

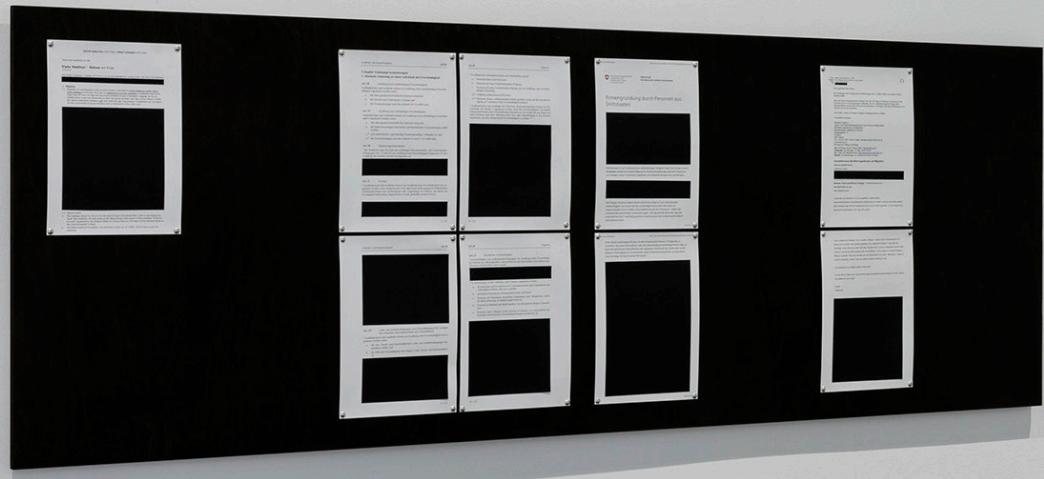
Oleksandr Holiuk

Selected Works



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Installation view, Swiss Art Awards, Hall 1.1 Messe Basel, 2025





Conditions I, 2025

A bouquet of 96 red carnations, each corresponding to an uncompensated labour hour spent producing this show

The works on display examine the conditions of my participation in the Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize—an award intended for young artists who live in Switzerland—from the perspective of artistic labour and immigration law.

There are three works on display at the booth: Conditions I—a bouquet of ninety-six red carnations, Conditions II—a black plywood board with clippings from the Swiss immigration law, as well as from my correspondence with the immigration office of the Canton Basel, and Conditions III—my expired residency permit.

One of my aims with these works is to critique the downgrading of artistic labour to non-labour in the context of artistic competitions, but also in broader societal and legal contexts.

To do this, I use the Swiss immigration law and its provisions related to work permits. Ninety-six red carnations comprising Conditions I—a sentimental nod to the past organised labour struggles of the 20th century—each represent an hour of unpaid labour spent producing my submission for this competition. Precisely because this labour is unpaid, as elaborated in the fragment from an email thread in Conditions II, a work visa requirement has been waived for me and I was able

Conditions II, 2025

Stained plywood, laser prints on recycled paper, steel tacks

to come to Switzerland as a tourist in order to work on my submission.

Another aspect of the Swiss migration law relevant to artistic work which I quote in Conditions II is the provisions regarding the issuance of a long-term work residency permit. Under the Foreign Nationals and Integration Act (FNIA), to extend my stay after graduating from a Swiss university with a master's degree in art, I can only secure salaried employment (Art. 18 FNIA) as an artist. Furthermore, my artist's wage should be customary for my 'location, profession and sector' (Art. 22(1a)), which Visarte—a union for visual artists in Switzerland—recommends at a rate of 90 CHF per hour.

The closest implementation of the concept of wages for artists was achieved only in the Netherlands (BKR scheme between 1949 and 1987) and in Sweden (State Income Guarantee for Artists between 1976 and 2010). Because no such scheme exists in Switzerland, and I have earned no income from producing art since graduation, I was unable to secure an extension of my stay. My last Swiss residency permit expired in March.

