

RU Exhibition

Familiar Fantoms: Agrina Vllasaliu, Alma Gačanin and Glorija Lizde, Curated by Veronika Molnár

KODA/RU House 404B, Colonels Row, Governors Island

On view: May 14-28th 2023

Opening: May 13th 2023, Performance: May 28th 2023



*Left to Right, Veronika Molnár, Agrina Gačanin,
Agrina Vllasaliu and Glorija Lizde*

Familiar Fantoms

Growing up in the aftermath of the Yugoslav Wars, Young Visual Artists Awards (YVAA) artists Agrina Vllasaliu, Alma Gačanin, and Glorija Lizde explore how collective, intergenerational, and personal memories of war have shaped their identities and family histories. The exhibition title references Slavenka Drakulic's essay, *My Father's Pistol* (1991), in which a familiar phantom, a long-forgotten ghost of war, resurfaces when she first holds her father's Beretta. In the works on view, all kinds of ghosts haunt the viewer: the land that keeps score of the battles that scarred its surface, the home abandoned before it could ever be inhabited, and the raincoat carrying the weight of history.

Notions of belonging, migration, and nationhood are brought together in poetic meditations via photography, video, installation, and text. Presented in the United States for the first time on Governors Island, a former military base, the site-specific iterations by Vllasilu, Gačanin, and Lizde create a dialogue with the built environment where the specters of history are ever present. With a war currently waging in Europe, the fabric of another society is torn, and all-too-familiar ghosts of the past return to pose the same questions again.



Opening reception, May 13th 2023 on Governors Island

Works on view by Alma Gacanin



"Yellow Raincoat", digital print on photo glossy paper, video, (sound, 3:12min), yellow tarpaulin, 2021, Installation at Governors Island



"Workshop", video animation (sound, 2:29min), archival photographs, sink with grease, 2021

Works on view by Agrina Vllasaliu



"The Ice Palace", video (silent, 5:19min), 2022



"Thaumatrope", digital photograph, 2022

Works on view by Glorija Lizde



"Fearless Youth", archival pigment print on Hahnemühle paper, digital print on adhesive paper, archival photograph, text, video, (silent, 12:24min)

Live performance and reading, May 28th



Agrina Vllasaliu and Glorija Lizde performing



Agrina Vllasaliu, Glorija Lizde, Alma Gacanin, Veronika Molnar with RU Executive Director Nathalie Anglés and RU Alumni Judit Kis and RU Artist Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow



Visitors listening to the live reading on Governors Island

About Alma, Glorija, Agrina and Veronika



Alma Gačanin (b. 1988, Sarajevo) is the winner of the 2022 ZVONO Art Award for Young Visual Artist in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Alma Gačanin is an artist, poet, and feminist whose practice is based on researching the specifics of labor and the precariousness of certain professions for which she attended professional training. She is particularly interested in value theory, biopolitics, and social reproduction. Alma Gačanin explores the link between artistic practice and earning a living through drawing and performance.



Glorija Lizde (b.1991., Croatia) is an artist working with staged photography. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Film and Video from the Academy of Arts Split and her Master's in Photography from the Academy of Dramatic Art in Croatia. Her work has been shown in both group and solo exhibitions. Lizde's works are part of private and public collections. She is the recipient of the Radoslav Putar Award 2022 for the best young contemporary artist in Croatia as well as the recipient of Dr. Éva Kahán Foundation artist in residency program 2022.



Agrina Vllasaliu (b. 1990, Pristina) combines various materials and media such as painting, photography, video, installation, and sculpture. Her current approaches to art go hand in hand with her studies in the field of geography at Humboldt University (Berlin). Agrina's interests focus on migration, individual and collective conceptions of identities, and the transmission of cultural practices and narratives from a feminist perspective. As a bilingual child of parents that migrated from Kosovo, she explores the boundaries between home and homeland, identities and cultures.



Veronika Molnár (b. 1996, Budapest) is a curator and writer currently based in Budapest. She has been the Artistic Director of Liget Gallery, one of Budapest's longest-standing nonprofit galleries, since November 2022.

Molnar received her MA in Art History from Hunter College, the City University of New York, in 2021 with the support of the Fulbright grant. Her research interests lie at the intersection of artistic activism and environmental justice; her curatorial and writing practice currently focuses on artists and collectives who have been engaging with the topic of the planetary climate crisis.