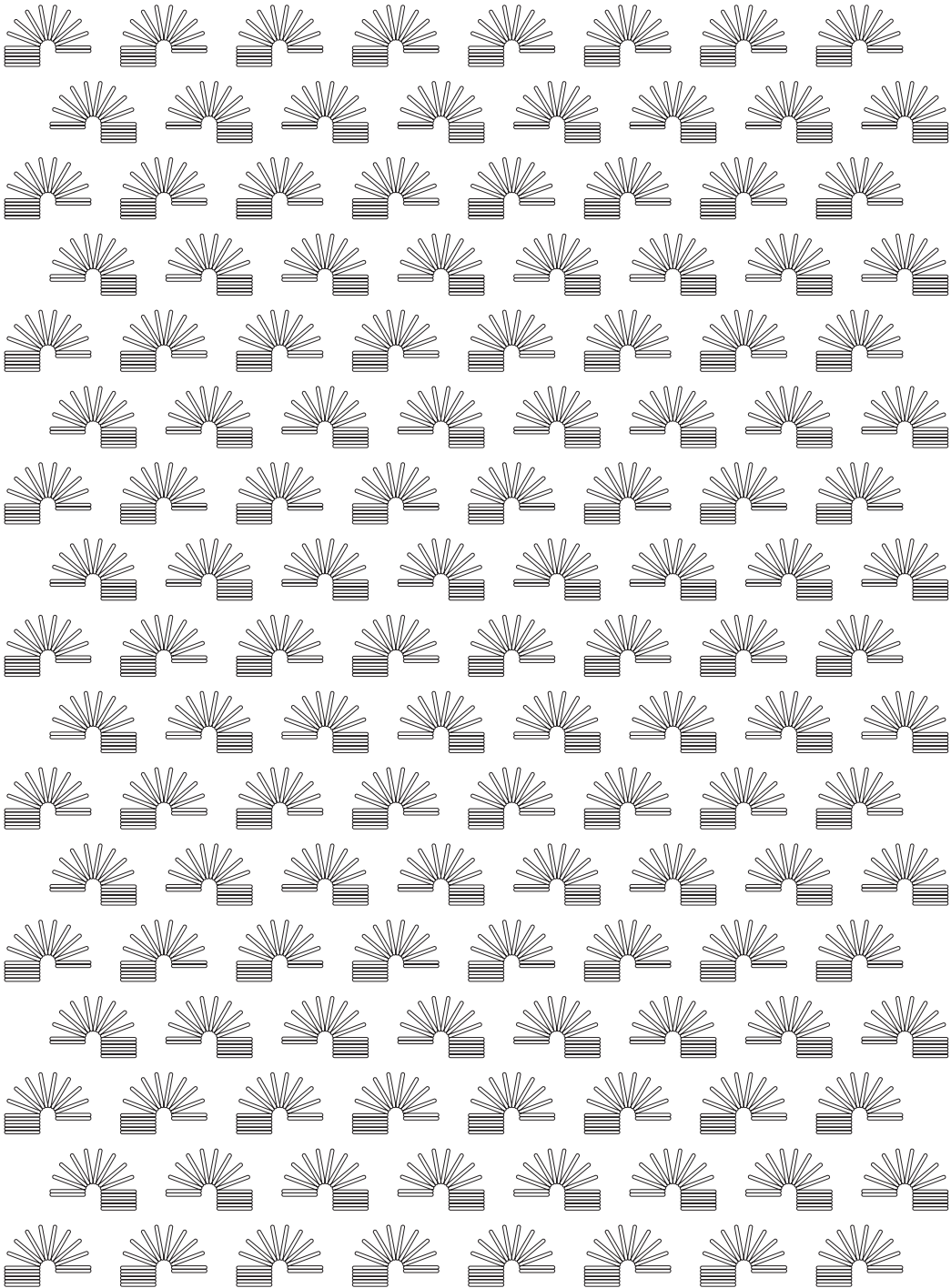
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# ADDRESS TO THE READER

## The Project

The title of the project references two previous museum shows: *Bad Girls* at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, SoHo, New York City, 1994 and *Good Girls*, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest, 2013.

Originating from an initial idea by the English born visual artist Giles Eldridge, now living in Bucharest, and developed through an on-going conversation with the Romanian visual artist, Delia Popa, from Bucharest, this project is intended to present some vital aspects of contemporary art practice as they are being played out in two of Romania's leading contemporary art scenes, Cluj and Bucharest.

It is an exercise in considering the persona and identity of individual artists alongside that of cities. It can be considered as an artistic dialogue rather than having a final curatorial outcome.

Broadly speaking, the differences could be characterised as follows: In Cluj there appears to have been a well lauded recent history of predominantly male painters, based at Fabrica de Pensule acquiring international acclaim and commercial success, whereas Bucharest lacks any such label, being made up of multiple and disparate art spaces and many artists. However, we have observed that in Bucharest there is a distinctive feature of women art practitioners, which includes artists, curators, gallerists, cultural managers and art writers. Alongside this recognition the project also presents itself as an opportunity to create awareness about the diversity of art in Cluj.

The project has taken the form of an exhibition in Cluj of 5 female artists from Bucharest followed by a round table discussion in the same city, which in turn was followed by a round table conversation in Bucharest and arriving at this publication. It brings to the surface pertinent subjects around ideas about art in this part of southern Europe today.

# The Exhibition

In June 2016 an exhibition of 5 visual artists living in Bucharest was held at Lateral ArtSpace, The Paintbrush Factory, Cluj.

The intention of the exhibition in Cluj was to reflect the multiplicity of approaches that seems intrinsic to the capital city: typically not studio based and involved in a wide range of art practices that are transdisciplinary and fluid such as painting, drawing, photography, performance, dance and collaborations, all largely taking place outside of a commercial framework. The roles these artists take include those of curators, cultural managers and educators.

All participating artists have either made new works or transformed an already existing work for this exhibition.

**Raluca POPA's** *Portrait of my Husband* (2016) references the Russian cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev, who was in space when the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991.

**Liliana BASARAB** re-presents 3 works in collaboration with 3 male artists: *Adam & Eve / NeverEnding Chances* (2009) a video made in collaboration with Costel Chirilă, *Rehearsal* (2014) with Bogdan Pălie, and *Wall/The Unseen* (2015) with Tuomo Väänänen, shown as a set of 6 postcards.

**Ioana GHEORGHIU's** *Remnants from Debate Performance* (2016) is documentation of a performance that took the form of a debate with two debaters from Cluj presenting arguments around a latent motion.

**Aurora KIRÁLY** continues her series of *Viewfinders* (2016), part drawing, part sculpture, part photography.

**Delia POPA** resumes her anthropomorphic mice series with *Shirley and Béla* (2016), linocuts deriving from film stills of *Heidi* (1937) and *Dracula* (1931) films.

## The Roundtables

Next, the project consisted of a roundtable in June at the Paintbrush Factory in Cluj and one in September at ODD, based in a Romanian Artists' Union (UAP) space in Bucharest, both of which were held in English.

The guests – artists, curators, writers, historians, gallerists - relevant to the topic: **Ioana IACOB, Ioana FĂRCAȘ, Mara RAȚIU, Dragoș BĂDIȚĂ, Diana MARINCU** in Cluj, and **Anca POTERAȘU, Simona VILĂU, Olivia NIȚIȘ, Mihai IEPURE-GÓRSKI** in Bucharest, initiated a public conversation with other interested participants.

## This Publication

*“As opposed to a journalist, scientist, intellectual or activist, society authorises the artist (and maybe this is what it expects of her) to pose axioms without having to prove them.”* (Francis Alÿs, *A Story of Deception*, Wiels 2010)

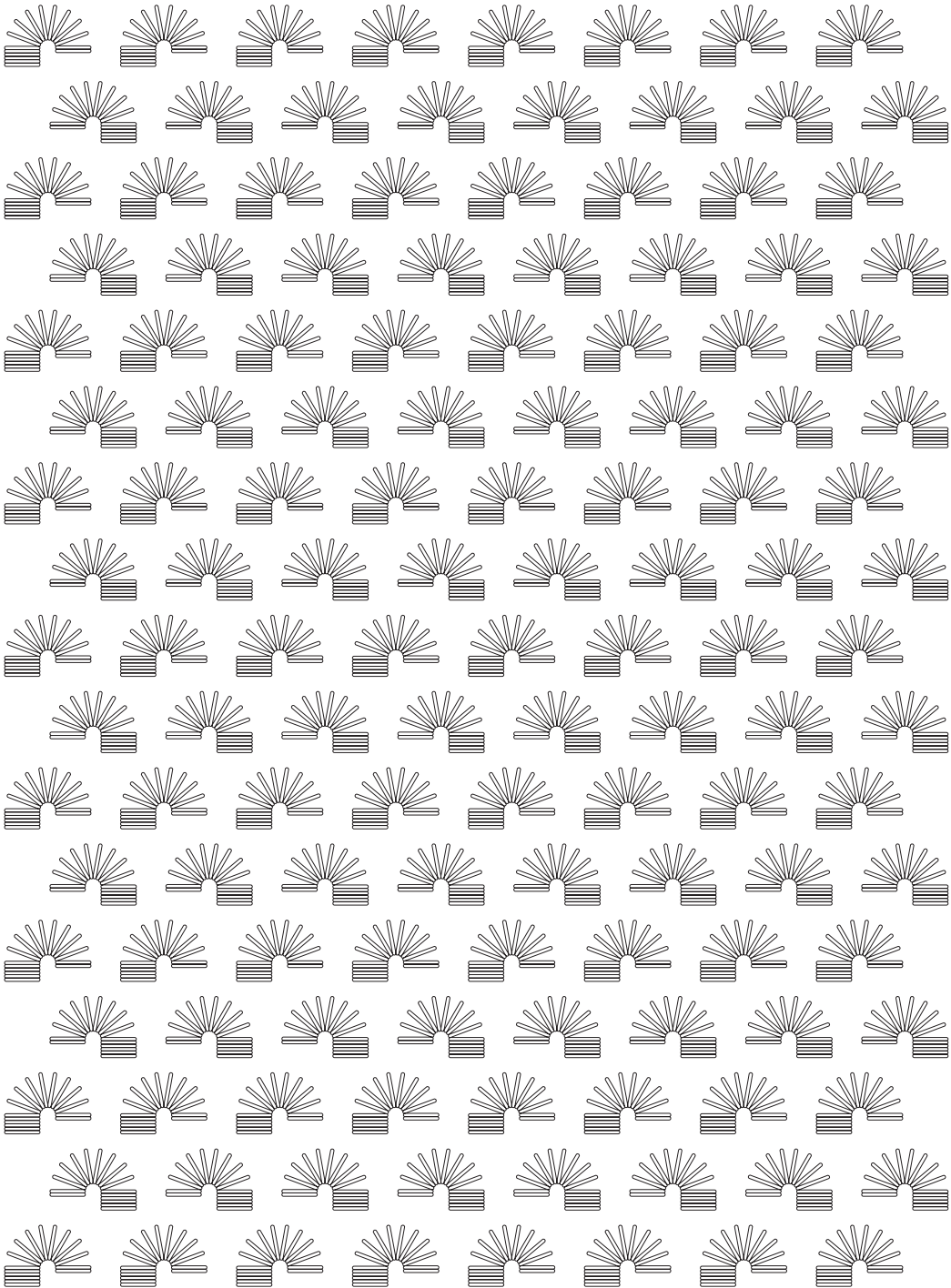
This publication is a hybrid: part exhibition catalogue, part conversation, part art work, intended to *stimulate ongoing discourse*. We have employed throughout this project a methodology of speculation and observation, derived from Fine Art practice, allowing for ideas and direction to develop.