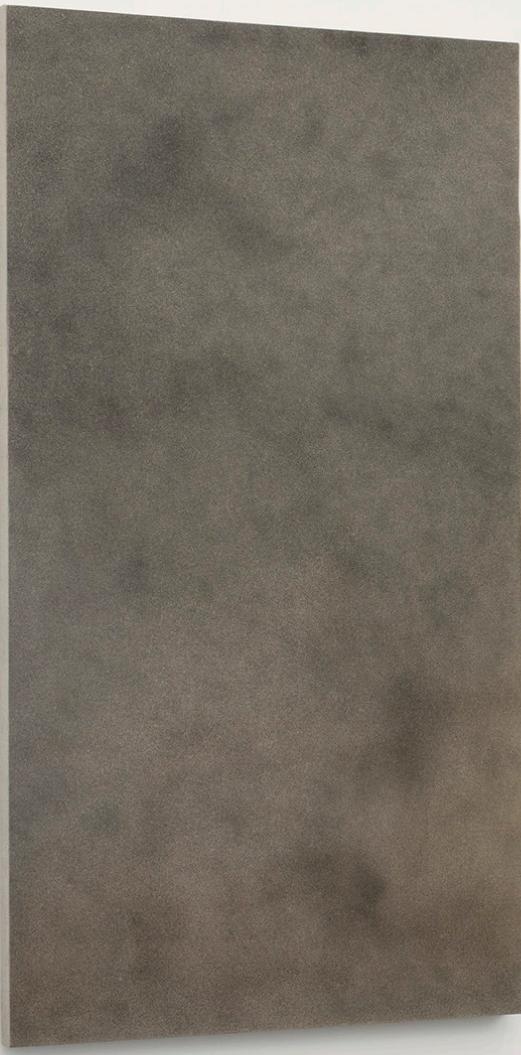
Ironically, if the email thread quoted earlier views artistic labour as non-labour due to the lack of income, the provisions of the FNIA quoted above

Conditions III, 2025

My expired Swiss residency permit

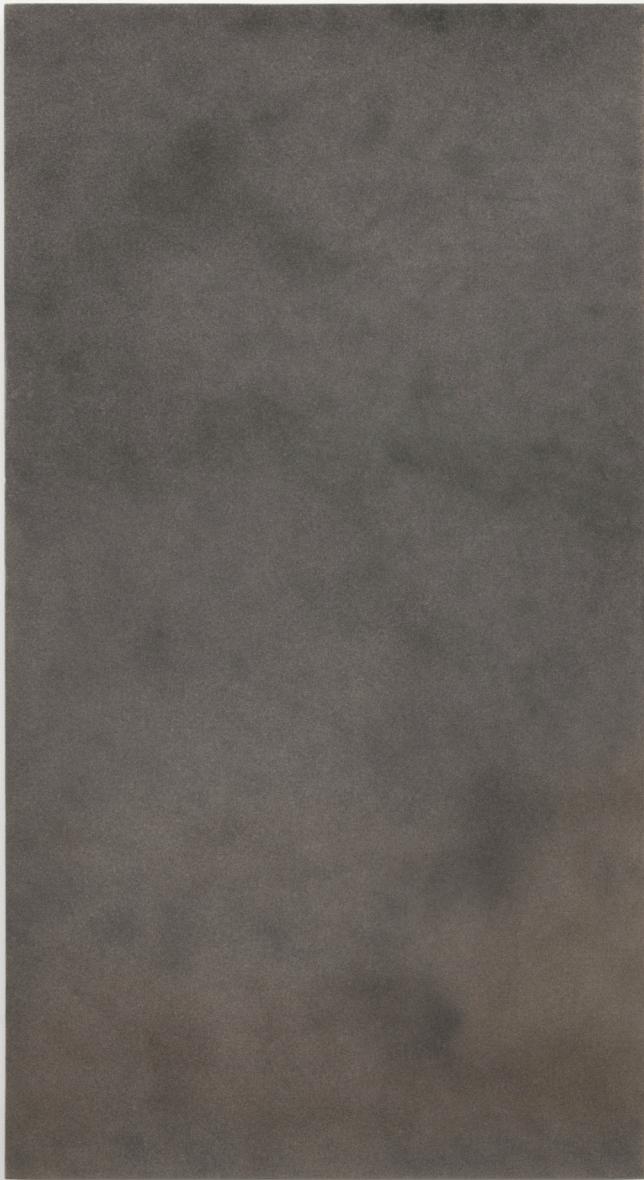
stipulate the necessity of a wage as the only condition for the issuance of a work permit.

