

## Long Distance Relationship

*LDRs are qualitatively different from geographically close relationships; that is, relationships in which the partners are able to see each other, face-to-face, most days.*

The Long Distance Relationship exhibition is conceived in a geographic, political, cultural, historical, linguistic and personal remoteness. It is the result of a series of exchanges, decisions, unforeseen events and transitional conclusions that problematizes the unknown and the togetherness, the filiation and the disruption. How does distance transform our modes of communication, impacting the practical realities of collaboration? How does it fabricate and shift the perceptions, prejudices, fantasies, imaginations, memories or stories we tell ourselves about the others?

After a first occurrence in Pristina, the exhibition crystalizes a new moment of encounter and forms a temporary community of things, thoughts, and voices that communicate in a specific place. On this common ground the distance becomes proximity.

For this exhibition Driton Selmani produced two artworks dealing with identity and travel, folklore and irony. On one hand, floating like a ghostly presence, the flag Reality Check, that was once proudly standing in Pristina, delivers a distorted message. Between poetry, caustic humor and brutal reality, it summons a wish to escape, to go to this fantasized and dreamlike country. On the other hand, the limited edition ZigZag represents an imaginary journey from Pristina to the providential Swiss mountains as Rodolphe Töpffer pictured them in 1844. By superposing sources, eras and places, fictions and facts, Driton Selmani creates a passport for uncertain states of being. The legal document becomes the spooky theater of political riots, including a protest held in Zurich in September 2018 against prices rising for flights to Pristina. Facts are replaced by the artist's sharp sarcasm as he turns reality into a vast fantasy playground.

In dialogue, the fictional relic of an anonymous artist from Kosovo emerges on the wall. Beuys on sale stands as the imprint of an elusive distance.

The Dissidents are fantasy characters escaping gender definitions and expressing attitudes of rebellion, anger, and disobedience. Meyrat's drawings are conveying childish gestures and ambiguous forms as a way to resist. With Shut up/actually talk!, Nastasia Meyrat invites us to get closer, to squat and listen. In a grotesque and political shout, the ear speaks to us on the importance of paying attention and the value of listening as a practice. Shut up/actually talk! is a statement about dominance, snobbery, dissidence, self-conscience, which is an echo to a performance from Chiara Fumai. The words of the Italian artist mingle with Meyrat, Valerie Solanas, Valie Export and others. Political thoughts resonate from the past to the present within the exhibition space.

Gina Proenza's installation was born of the idea of creating a space of one's own anywhere. How to be able to transport a personal place, how can it be removable and constantly adjusted? Nostalgie en pantoufles is a mechanical piece that evokes a transcultural and transhistorical collective game. Its meanings come out of our presence/absence, our temptation or fear to jump in. By simply connecting two distant points, the rope creates a space within the space.

Dardan Zhegrova's video I kissed your kiss on your girlfriend's cheek, it was still wet speaks about love. It's a poem, the dreamy

narration of an impossible relationship. The work is born of an intimate collaboration with the film director Samuel Weniger met in Zurich. A connection built within the distance of spaces and feelings, a flow of waterproof desire.

Born out of this encounter, the character Lucky Pierre became an ongoing live poetry project. During the opening, Zhegrova will perform Lucky Pierre: How can I trust someone named Lucky.

For Will They Won't They, Anaïs Wenger questions our ways of projecting. What do we perceive from afar with a glimpse at someone's life through a window. Using "coming of age" movies from the 90's, she creates pure impressions out of fluid monochromes – a synthesis of all colors of each shot. Like a tinted memory, we become viewer of abstract narratives recollecting our own childhood or adolescence. Reconnecting with her generation, she provides new Albanian subtitles to be shared on the Internet.

With Apologise for my breath, I am biking, Doruntina Kastrati questions the distance within proximity, evokes the feeling of a whispered speech. For this project, she invited the artist Lori Lako to a long-distance collaboration. They created a four-hand work, without touching each other. "Let's keep in touch; Le te ngelemi ne prekje". And the incarnation of the absence imprints on images and words. In the work, only remains the unpredictable and volatile breath of a voice message sent throughout the rush of the daily life.

Long Distance Relationship has been an exhibition in the making. Waiting to be redefined in and by another context, to be transformed, translated transported elsewhere.