The texts published here are excerpts from the two round table discussions. They have been edited to give an indication of the nature of live debate and illustrate the breadth of topics raised. Whilst it does not attempt to present a singular argument or thesis it does bring to the surface key issues, in an aphoristic style as in Cioran and Barthes - dialogical fragments of information. If you wish, you can consider the following as a script from a theatre play or a film with real actors, a script we fully and cheekily acknowledge to have manipulated, cut, interpreted and changed, and that we consider to speak some/a truth about the current movement of two of Romania's leading art scenes: Cluj and Bucharest.

**GILES ELDRIDGE, DELIA POPA**

October 2016, Bucharest





# ROUND TABLE 1

June 11th 2016, Fabrica de Pensule, CLUJ

## PARTICIPANTS (in order of appearance)

Giles ELDRIDGE - Artist, lives in Bucharest

Delia POPA - Artist, lives in Bucharest

Cristina CURCAN - Artist, lives in Cluj

Diana MARINCU - Curator, lives in Cluj/ Bucharest

Mihai IEPURE-GÓRSKI - Artist, lives in Cluj

Corina BUCEA - Cultural Manager, lives in Cluj

Ioana GHEORGHIU - Artist, lives in Bucharest

Mara RAȚIU - Art Theorist, Professor, lives in Cluj

Liliana BASARAB - Artist, lives in Bucharest

Oana FĂRCAȘ - Artist, lives in Cluj

Dragoș BĂDIȚĂ - Artist, lives in Cluj

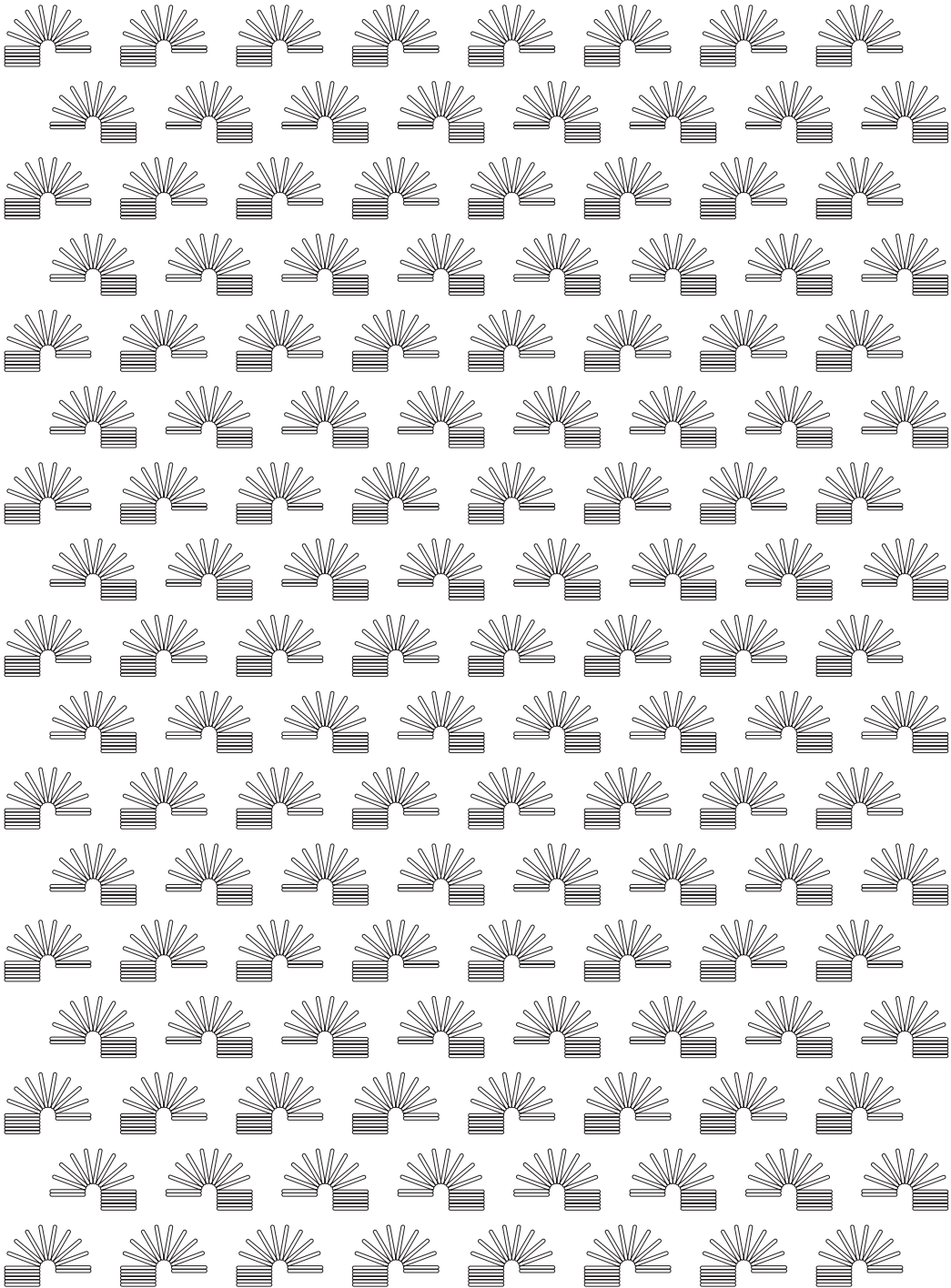
Ion COPOERU - Philosophy Professor, lives in Cluj

Ioana IACOB - Artist, lives in Cluj

Răzvan ANTON - Artist, lives in Cluj

Radu CIOCA - Artist, lives in Cluj

Lucian INDREI - Artist, lives in Cluj



[*Fabrica de Pensule, Indoors, Afternoon*]

**GILES ELDRIDGE:** I am a painter, I want to say this right from the start... I moved to Bucharest from London full time in 2015, I had travelled to Romania many times before that, I had spent some time in Cluj in 2011 and then had moved between London and Bucharest since 2013 (...) The other maybe important point I should make is that this is not exclusively a feminist project as such, but gender is playing an important role, so there is a subtle difference here. The name of the project and exhibition, *Girls with Ideas, Boys and Painting* references *Good Girls* that happened in MNAC 2 – 3 years ago – 2013 – and also this references the *Bad Girls* exhibition in '94 in the States. The *Bad Girls* exhibition was ostensibly a feminist show, Marcia Tucker was observing a feminist way of working and she wanted to bring 60 women artists – and a couple of men - to exemplify that, and this is not quite what we're doing, but, what we're both saying now, having developed the idea with Delia [Popa] that we're observing – there seems to be a lot of women in Bucharest making art, so we're not saying they're all feminists or this necessarily is a feminist exhibition, but we can discuss it in feminist terms. So, for me, there is a subtle difference there and establishing that as a curatorial starting point. (...)

...How is it then to be, either an artist in Cluj, either as part of this strong identity or alongside it or, in some way, very discreetly separated from it, what is it like for academics or curators also to be within this umbrella and, likewise, what is it like for people in Bucharest, artists or practitioners in Bucharest, curators, academics to be within this much more fluid situation where the singularity of material and practice simply doesn't appear to exist? The artists that we show in the exhibition at Lateral ArtSpace exemplify and showcase different ways of working, different fluidity, the multiplicity of ways of working. So, there are a number of other points, but this is the kind of material I'm kind of interested in discussing.

**DELIA POPA:** I guess what we are proposing for today is to have a small discussion about how you position yourselves as artists or cultural art operators and how far has the perceived notion of the Cluj painting scene changed that, or, if you are from Bucharest how is that influencing your work and how you see yourself as an artist.

**CRISTINA CURCAN:** So we invited some people that we thought could answer some of these questions and I will just quickly show them to you... and let them present themselves. So Mara Rațiu is one of them, Diana Marincu, Oana Fărcaș and Ioana Iacob, Dragoș Bădiță.

**UNKNOWN:** So more girls, and just one boy.

**CRISTINA CURCAN:** The other boys are out of the city, sorry...

*[laughs, people talking]*

**GILES:** Maybe I will ask Diana... since you have to leave early... maybe just some... any responses to what's been said so far... if you find a particular area of interest...

**DIANA MARINCU:** Actually I've been thinking a lot about this topic lately. First I had a different idea about the meaning of this exhibition after discussing it with Cristina. But then after I read the text I was surprised by the fact that you started from this idea of a typical identity of the Cluj art scene regarding painting, which is very much an idea that comes mostly from marketing and a cliché view about the art scene here. As you can see also around you here, there are so many artists who are not really engaged with painting or using any classical mediums, artists who use different mediums, changing them all the time. So I was thinking why using this stereotypical image and creating this dichotomy between Cluj and Bucharest? I mean I think all our efforts should go towards deconstructing this and not really stressing it once again.

**GILES:** But this is the perception. So this is the motivation... to try to attack that, not to place Bucharest against Cluj or painting against other ways of working... but to try and discuss it and expand it in such a way that it possibly can be a way... artists can take back, slightly idealistically, artists could take back and retrieve for themselves another identity outside of the market that is determining the classic painting dominance.