More broadly, though, my works at the Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize try to reveal the material and bureaucratic reality of sustaining a living as an artist in a Western European country, particularly for someone with a non-EU passport.



Class Portrait I, 2024

Leftover oil on linen of all non-EU/EFTA resident
painters from my class, stretched to the dimensions
of Maja Hoffmann's Mansfield St. house entry door,
84x45.6 inches

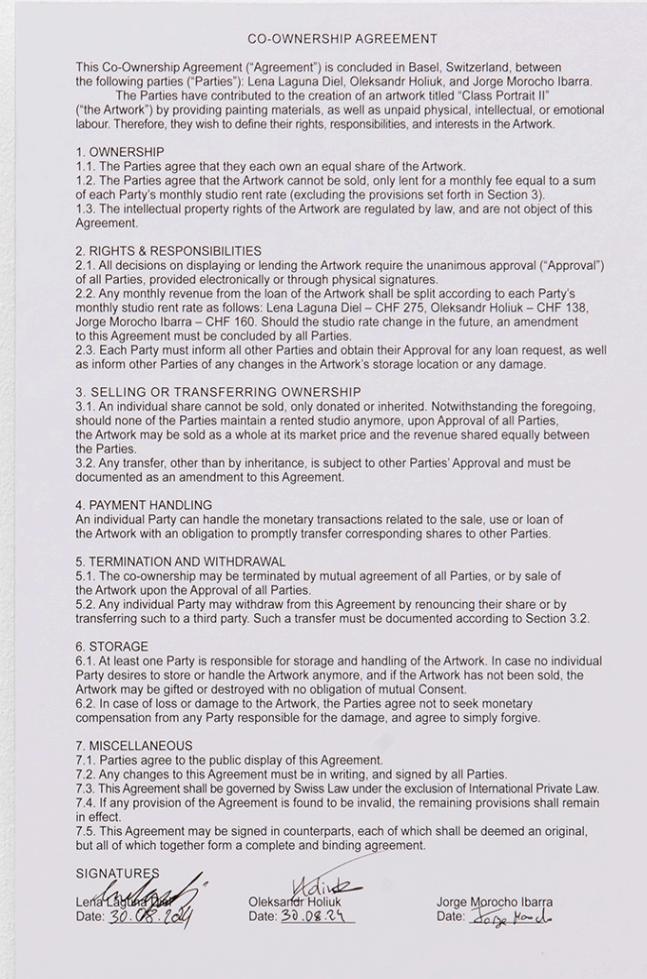
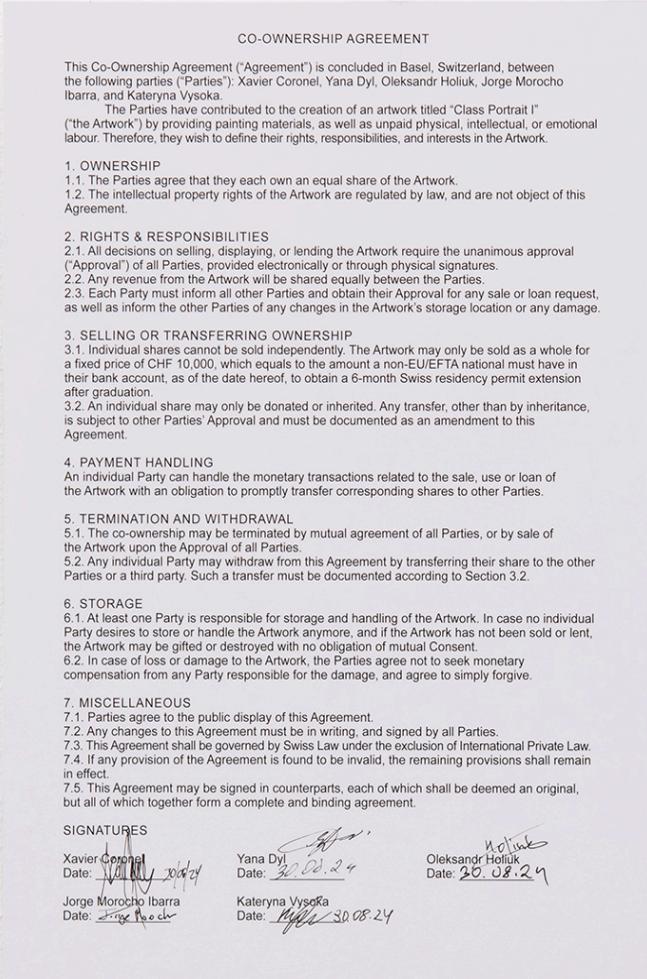