Curated by Gabrielle Boder and Tadeo Kohan

ET-Espace Témoin, Geneva, Switzerland  
November 14 – December 1, 2019

The first stage of the show has been presented in Motrat, Pristina, Kosovo  
October 12 – November 3, 2019  
Curated with Yll Rugova and Fanny-Alma Serée

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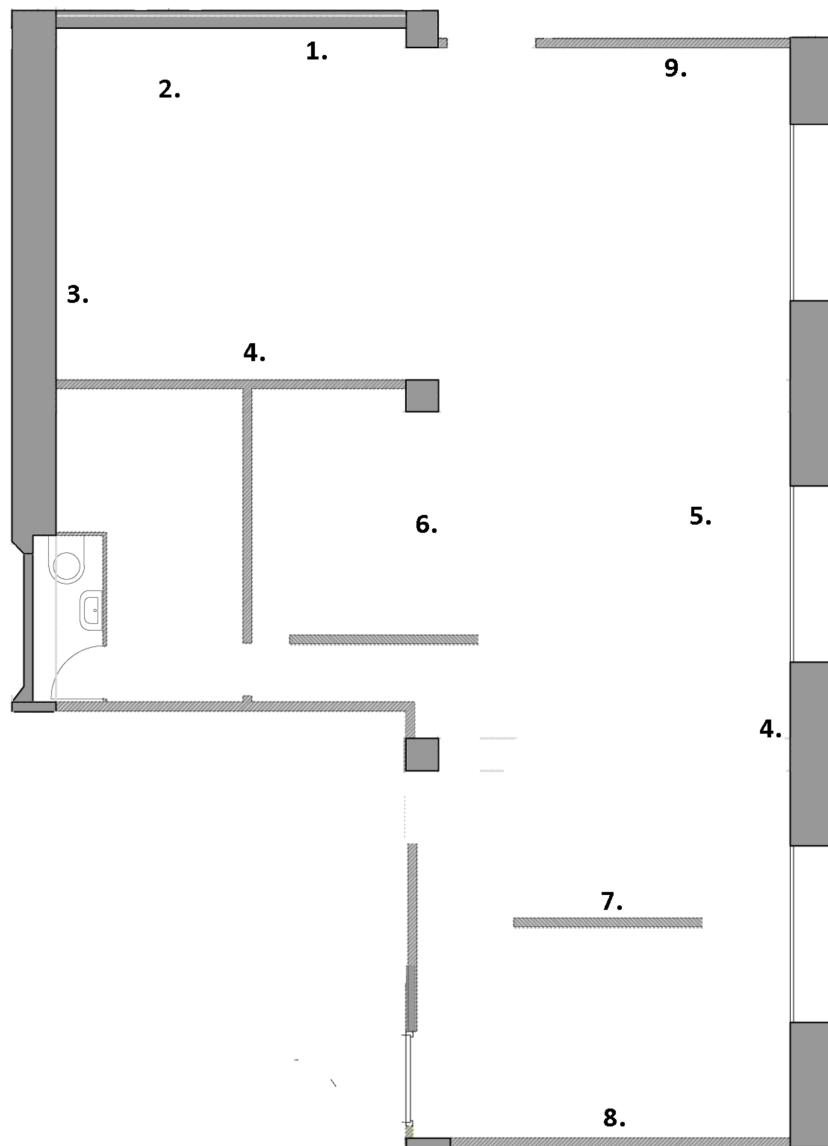
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**Driton Selmani**

1. *ZigZag*, 2019

2. *Reality Check*, 2019

**Anonymous artist**

3. *Beuys on sale*, 2017

**Nastasia Meyrat**

4. *The Dissidents*, 2019

5. *Shut up/actually talk!*, 2019

**Gina Proenza**

6. *Nostalgie en pantoufles*, 2019

**Dardan Zhegrova & Samuel Weniger**

7. *I kissed your kiss on your girlfriend's cheek, it was still wet*, 2016

Musique : Trio Heiz Herbert

**Anaïs Wenger**

8. *Will They Won't They*, 2019

Collaboration technique : Julio Perez

**Doruntina Kastrati & Lori Lako**

9. *Apologise for my breath, I am biking*, 2019