**MIHAI IEPURE-GÓRSKI:** Even though the approach and the title are cliché, this kind of identity has an influence on artists that are working in other mediums here in Cluj. Painters, and we're not talking about the ones that are super famous, but this situation is present for us. The fact is that painters in general are doing well, in Cluj at least and there is a lot of interest from

outside for painters or what painters do and less interest for what other people do. And this is our present, even though it is cliché. We are aware of the fact that there are many people without a take on the whole matter, but let's face it, there is a kind of attention, a kind of pressure on the whole structure from the part of... I don't know... the market. So I personally perceive it to some extent, I can feel it as pressing, and even though I don't want to I have to position myself in relation to it.

**CORINA BUCEA:** Beyond the specificity of the subject, [what] this title [refers to] of your proposal and the whole topic, which, of course, touches a lot of us working here, in different ways, me not as an artist, nor as a curator... but it does touch me also, in a more global or distant manner. I have a dilemma more regarding the, let's say, methodological question of exactly how do you approach the elephant in the room. It's not just about this topic, or it's not just about this context, but in more general terms. I really ask myself a lot of times, if you have a strong subject such as this one - the identity, the market, the national, local specificities, or the school... or, you know, like big big subjects which do disturb you, which do concern you in a way - how do you approach it? I mean, exposing it as a subject, of course is important. I do have my reservation that just exposing it and not going deeper into it might just repeat a song that we hear all the time, and might even accentuate it somehow. It's hard to finish somehow... It's a question, it's really a question. So I really launch this question: what's the best way to approach something that is so relevant, and it's not just relevant for this space, but it's relevant for Bucharest, it's relevant at large? Is it just naming it enough? or what would be the best way to actually break it somehow, break it into a debate, not into a result, of course. I don't want to go further because I would try speculating.

(...) In general, honestly, with Diana [Marincu] we tackled somehow this issue because we were thinking and discussing about Fabrica, its identity and so on. We got to that point where we discussed about how we should address this equivalence that you find between what is called the school of Cluj and Fabrica, or the Cluj scene in general for that much. And also in terms of how people identify Fabrica with the scene of art in Cluj, which is not... there's no equal sign... And there are a lot of not equal signs between a lot of things. This is something that we are struggling with, I think, for some time: how to break this mis-identification or wrong identification - wrong in a lot of ways. So, I have to say, it's a bit disturbing to think about it for a long time and find a lot of scenarios for it and finally, at some point, somebody comes up

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with... "Yeah, we realised how to approach it!" And, for me, it sort of breaks my long thread of trials of breaking this equal sign between a lot of things, and even opposites. For example... just from the title, I would think *ideas* are opposite to *painting*.

**GILES:** ... back to Diana's original point - exactly to undermine the structure, to deconstruct...

**IOANA GHEORGHIU:** But you then have to think about the language and how do you use language and how language can deconstruct something or can emphasise, so it's just about what gets to... so, for example this title is strong enough so it can function, it can travel without the exhibition and without any kind of context.

(...) So, basically the title can function as a stand-alone entity, that is problematic and I think it's interesting to discuss. What happens after this series of events in which we acknowledge things and we discuss and everything is kind of [*inaudible*] ? This title is strong enough so that, once it leaves the room and the exhibition and everything else, it's not attached to the intention of the person who formed it, like to which side... is it a punk kind of acknowledging of an aspect that wants to be... fought? It's a very complicated way of putting it. Or is it punk in the sense of just poking a reality that nobody wants to look at? In this sense punk, or is it just more of a *resemnare*... ? How do you say *resemnat*?

[*Everyone talking in Romanian about the word 'resemnat' ]*

**DELIA:** *We accept fatality?*

**IOANA G.:** I think it's *resigned*.

**GILES:** I'm intrigued by this, it seems exactly this is a kind of sticking point right from the start.

**DIANA:** Yes but what you're saying, what you have in mind with this question, this opposition is true, but at the same time I have the feeling that you are approaching them as a given and not questioning them enough. This is what bothers me. If you would have started with a series of discussions about this topic and then after, I don't know, six months or one year you would have made an exhibition with the results from this, then, for me at least,

it would have made more sense. But now it looks like a hypothesis, a given that you already had in mind and that you want to test in a way.

GILES: Yes, I understand from your point of view, you describe a curatorial and historical and theoretical methodology, which is obviously an academic methodology, which is where you're coming from, but I am an artist so I'm coming from fine art [background] and this is the approach that is intrinsically a fine art methodology. So, again, I agree with you, but we are comparing different methodologies. [*inaudible*]

DELIA: But, yeah, maybe we can list here other opinions...

UNKNOWN: I certainly understand the issue of methodology, but I think it's a little bit problematic to index in this way the discussion that already happens here, more particularly the way criticism works. Secondly, Cluj has a long history being embedded in the markets beyond Bucharest, so, obviously this is a huge part of the local history. Markets are all, most of the time, if we are trying to criticise them, you need to criticise capitalism, you need to criticise how money functions and how particular actors are made important by very abstract forces there are sometimes against the local community. And here is exactly this case and if you're trying to criticise the way markets function by saying: "Look, this is how markets function!" you are not criticising markets, you are just reinforcing a particular way in which a community is attacked, and also it's very problematic to put gender back here, because exactly gender is a huge part, a very important dynamic that's going in the art scene... is to make invisible various types of work, various types of artists but this is not just... comes from nowhere... particular forces, very particular types of how they work... and here exactly to name this case. Even if in a burlesque way, "boys are doing that" [it] is just not respectful for the huge feminine work that is here, it's completely creating a new layer of invisibility. So I was wondering how actually criticism can work, if you are just saying "look, this is a supposed reality" but I think you are not right even in a slightly or remotely way how you describe this reality... because obviously you are also having or this seems a little bit very colonial to say "Global markets that are functioning in this way are saying Cluj painters are very important, so painters, boy painters are a part of Cluj"... Yeah, but this is problematic from the beginning.

IOANA G.: Can I ask you something regarding the methodology of fine



art? Because, actually, now when you use this dichotomy... I realised that by saying that this is a methodology of fine arts it's as if the relation that you draw between you and this project would be as if the entire project is your work of art.

**LILIANA BASARAB:** I have to say something...

*[more people talking]*

**LILIANA:** Maybe it's not very obvious from the title of the exhibition what are our intentions. I studied in Iași and I lived there for 12 years I am living in Bucharest now. All the time we look towards Cluj with a lot of respect and a lot of wishes to be here, or even to adopt some of the models that make you go on... it's not that we see all of you like very all the same... we respect and we want quite a lot of the things that happened in Cluj to happen in Bucharest. To be very honest because I'm coming from Iasi, and that's another scene, another attempt to do things, I think the Bucharest artistic scene is quite superficial. Sometimes it is just "oh, everybody makes objects for the market" and „let's criticise capitalistic market", but let's have it a little bit and we can criticise it later.

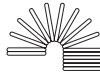
**DELIA [to Mihai]:** You wanted to add something?

**MIHAI:** (...) nerve and vein and sometimes you have to say things that disturb, and you have to put out things like this, you know, coming here with this kind of narrative... even though it's a bit simplistic... and I think it's important... we don't need to reach a conclusion here, we are not trying to define anything... but we're trying to discuss and maybe look at what else is there than "boys with painting and girls with..." you know... Let's look at what else is there and maybe... cause it's important, maybe other people should look at what else is there... and there are important artists doing something else...

*[everyone talking, laughing]*

**OANA FĂRÇAȘ:** I stopped thinking of that a few years ago, I'm focused on my work not thinking if I'm in the Cluj scene or Fabrica scene or... whatever scene, 'cause my work is too important to focus on this kind of things, but I can say... I mean... even for me it's a bit misogynistic... not a bit, a lot of misogynistic scene... and I feel it's not only from outside, it's not just like people see it... it's from inside as well. As I said I stop thinking about

this because if you think about this all the time you don't work any more, you become frustrated.



**IOANA G.:** First of all, I would like to listen to Dragoș, he is a painter boy, I do want to see his ideas.

**DRAGOȘ BĂDIȚA:** As an artist I am concerned mostly with my work... I mean, it's the curator's responsibility to see patterns and to see routes or to find connections between artists. My responsibility is just to give work and how it's saying it's not my...

**DELIA:** So what else... sorry, please go on...

**ION COPOERU:** Relating to... I haven't seen anything obviously feminine in this exhibition.

**DELIA:** Feminine... ?

**ION:** Girlish... and I was thinking that... but the idea is that the girls are looking for new ways... which might be true in some sense, and I was thinking of some old saying "the fox knows many ways but the... hedgehog knows only one... and he is successful". So to be successful is to do one thing... when you are successful you do one thing, when you are oppressed you tend to find, to look for many ways of doing things in other ways... and I think that the title points to something very problematic... the traumatic - sorry for putting it in a philosophical way - a traumatic nature of identity.

Being a girl or a boy... it's something traumatic, it's interesting because girls are painting... when they are little, small girls... 4 years... and the boys are in the yard, playing in the yard with the other boys... but now it's vice versa, why? Because boys are always looking for success, and the girls have to find other ways... I perfectly understand that all this construction of identities is really traumatic, and I think that this exhibition and the discussion after reveals actually the traumatic, the trauma of having one identity, one imposed identity. The question would be - and it was mentioned - what can we, should we do after exposing this drama, this trauma, and is there something to do

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after deconstruction, to put it also philosophically somehow... just plainly exposing or fighting against - as my colleague suggested... from sociology - or... I don't know, find... probably, girls will find another way.

**UNKNOWN:** Or be better painters... *[everyone laughs]*... no, that would be imitating painting...

*[everyone talking]*

**MIHAI:** The fact that you are doing this, it's also underlining another trend, in my opinion. I have noticed and it's typical for marginal cultures or countries, and we kind of are that... we don't have enough strength or we're not taken seriously enough by the general art market to create opinions...