Class Portrait II, 2024

Leftover oil on linen of all painters from my class,
whose parents' income is less than average in their
country of origin, stretched to the dimensions
of Maja Hoffmann's Mansfield St. house entry door,
84x45.6 inches



Laser-printed signed contracts, 210x297mm each

[Read](#)

This work was made for and shown at Kunsthause Baselland during the graduation exhibition of the Institute Art Gender Nature in September 2024.

It features two large paintings, the dimensions of which precisely match the entry door of one of Maja Hoffman's London properties—a heritage house in central London designed in the late 18th century by the Adam brothers, famed British neoclassical architects who built for the emerging bourgeoisie.

The paintings are made using leftover oil paint collected from my classmates. The paint was turned into fine dust and applied to canvas. The dust consists of brightly coloured particles that—when viewed from afar—form a grey monochrome surface.

The paint was collected according to a specific rule: for the first painting, I could only use paint from classmates who are non-EU/EFTA residents; for the second, only from classmates who self-reported as coming from low-income backgrounds.

Both of these groups are virtually barred from participating in Western art education due to strict economic and immigration restrictions. Most European and Swiss art schools end up admitting only those non-EU students who come from wealth.¹²³

The resulting paint material was scarce, as only a few classmates matched these criteria: four non-EU students and two from a low-income household, out of a total of 26 MA students graduating in 2024.

These structural conditions are fundamental to the political message of my work, further elaborated in the contract agreements titled 'Terms'.

The resulting paintings are named 'Class Portrait I' and 'Class Portrait II'.

Besides the paintings, two plaques with printed text are placed at a height of 120cm—a wheelchair-accessible height for wall texts. The texts are contract agreements signed between the paint contributors and me, outlining the collective ownership of the paintings, as well as the rules of their market circulation.

'Class Portrait I' can only be sold for 10,000 CHF, the amount required for a single non-EU/EFTA student to extend their legal stay in Switzerland for 6 months beyond graduation day; otherwise, they would have to leave the country immediately.

'Class Portrait II' cannot be sold; it can only be rented for a sum equivalent to the combined monthly studio rent of the contributing painters (CHF 573/mo).

'Terms' is an attempt at a structural alteration of our fucked up conditions, a DIY parasite worm integrated into the art circulation circuits to offset the absence of the material conditions of possibility. Is it—to borrow from late Marina Vishmidt—an 'infrastructural critique' of a world we hate so much, yet cannot escape.

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1. Vögele, S. (2023). Art.School.Differences: Exclusion through Inclusion. Available at: <https://blog.zhdk.ch/artschooldifferences/en/schlussbericht/>

(Accessed: 17 December 2024).

2. Rothmüller, B. (2010). BewerberInnen-Befragung am Institut für bildende Kunst 2009. Wien.

3. Rothmüller, B., Saner, P., Sonderegger, R., and Vögele, S. (2016). Kunst. Kritik. Bildungsgerechtigkeit: Überlegungen zum Feld der Kunstausbildung. Basel: Beltz Juventa, pp. 89–105.

Mom, 2023 & Dad, 2023

Art school merchandise keychains,
US Department for Immigration and Customs
Enforcement Lanyards