**GILES:** So it's easy for somebody to occupy Cluj...?

**MIHAI:** It's a cliché that takes shape in the markets in the West - because this is all West, we didn't say this - it forms our own identity, and it shouldn't be so, we should create our own identity, and be allowed to make mistakes about it... And this is also related to the curatorial practice... because as a curator, I think, you have a responsibility, it's a big responsibility that you kind of create a situation, a context, an opinion... And often I have the feeling, or better let's just say that I lust for the internal scene to create opinion and that opinion to spread out, instead of adopting clichés from outside... that implicitly affect us quite heavily. *[more people agree]*

**UNKNOWN:** Let's move on to the terrace !



*[Fabrica de Pensule, On the Terrace, Later]*

**UNKNOWN:** I would be more careful with the idea of the labels that we take from the West, because we kept saying that, "we take labels from the West", so basically the idea that the West came with the concept of "school of Cluj" and "school of painting", which, I would argue that... well, it's way more complex and I don't think it's true. Even when looking in the art history, the idea of a school creating... a person, or a school creating another generation, and another generation of students is a common place.

**CORINA:** I would have a point on this... *[wind noise]*... about what we do here for example. From my point of view, some things that we tried somehow to subtly transmit through our work as Fabrica at large, so not just individuals - either galleries or artists and so on - they go beyond medium, gender, politics. I mean it's exactly this dialogue between different disciplines like performing arts and visual arts, between different media like conceptual artists and painters, between different levels of age and experience, and emerging artist and having more established artists. (...) We tried to set somehow as an identity, not to put an equal sign between the school of Cluj - what is called the school of Cluj, which is, generally, identified with painting - and what we are here, for example, and from this point of view even now, statistically, you can actually see it even more, it did turn out into this big space, a mental space where there are different organisations, people of left, people of right, people who are more known, people who are less known, people between different disciplines and so on.

So, from my point of view, this sort of interdisciplinary, collaborative, collective thinking and so on is something that I personally see more as an identity for Cluj than other places, and again you always have to struggle (...) For me it's always been a struggle, even when I go abroad and I talk about Fabrica and the artists here and so on, people who do know something about Fabrica, of course, they're like: "Oh yes, I heard about Adrian Ghenie, and I heard about...", because everybody avoided until now to say his name. I always have this speech prepared beforehand to say: "You know, it's not just Adrian Ghenie, and it's not just Plan B, and it's not just painting... it's all these other things... and we do that, and that..." This is a topic for a lot of people here, for example, how the Cluj scene and Fabrica are represented. And the creative artists and arts scene, how they are represented, for example, in exhibitions... because there have been a few exhibitions, like in Budapest,

in Arken (...) Warsaw and so on... And, theoretically, they all tried to make a portrait of the Cluj art scene, but if you see them all you realise each of them has a completely different projection, [*sound of airplane*] for example the exhibition in Múcsarnok [Kunsthalle] tried to present also the context of the last 20 years, of all the relevant cultural scene at large, so not just looking at art in the way that art is what you hang on walls... It's more of creating a context. And in that exhibition, for example, you could see that more explicitly - this is how I felt somehow - that people who were from Budapest and who saw the exhibition had a little bit of an idea about what Cluj is. I think they left with this idea: "Oh, Cluj is such a vibrant place, where people collaborate and they are more socially engaged" and so on, but then if you look at other exhibitions, like the one in [Espace Culturel] Luis Vuitton [Paris] you have the feeling that it's about the school of painting. So this is also funny, how it's projected outside, how each of these contexts try to define Cluj... They each have actually completely different definitions. But of course people see just some of them, because some of them are more visible, some of them are in Paris or whatever.

**IOANA IACOB:** ... To slightly change the subject, how many girls were in those exhibitions? Maybe one in all three of them...? In just one of them actually... [*more people talking*] ... so 2... Geta Brătescu... 3...

**CORINA:** It's practice that defines things, it's not texts or what you say about it, it's not that I *talk* about the approach of interdisciplinarity, for example, it's that we did it for the last 7 years. (...)

**RĂZVAN ANTON:** So there is something that connects Bucharest and Cluj. There's one thing that connects all these cities, it's the precariousness of the artist. I think there is a big common point. Even Fabrica for example, it started as a platform, people renting... getting together the money... but now it got to public funding... now it's funded by the City Hall and Norwegian Funds and so on. It's been through different stages, but again I think for the Romanian scene it's an exception and when you compare it to the 1970s for instance, or the '80s, when you have big cultural institutions supporting the Arts, it's definitely a major change, and that's visible in the archives of the national museums... the amount of practice, the amount of work that was produced back then and is produced now... that's visible, it's visible in the way arts and culture is produced now, even though it was Communist

Romania. So it's a question of gender, different cities, but essentially we are in the same precarious phase as in the '90s, it's just that we learned how to find money, we had to.

DELIA: Yes, so we *feel* it every day. So we were thinking about the artists that we chose, that they don't necessarily have a studio. Practice is on and off... and that can be generalised for Bucharest... there's a lot of fragmentation... things that appear and disappear... and then there's... yes... these ideas... precarity as well... and... fluidity... having to adapt and reinvent and reassess... and also, for me, I feel this need of positioning myself, I feel that this is for me a group statement, a group positioning in a way, so that's... yeah, there's some strength in numbers for sure, and this type of association is not one that says "now we all sit together, hold hands and we have the same ideas...", and we don't work in the same spaces, but we meet, we collaborate sometimes, we talk... things like that... so it's a different kind of being together... but it is a question of group identity.

IOANA G.: But there's also a lot of drama in Bucharest... everybody is fighting all the time... *[more people talking and laughing]* But here [in Cluj], my feeling is that it doesn't happen that often... not to the extent to which it happens in Bucharest.

CORINA: No, but when it happens it happens! *[everyone laughs]*

DELIA: But is it natural not even to collaborate...?

CORINA: But that's the point... and here I... I had the feeling from the beginning of Fabrica but now it's even more clear that collaboration is not about working with the people you like... just as making an exhibition is not because you like the paintings or the works or whatever, it's because you find it relevant. I mean nobody ever liked everybody in Fabrica and it's pretty obvious now... that's the reality.

MARA RAȚIU: It's professionalisation, actually... this is what is missing in Romania, professionalisation means that we don't work with our subjectivities... etc, and that's the definition that [Howard S.] Becker quotes regarding the art-worlds, the capacity to create cooperative networks, and this is missing in Romania... and in Bucharest even more; in Cluj, with all

these tensions that we have, still, cooperation is much more possible... but in Bucharest, yes, it's very difficult too, but I think it's going to get there... maybe in a longer time but it's going to get there because we all need to professionalise our artistic worlds.

**ION:** It's one aspect, but I was thinking of a figure in Bucharest which hasn't been mentioned and which would be an authority... probably in painting or in visual art, the authority was always in Bucharest... the big school of painting etc, and probably that's the power figure that you are not mentioning but it is operating there... and blocking somehow...

**DELIA:** Yeah, because we are rebelling against it... so we are trying to find other ways, and we started from that... we went to school, I mean I went to school in Bucharest and it was all patriarchal.

**ION:** Yes, that's it, that's the starting point of...

**DELIA:** Of course, these are other underlying ideas of this project... but if you say capitalism, you say big words... then you don't have a personal experience...

**MIHAI:** I think it would be good if we had a better historical background... I'm sure that if you look back on what Cluj... what happened in Cluj before Fabrica, you will see that there were things that created the environment that's made it possible for Fabrica to happen... it's not just, you know,

**UNKNOWN:** ... dropping from the sky...

**MIHAI:** ... so we need to be careful with that, and we should look back as well, maybe in Bucharest also the historical context... What I kind of noticed, and maybe I'm wrong - there's somebody from the school here that could contradict me if I'm wrong - what I've noticed for example in my earlier years when I was a student or a high-school student, I have noticed that in Bucharest it was more the idea of a school, of somebody's school, like "I'm the master and you are the..." It was stronger than here, that's what I noticed, this was my impression. I think, being a student, ... I had this impression, I don't know if this had any effect. I know that for us, at least for me, I had the strong opposition to my school... and some of the painters had this...

Of course they borrowed stuff from their teachers, it's not about this... but sometimes a lot comes out of this spirit of going against.

DELIA: And that could possibly explain why there's so many women doing this, because it was so male at the school in Bucharest... there's no actual historic... at the moment there's no woman professor in the painting department... has never been... or Cecilia Cuțescu-Storck in the '30s... so it's really really...

RADU CIOCA: In Bucharest, the sculpture department was well-known, and in sculpture you have boys... because it's heavy, and that's why there are mostly men but I think in general the gender issue is not an issue...

DELIA: Oh my God!

*[random voices]*

RADU: It is about the works, for example when you study an art book you look at the work, and if you are interested in it, you look at the artist.

LUCIAN INDREI: I am Lucian and I'm a boy... No, really, but regarding the gender issue... the truth is that if you are a man it's very hard to realise, it's hard to realise that you have a privilege, this is what I wanted to say... it's very hard to realise when you are privileged... because everything comes so natural, I'm never scared going on the street... so you don't see all this... you don't see, and maybe it's my ignorance that's at fault or my... I don't know, not paying attention. (...)

RĂZVAN: There was a good point Mihai had, with Fabrica not coming from nowhere... because you had Revista Idea - Balkon, Casa Tranzit, Protokoll... all of these institutions that somehow survived longer... to create an environment...

CORINA: And everybody did something before Fabrica, people who were here, even the very young ones, it's not like they just dropped from the sky and they received the studio and they said: "Yeah, let's be successful!" (...)

LILIANA: As I was talking with Delia, last year we've been involved in a project trying to do something about artists' rights [to create a new branch at UAP, the Romanian Artists' Union]... and after half a year of work it just stopped...



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because we couldn't really manage to reach a conclusion, we didn't manage to really continue. I was previously involved in Vector [in Iași], we did things for 5 years... Vector was for 15 years but I was involved for 5 years - without really asking: "No, I have to stop because I disagree with somebody", no, we just kept going on, we were disagreeing, fighting, but still continuing... that's the problem, that sometimes in Bucharest things stop.



**IOANA G.:** (...) ongoing series of events and interchangeable... girls with ideas and painting...

**CORINA:** This is a good point also, that it's a global issue... and this is somehow not just about female artists but also about how to read between ideas and painting... I think this is also a global issue, again, painting works in the market, it's a common place, but... go beyond that. And if we go beyond that what do we discover? And I think there are far more interesting things...  
*[wind noise]*

**IOANA G.:** ... in Bucharest, about how you could connect people who work in several, in different parts of Romania and we realised there are some residencies, but... we were thinking about the idea of a residency that would be geographically situated somehow kind of in the centre of Romania, to bring people from Romania specifically to work together, in a space such as this one, so to just hire a space.

**DELIA:** There's no space such as this one.

**IOANA:** I think that there are some options.

**CORINA:** In Călan... fostul Combinat...

**IOANA G.:** There's such an example in France [PAF - Performing Arts Forum, St Erme] ... there's a performance art festival that basically is a space where you can go all through the year and they have two major events (...) and they bring theoreticians and curators and so on, and they just did this in a very

isolated space somewhere in a very small French town, and they have this big place that they bought for very little money... and they are doing this (...)

UNKNOWN: ...and roads!

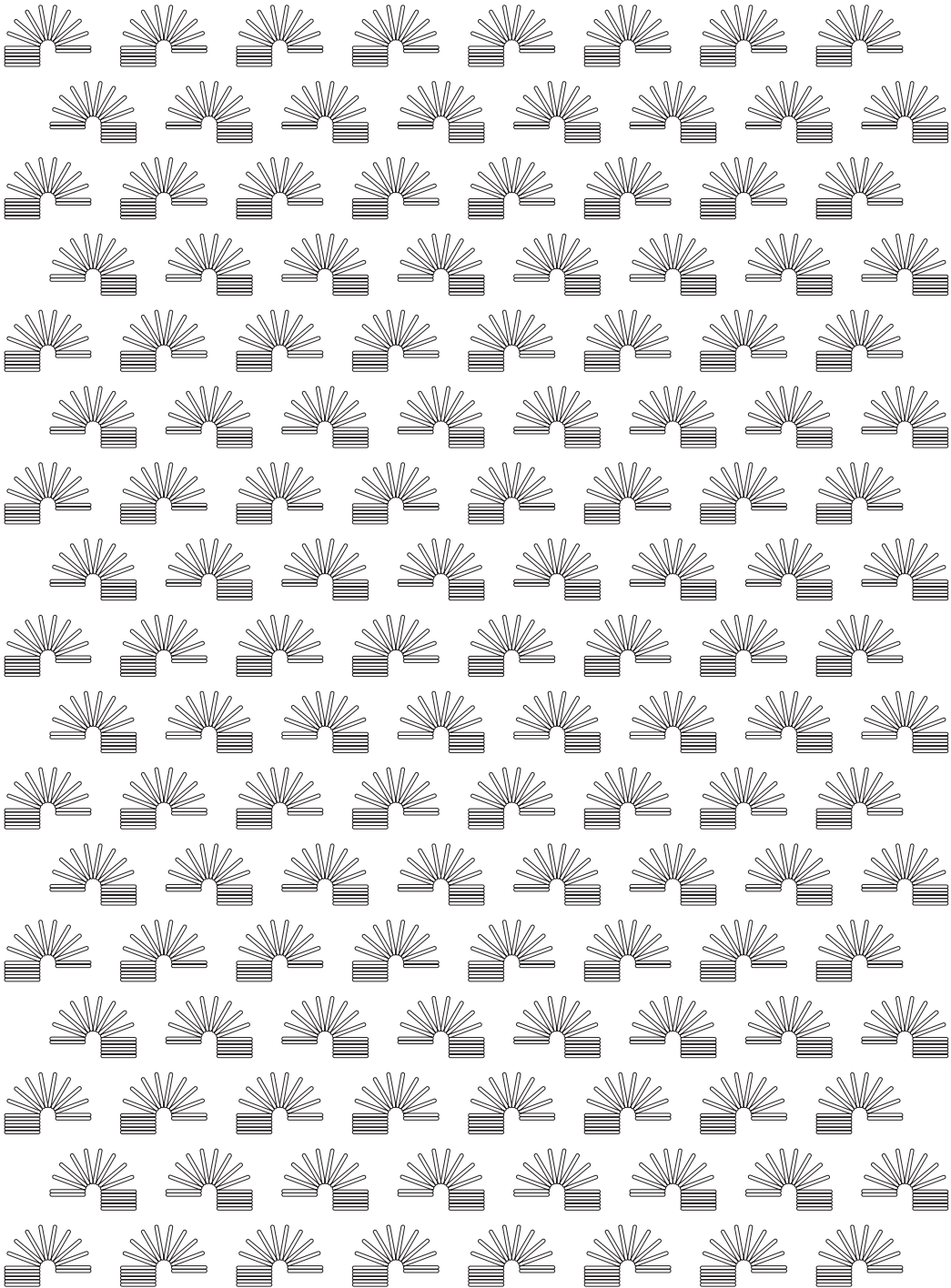
MIHAI: I sense the beginning of a cult!

MARA: But it's absurd to have, by train, like 11 hours to travel to Bucharest... or by car... that's awful... Not to forget that AFCN has these criteria of mobility in Romania and I think this is very good and let's hope ...

*[plane noise]*

UNKNOWN: Group hug!





## ROUND TABLE 2

September 22nd 2016, ODD, BUCHAREST

### PARTICIPANTS (in order of appearance)

Delia POPA: Artist, lives in Bucharest

Mihai IEPURE-GÓRSKI: Artist, lives in Cluj

Cătălin NĂSTĂSOIU: Designer, lives in New York/ Bucharest

Simona VILĂU: Curator, Artist, lives in Bucharest

Giles ELDRIDGE: Artist, lives in Bucharest

Anca POTERAȘU: Gallerist, lives in Bucharest

Iulia SIMA: Artist, Performer, lives in Bucharest

Olivia NIȚIȘ: Curator, Art Historian, lives in Bucharest

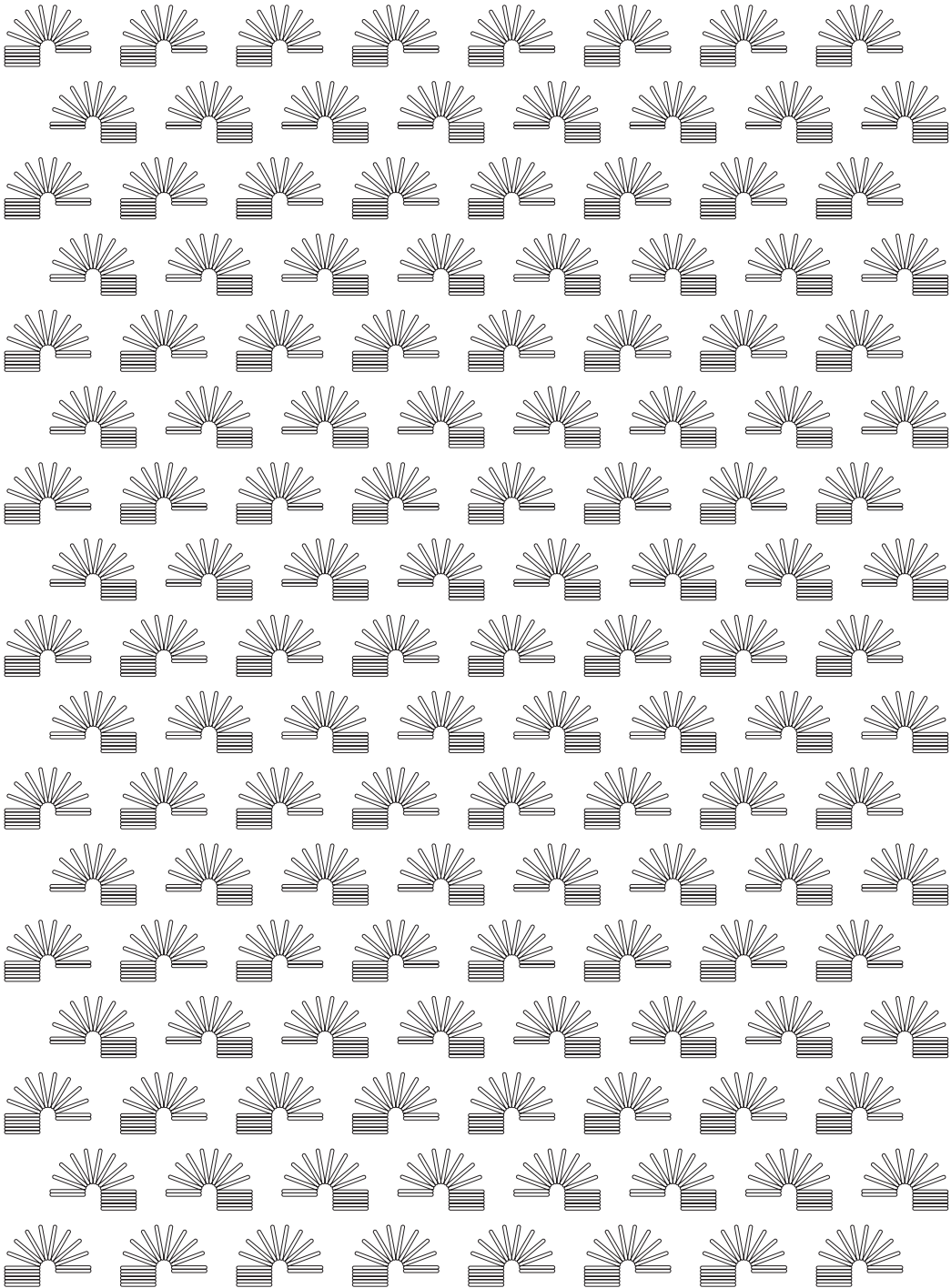
Sabrina SOYER: Artist, lives in Paris

Cristina BOGDAN: Curator, Art Critic, lives in Bucharest

Aurora KIRÁLY: Artist, lives in Bucharest

Emanuel BORCESCU: Artist, lives in Bucharest

Liliana BASARAB: Artist, lives in Bucharest



*[ODD, Indoors, Evening]*

**DELIA POPA:** Yeah, so we thought about doing an exhibition that would not necessarily be representative, but that would kind of take one of each artist that we thought was somehow meaningful for what is going on in Bucharest, and we purposefully chose only women, to show that there is a majority of women, of course it's not only women, but we chose 5 women artists... Raluca Popa, Liliana Basarab, Aurora Király, Ioana Gheorghiu and then myself; and that was a discussion between us and we ended up agreeing that I should also be here although I am curating, and we can talk about it later if you want. We thought that it would be a nice range of mediums as well, and of themes or issues that artists were addressing (...)

**MIHAI IEPURE-GÓRSKI:** I'll just say that in what I do I am particularly analytical and a bit critical as well, so maybe this is the only thing that would recommend me as being the Cluj representative... because I'm not a painter. Still, I'm pretty interested in what's happening around me, in my generation. I'm trying to filter what's happening around me in the work that I do, put it out somehow, respond to it... and to that degree I can be a part of this, also, even though, you are using quite cliché ideas about Cluj and Bucharest - because as you said there's a lot more happening, like there are boys with ideas... and girls with ideas in Cluj... and there are other: boys with paintings... girls with painting... yes there are girls with ideas in Cluj, and girls with paintings... but I think this is a good exercise as it draws a few lines and contextualises things a bit, and it can be helpful in giving direction and kind of a know how for better positioning yourself as an artist. I think it's interesting for artists as well, definitely interesting for me.

**SIMONA VILĂU:** When you first invited me I was thinking that one of the issues of this fracture - because I can call it a fracture - is the Romanian problematic infrastructure. For example, it's very hard to reach Cluj from Bucharest, if you go by train you spend more than one night in a very slow train, and if you want to go by plane the ticket is more expensive than tickets to Berlin or Rome or even Paris. So this is a problem...

**CĂTĂLIN NĂSTĂSOIU:** Not anymore! 25 Euros... it has changed recently...

**SIMONA:** But the same situation is between Bucharest and Timișoara, and

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between Bucharest and Iași, I guess in Romania we have four major artistic centres: Bucharest, Cluj and also Timișoara and Iași. We can't ignore that. It is important that we have this square.

**GILES ELDRIDGE:** But do you feel it's... that, from the outside, that the outside, UK or Berlin, Brussels, whatever, US... that Cluj is perceived in this nominally successful way?

**ANCA POTERAȘU:** Not anymore, in my opinion (...) I came back from [Spinnerei] Leipzig and there [they said:] "Fabrica de Pensule is Spinnerei"... I was invited there, and I am a gallery from Bucharest, not from Cluj, and, before there [had been] Club Electroputere there as well, so yes, they knew Cluj, but also other artists. They said: "Oh, Romania, we know Adrian Ghenie, we know Victor Man, we know... Perjovschi."

**DELIA:** And 3 other female artists...

*[several laughs, all talking]*

**GILES:** You mean... you feel like, from your experience, it's actually changing... from the outside?

**ANCA:** Yes, I go to art fairs, and when I go to art fairs, in the last two years they have been saying... especially the guys from Leipzig said "You know, Cluj is like us, we were on the wave, and now not so much ..." They told me two years ago. But they were laughing and saying: "it was time for Bucharest to be in the spotlight!"

**DELIA:** But Bucharest never had an international reputation.

**ANCA:** Because we didn't have an art market... we've had an art market for a few years... we are moving forward, this is my opinion. For years now, there are good galleries with international programmes.

*[mumbles, general noise]*

**IULIA SIMA:** Maybe I would introduce a bit Olivia [Nițiș] with my observation... My name is Iulia Sima and I'm also an artist, performer... But I'm also a feminist and... what I want to stress is the fact that every time I'm in this kind of gatherings... when I'm surrounded by intellectuals and artists, I find it very

weird that, at this point in time, when this kind of observations are being made, observations that are addressing gender ideas, people in this field are still very reticent... about questioning; I'm not talking about necessarily agreeing upon a situation or an observation that is made, but they are reticent in questioning. We are talking here about a gendered... visibility of women in the art field, and we need to observe this aspect. (...)

DELIA: Yes so, this is the numbers' time... *"I think that this discussion..."* ... if you want one [a text] I can pass it:

DELIA reading OLIVIA NIȚIȘ' text: *"I think that this discussion, focused on gender representation from a comparative approach between Cluj and Bucharest can be the starting point of a broader perspective on gender gaps in various sectors of our contemporary society in general and in the art world in particular. If we take a look at the recent European Index of Gender Equality published in 2015 and covering the period between 2005 and 2012 we find interesting facts that also reflect the situation in the art world today. The index is introducing several categories such as work, economy, education, time, power and health, also including intersectional inequity (age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation) and violence against women. And so we discover without much of a surprise the labour market occupation rate for women in EU" - so I think this is what you were talking about lulia - "is lower than for men".*

- So just the occupation of jobs, how many jobs people have. - *"As well as political power and money, women still having a higher risk to poverty (women work part time jobs more than men, increasing poverty risk). Romania covers gender equality up to 33.7%. Brilliant! Time is not equal either, women continuing to work at home as well, taking full responsibility for domestic activities. In terms of education it seems that the percentage of women with a higher education status has increased, but there are several issues to take into account when discussing gender and education. For instance even though in Romania 90% of students in art are women..." - That's a number, right? 90%. - "... as well as earning the university degree, the university environment (as well as the Romanian Academy) is male dominated, perpetuating the same values, stereotypes and segregation. It is not enough to be educated; one has to look at the mechanisms of the system that shapes education. The progress made in education is not necessarily improving women's positions at work or in their public lives. There are cumulative disadvantages for women leading to social representation gaps and inequity. In an article from 2015 in Art News*



"Inequality endures: the price of being a female artist in 2015" *there is a quote from Georg Baselitz for The Guardian: "The market doesn't lie. Even though the painting classes in art academies are more than 90% made up by women, it's a fact that very few of them succeed. It's nothing to do with education, or chances, or male gallery owners. It's to do with something else and it's not my job to answer why is it so....If women are ambitious enough to succeed, they can do so, thank you very much. But up until now, they have failed to prove that they want to. Normally, women sell themselves well, but not as painters."*

UNKNOWN: ... this is so offensive!

DELIA: Georg Baselitz...

*[people talking, laughing...]*

ANCA: *[inaudible]* ... an exhibition, a woman invited...

SIMONA: I would like to add something. Because it is important to have an overview and also, for the sake of the recent history... if we are talking about Bucharest... mainly about Bucharest, because this is the experience I'm having, I think it's important to make a short revision of the last 25 years. So, I mean... Bucharest has been the capital and the centre, the place where the headquarters of the Fine Artists' Union are, where most artists were enrolled in this Union, so I guess this advantage, of being on the top of the hill, at least as number of people involved, gave a kind of laziness to the context. Most artists here think that they are in the middle of things, even though they are not, if only you studied the facts and the recent history. So, the first private gallery, for example, in Bucharest, H'art, was opened in 2002, 12 years after the revolution were needed for this to happen, so this is...

*[more people talking about who was first... H'art or Galeria de Interese]*

SIMONA: They were, I guess they started in the same time, 2002, 2003, but I mean that the gap from 1989 until 2002 is quite long. Also, if we analyse the public positions, the jobs, the art jobs in Bucharest in the last years, there are mostly men involved, the presidency of the Artists' Union, for example. As members in the committees, there are, or at least were, mostly men, almost only men. The Deans or the Rector of the Art University are also men here in Bucharest. So, of course, it's very important to notice this patriarchal society that we are living in.

**ANCA:** I can tell you, when I was trying to find a job in 2003, '04 , I couldn't find one... and, really, sometimes I felt that the problem was that I was a woman. A friend of mine told me: "Anca, you should use a male perfume when you go for the interview... and don't dress very nicely." Really, I'm serious now, so when I went for the interview... I didn't dress very nicely and I used a male perfume. In the end I found a job, but... it was 14 years ago [laughs], it is not the case anymore. I believe in women who run galleries – there are more and more of them.

**SIMONA:** (...) And also the university should have a role in the art scene, in my opinion, even though here are many discussions if it's good or bad or... not entirely involved, but I guess in every healthy art scene the Art University should have a very well defined role.

**DELIA:** (...) I would like to go back to what Giles was saying, I think it's very important, coming from this project, that we think about this for a moment... what it would mean for Bucharest to create an identity for itself, as an art scene, not as a whole thing... Starting with the idea that there's all these women... it's a city of women artists... and when I say that I also mean male feminist artists, not just women (...) So from the perspective that it could be a feminist, let's say, city, that acknowledges the fact that women can have power, can have different types of statuses and can create a community that also involves the art market, that also involves institutions, that also involves galleries and...

**GILES:** I can maybe describe this as a methodology of diversity...

**DELIA:** Yes, and if we are talking about international success, I think we cannot ignore the art market.

**SIMONA:** Yeah, but if you say success, you mean numbers... or if you put it in another way... fame?

**DELIA:** That's a good question. To me it means, I guess, it means a combination of numbers, of having a position, but it also means creating an environment... To create a collaborative environment, where people support

each other and where we actually make it... we are better together than by ourselves. It's actually constructing something together, and considering this as a feminist position... for me feminism is about collaboration... and it's about feminine values, so humanitarian values... and then... positioning that with the success, how it is defined now... as selling, or being... rank number I don't know what. But that's to each... it's an invitation to think about it, to say what your definition is of success... So maybe someone?

**SABRINA SOYER:** For me (...) I don't consider myself like a woman... I don't really care about gender, concerning myself, I recognise there is a matter of gender... like an epistemological matter, a society matter actually, and I'm really interested in that, but regarding myself... I don't feel like a woman, but I think... the matter for me is "Can I exist with art... without to go at the top of the thing? can I find a way of existing without going at the top of the road... like this kind of idea... ok, there's not here and there, can we maintain a life in the [*inaudible*] as artists... I don't want to go to fairs, I'm not really interested in doing exhibitions in fairs... so I just want to continue to make art... but it's very... The most difficult for me is, really, as you say, to build a community with people (...)

**IULIA:** It's... I don't want to be misunderstood, but when we talk from the feminist point of view, because I also see this misunderstanding, it is not about struggling for positions or access to power, feminism is about making the life of women easier... this is the question.

**MIHAI:** When there is a crisis, when things start to change... that's the critical moment when good stuff happens, when good art can come, usually good art comes out of that. If you take as an example a woman rapper from the UK, Kate Tempest, I don't know anybody else in Britain that writes such piercing lyrics these days, I'm serious. (...) Now going back to Cluj/Bucharest differences: Being in Craiova on a residence at Electroputere for a few weeks I've got the sense that there is a lot happening in the South and particularly Bucharest in so many different places and that what is happening matters in this quite large local scene that manages and regulates itself. Cluj on the other hand is more isolated and most things happen in the same place, or a just few places, Fabrica being one of them. I get the sense that it cannot function as a scene in itself, like Bucharest. And because there are less means, like state gives far less money, there's less state driven things, because there's not so

much money, like national, here you have the National Museum, national that... what I've noticed is that everybody in Cluj is oriented elsewhere, towards the West... so we're looking towards the West. *I don't want to be successful in Cluj... I don't want to be successful in Bucharest... I want to be successful in the West!*

**CRISTINA BOGDAN:** It's more of a black hole here in Bucharest...

**DELIA:** So in the sense of provinciality? self-obsessed? self-occupied?

**CRISTINA:** Self-absorbed... and somehow not really giving a shit about whether you're famous...

**MIHAI:** And it's sort of a paradox you have... Bucharest, even though it's bigger, it's the capital... it's more local, and Cluj wants to be more global.

**CRISTINA:** But... that's also a question of myths as well, because, from the outside... Cluj has maybe a myth as an art scene, but it's no... there's nothing mythical about it - in terms of lifestyle, no one says: "I really want to go and live there", but Bucharest has kind of a myth in terms of lifestyle. I also say that from having lived abroad for a while, I mean Giles and I met abroad, and we both had a myth about Bucharest.

**SIMONA:** I guess one of the differences between the two cities, if you say Cluj you say Fabrica de Pensule, but if you say Bucharest, you don't know what to say...

**GILES:** Exactly...

*[more people talking]*

**AURORA KIRÁLY:** I'm Aurora Király, *[inaudible]* and first of all.. I feel a little bit that the discussion is going on a sideline... women and men... gender... I didn't feel it that way, and also the project, I think it was softer and had this playfulness which...

**GILES:** ... different things were emerging? Yes.

**AURORA:** ... and I took it... I was especially interested in this playful side, to reflect on these things and the differences between these two contexts...

what I admire and appreciate in Cluj, and what might be the problem in Bucharest. Problem... maybe I didn't choose the right word... But I thought that because in Bucharest the scene is larger, and very fragmented, as many of you mentioned, I don't like this lack of communication, which I think is also in Cluj but from outside, from Bucharest we can't see this. So, in a way we were quite envious of the fact that the artists from Cluj can have this community from Fabrica and people can leave the egos outside and think of the common goal (...) Recently I understood that is not quite like that and there are frictions too. Ten years ago I think the young artists from Cluj positioned themselves like a tank, I see it like that. So "we have this, we are good at this..." ... and even they were... they have their own problems or discussions or... those kind of fragmented opinions... So, yeah, that's why I think they are perceived by this school of painting and this successful commercial... which many young artists admire very much... when they are in their first years at university... and you go to the students' exhibitions and see this kind of Cluj painting... because... even here... they took it like a success.

**ANCA:** If you dream to be a good artist, you dream to be international, but you have to work [*people talking*]. I'm talking about the power and money, [*inaudible*] ... [*to Sabrina*] Where are you from?

**SABRINA:** From Paris. But we meet the same... the same matters. (...) I mean we all fight to be international.

**ANCA:** The Romanian art context makes us fight more – we are more under pressure so we fight and we double our efforts. A gallerist [at Spinnerei in Leipzig] told me: "We are lazy here, you are not – you work and you make contacts...," and he was not talking about me, he was referring to galleries from the Eastern Europe and about the stream of successful young art from this area. It is all about the fight and perseverance.



**MIHAI:** ... When money comes to you, when you make art and because of that you make money, you have the chance to live, you have the chance to produce work and I have artists friends that have published recently catalogues full of works made in the last two years... I have 10 works in the

last two years...

DELIA: I have 3.

MIHAI: So what I'm trying to say is that... it's good to be an idealist, it's great, we all want to do that, and actually I have this text, this funny text... It's called *Artists are no big deal* and it's an insult towards artists that I wrote, it's...

DELIA: ... No, I like that! I want to talk about that...

MIHAI: ... and one of the things I wrote is: Artists play left... no, *Artists make corporate money, but play leftists*. You know that drawing by Perjo[vschi] with a conceptual artist on a bench in the park supposedly at work? That's my dream.

CRISTINA: I moved to Bucharest to escape the terror of the market, it's so boring to submit to it.

GILES: ... if I am [*inaudible*]... Cabaret Voltaire... [*inaudible*] that much money...

DELIA: ... it is now!

GILES: ... with the DADA...

EMANUEL BORCESCU: But is the market a terror?

CRISTINA: There's no point in becoming just one more art market. I mean it's so ridiculous, the Western model is completely failed, so why are we so willing to fall into the same trap?

[*everyone talking*]

LILIANA BASARAB: ... poverty... precarity...

EMANUEL: ... a cliché... market is a terror...

CRISTINA: There's a massive difference between using the model of the market and then thinking of precarity as an aesthetics. There's two different things, it doesn't have to be either this or that. I think it's worth advocating for

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finding the model that's different that absolutely doesn't copy anything and doesn't use the market. It doesn't mean that we don't want to live well. I want to live well! It's not that... but it's just... different things...

**LILIANA:** ... It's not about just taking the capitalist model, but acknowledge that... being focused on something, and having more funds, or like... allow yourself to work more hours per day for a project will build more coherent projects, instead... what I see from Bucharest, is that there is a fluidity that... I cannot quite... see as interesting, but it's like...

**CRISTINA:** But there's also...

**LILIANA:** ... There is this lack of...

**MIHAI:** ... consistency.

**CRISTINA:** ... But it's also professionalism. I mean this is more interesting, I guess, than a different discussion. For example, in Cluj there are professional artists, and here much less, and even the level of the conversation between professionals in the field doesn't go very high... and I'm working here for two years almost. I feel like there's a lack of professionalism, not just that people are not full-time artists, but where they are artists, they're not fully professionalised, they don't treat you right, they don't keep their word, they don't work according to the fucking contract (...)

**IULIA:** (...) And I want... just want to... stress that... professional is also a capitalist...

**CRISTINA:** But also there's a difference like, this woman from Greece who came over during this past month, and she was saying she'd been a few months in Bucharest, she said "you know, this amazing thing that's in Bucharest, that you have artists who are also curators, or also critics, or also this and also that...", and it's true in a way, she said "I have not seen this before...", specifically in Bucharest people doing a whole range of things... so in a way maybe there's a bit like... maybe less professionalism, but also more inclusive kind of, I mean it's a different way of looking at the job... Born probably of precarity, as you say, but it's something specific.

ANCA: It's about developing a good project and being all the time active. We [Anca Poterașu Gallery] started to be visible. It's about working and it's about time. This is my opinion. I think that if everyone works well, I think that in the next 5 years, in 10 or 20 years we will develop. Hopefully, I am still a gallerist at 60.

CAT: Hi, I'm not an artist, thank you very much, you know, I feel very blessed... with this situation...

DELIA: You're not an artist? Are you sure?

CAT: Well, no. I think it's... From all the stories that I heard... I hear Anca saying: "I went to get a job and I dressed up for it and I used a male perfume"... that's a character. You need to have that presence to do that... to surpass the moment, she [Anca] says: "you know, I'm in this business for"- business, whatever, activity... I don't want to, you know... offend anybody with the word *business* – [people laughing] but to... wow! I mean... I think we have these expectations for a very young... what should I call it... art scene, it's very young!

ANCA: This is what I said. This is my opinion.

CAT: It takes time. And this... you know, this moment right now is just a little dot on a timeline... and you have a very good question, you know... and you use the word "identity", I would use the word "character"... Because a character, whether it's a bad character or a good character it's memorable in any kind of story. You don't label somebody with a brand or something... an identity, you create a character... [to Cristina] You said something beautiful... that somebody noticed that here artists are curators, and artists are... accountants and... that's a character. Take that and make it the Bucharest character. I'm very excited of what's happening here in Bucharest. As I'm excited of what's happening in Cluj, they are two different characters. They're two different characters.

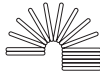
DELIA: But we *are* characters. What... why are we...

CAT: Yeah, but we want to be *one character*. You know what success is? If you're thirsty, you drink water, that's success... When you become the water



for the society, they will drink you and say: "Ah, I need some more, I need some more Fabrica de Pensule, I need some more of this!" But those are models, and every model is built to be... to be commodified into something else, developed (...) I think what's happening now it's so fantastic. When was such effervescence in the artistic scene in Bucharest in the last 100 years? really? (...) I think there were two very good points here... right? Ethics... do we have them?

**ANCA:** Munca și etica!



**MIHAI:** (...) Aurora was speaking about the fact that Cluj, when they came out, they came out as a tank, and it's true, and also we're not speaking of Cluj of any time, we're speaking of Cluj at some point in time and a particular generation. I'm not part of that generation, I'm younger. So it was a generational point and it's very accurate what she underlined. Take a look what they had: they had a magazine that was very well respected internationally, Balkon/IDEA. There were also the Hungarians with their cultural background and activity. There you have a difference that creates crisis, but a constructive crisis... it was a whole situation. Then there was/ is (Casa) Tranzit, Protokol, Plan B later and so on. Artists, curators, gallerists, critics. And if you look even further back you see professors, you see artists, you see painters (the masters)... and all those guys. What I'm trying to say is that I don't think an identity can be made artificially... you cannot program an identity. The Fabrica de Pensule identity created itself to a large extent as a result of something genuine happening and generating context. Right now, when Fabrica is in crisis, it's quite interesting that it is internally trying to create and identity for itself. This is a sign of crisis. (...) On the other hand, here in Bucharest...and I also like what Anca said, that what you have is a moment of hope. And I am naive, idealistic, but I think that when you're talking about something... something is about to happen... so... an emergency... urgency. I believe that the time of women is now and the time of Bucharest is coming.

*[all talking]*

**AURORA:** There are some things which I really appreciate about the group from Cluj and I learned a lot from them. I am thinking of their work ethics... Even the young artists, they are working hard [*inaudible*], they go to the

studio and they work, even they don't earn like others, or they don't have the same success in terms of money... But, the fact that they produce art, works, objects... and I put this together with what Liliana said, that here sometimes works are diffused and might arrive after 5 years.

**SIMONA:** I would like to add... Not necessarily about Cluj, but some thoughts on our topic. I guess we should focus more on the similarities of the two, and not see only the adversity. Because, if we try to build - I will use some common words - *bridges* between different centres, be them Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Timișoara, and if the artists migrate from one to another, and if the curators take a look outside their desks, things should be more flexible. And about work and work ethics... which also for me are a very important, very controversial subject, and I mean ethics of the institutions we are collaborating to, or ethics of our colleague, of our collaborator, whatever, this is the most important objective, that we should focus more on values, on classical values, such as trying to fill the gaps that are missing, trying to raise the art scene, to make it grow mature, and, of course, it's very important to have strong feminist positions, to have strong left discourses, to have strong political views in the art field, and also to help the newest artists to start, to have their first exhibitions (...) and I don't think this continuous drama of being a Romanian and being in Bucharest and being in a Balkanic area or... not being in the West are our main issues. Our main issue is, I guess, the lack of having things done, having things finished and following up and continuing with the same energy, year after year. It's about resistance, it's about stubbornness, you have to be very stubborn to be an artist (...) The artist shouldn't go in the studio and think "I want to make a successful piece of art". This is so stupid! ... to have to make, to create, to produce a successful piece of art - this is so counter-productive, it creates depression, anxiety, and failure in the end. It's too complicated, but sometimes, even in school, students are trained to be successful, which is not the point, in my opinion, we have to work on evolving the level of the system.

**DELIA:** Don't you agree that we have to define success? We can have different definitions...

**SIMONA:** No, I don't care about success, really... I'm also idealistic, but success is a thing of our century, of the 21st century.

Fete cu idei [Băieți și picturi]

MIHAI: It depends how you define it...

DELIA: But it's a word, and I can use it in different ways...

SIMONA: I guess it's a new word... I'm not sure if Baroque painters were successful... I'm not sure that (...) this is a matter of the modern world, of the contemporary world, this success.

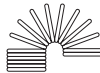
*[people talking]*

DELIA: So if you're in Manchester... it's raining... everybody is sad...

CAT: ... Outside with my electric guitar... electrocute myself...

DELIA: Thank you very much! And live from Bucharest... ! We can continue for a drink, if anybody wants to go for a drink...

*[people talking]*





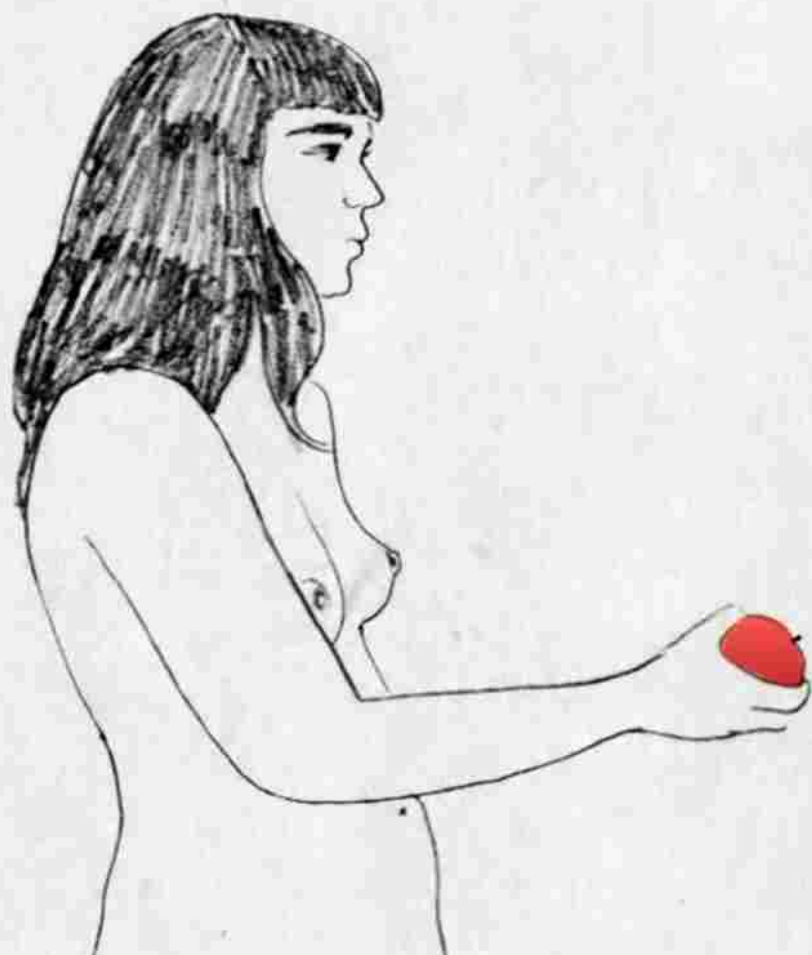
# EXHIBITION





next pages | Liliana BASARAB, *Adam & Eve / NeverEnding Chances*, 2009, video still,  
in collaboration with Costel CHIRILĂ, animation, colour and sound, 30 seconds loop









• înșirinat → metode de securitate → de prestabilitate

↳ ex: ~~...~~ metode de a-ți creșterea viitorului & opun  
vârândului  
sau

## CAHENIU NU CRED ÎN SOARTĂ

⇒ e în mare măsură scuze de-a răgușit care le  
caușia caușit

⇒ 1) evitarea vaguității & contribuțiile la înfruntarea  
și la <sup>impresia</sup> lor  
câ SUNT ÎN  
CONFID

## 2) CE OFERĂ PRECIZIT & CLASIFICAT

• scrierile dezvoltă principii & idei  
dezvolta concepțe  
dezvolta categori & construcție sociale

IV CLARITATE ȘI GRUPURĂ

↓

CONFLICT

genera pt. marea masula

VAGUITATE



EXHIBITION VIEWS





next pages | Aurora KIRÁLY, *Viewfinders*, 2016,  
2 table top objects, drawing, cardboard, photography









Shirley, 1937



Bela, 1933





*Debate Performance* with Anda PRUNEA and Mihai MORAR  
by Ioana GHEORGHIU



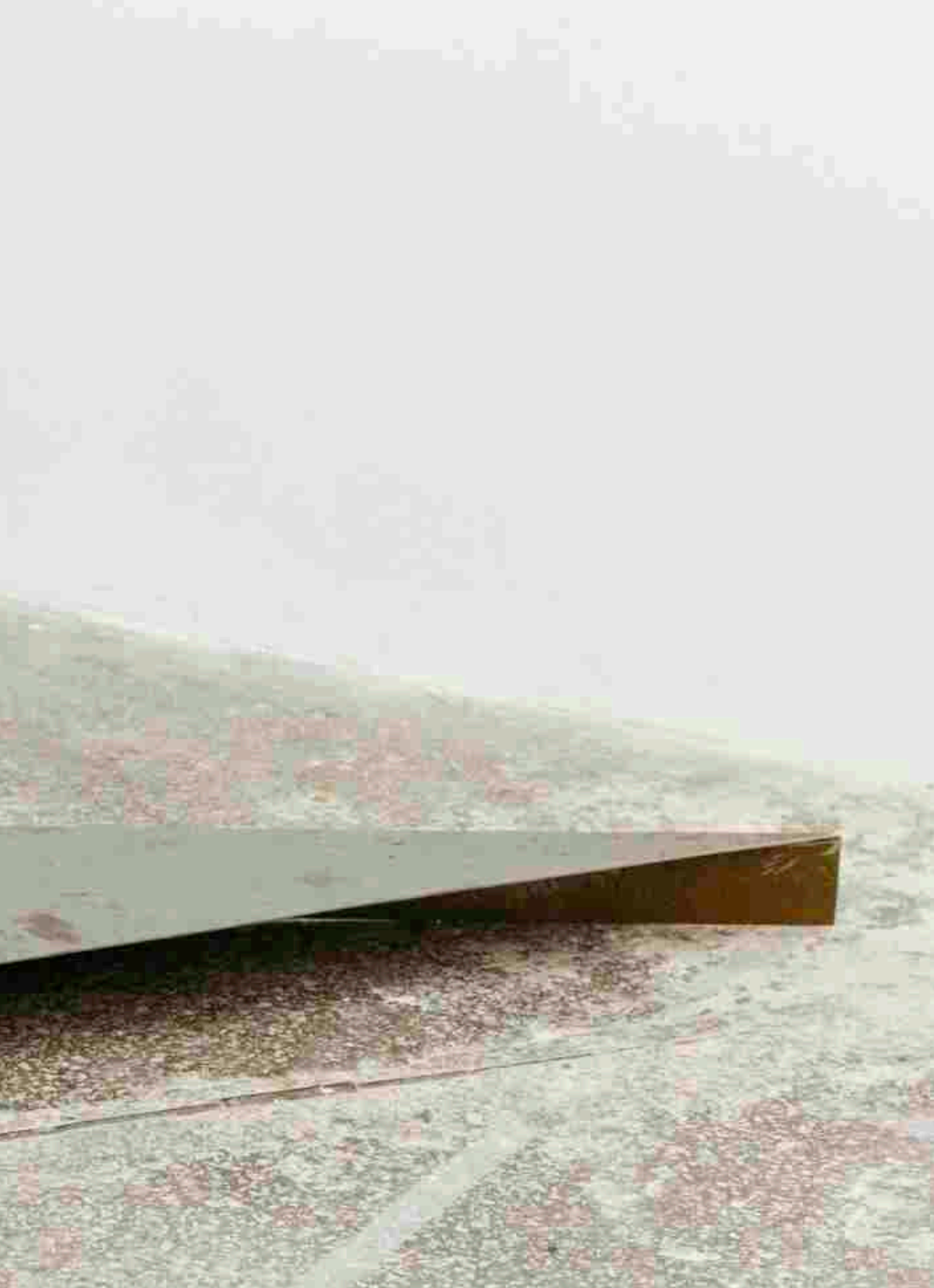
*Rehearsal*, video by Liliana BASARAB



Guided Tour for pupils from Avram Iancu High School







Fete cu idei [Băieți și picturi]



## ROUND TABLE 1

Fabrica de Pensule, CLUJ







Fete cu idei [Băieți și picturi]





## ROUND TABLE 2

ODD, BUCHAREST







THANK YOU:

Dragoș Bădiță, Cristina Curcan, Lucian Indrei, Anamaria Stroia,  
Cristina Marian, Ștefan Pop, Luna Sommerset, Rodrigo Korkovsky,  
Victor Flueraș, Corina Bucea, Roland Váczi, Daria Ghiu, Cosmin Năsui,  
Marilena Preda Sânc, Florin Stoiciu, Cristina Bogdan, Raluca Voinea

AND THE GUESTS OF THE ROUNDTABLES:

CLUJ: Ioana Iacob, Oana Fărcaș, Mara Rațiu, Dragoș Bădiță, Diana Marincu  
BUCHAREST: Anca Poterașu, Simona Vilău, Olivia Nițiș, Mihai Iepure-Górski

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