Installation view, Kunsthalle Basel, 2023



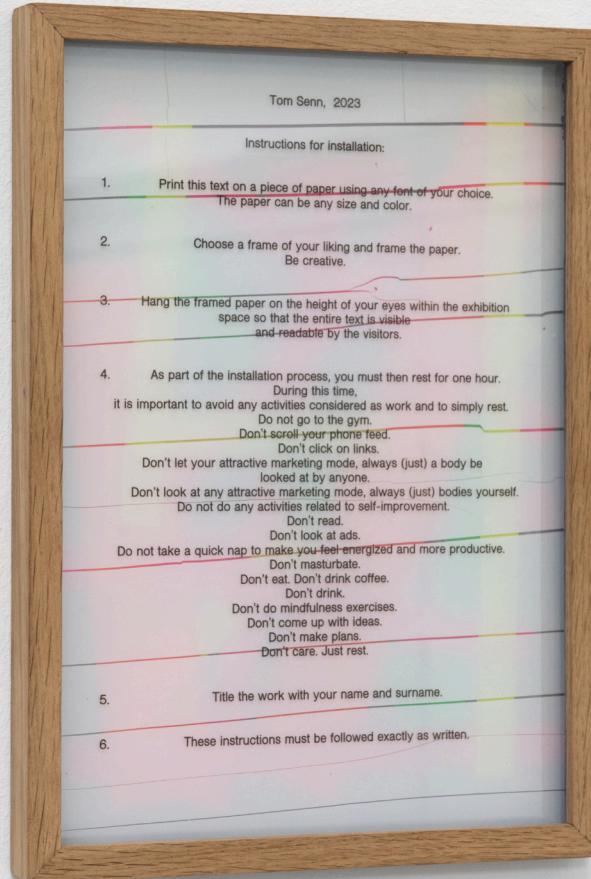
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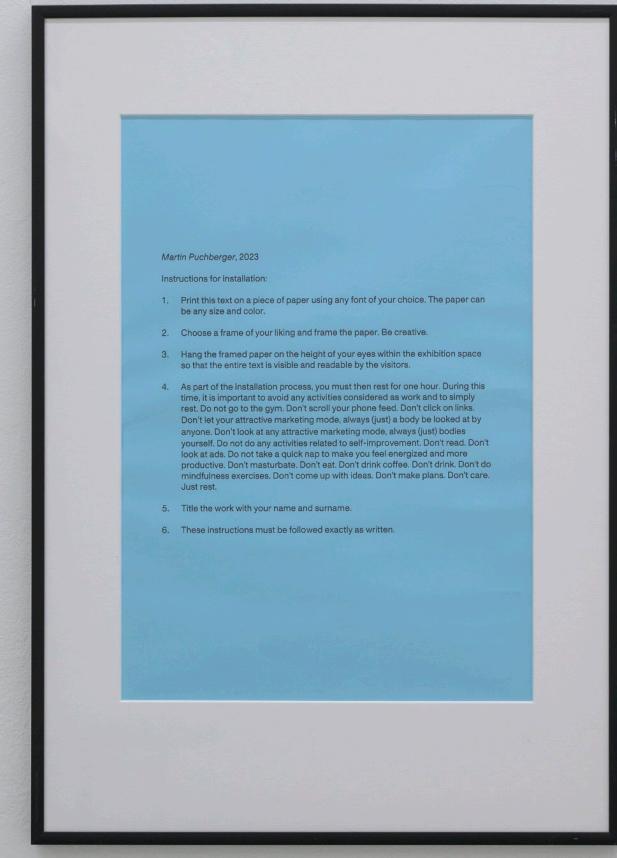
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Instruction-based work



Instruction-based work



Ein schwarzer Rahmen mit Passepartout, ein blaues Blatt Papier, auf dem eine detaillierte Handlungsanweisung zu lesen ist. Ausgeführt von Martin Puchberger, seit zwanzig Jahren Ausstellungstechniker des Kunstvereins Freiburg.

Der Unterschied zwischen Tatenlosigkeit, die den Menschen, vor allem westlicher Gesellschaften, angesichts offensichtlicher Katastrophen immer wieder vorgeworfen wird, und dem vom Künstler geforderten Nichtstun, liegt in den Umständen, gegen die das Nichts performt wird. Tatenlos zu sein ist oft nicht die Folge einer bewussten Entscheidung, sondern vielmehr der einfachste Weg sich nicht mit etwas auseinanderzusetzen. Das Nichtstun hingegen ist, in der vom Kapitalismus geprägten Leistungsgesellschaft, die den Prinzipien des Höher, Schneller, Weiter folgt und in der jede*r unter ständigem Performancedruck steht, wahrscheinlich überhaupt nur möglich, wenn es Teil der bezahlten Arbeitszeit wird.

Oleksandr Holiuk befragt mit seiner Arbeit institutionelle Abhängigkeiten und regt ebenso an, über die Produktionsbedingungen eines zeitgenössischen Kunstwerks nachzudenken. Ist das vermeintliche Nichtstun doch Teil eines jeden kreativen Schaffensprozesses.

Es sollte zur Normalität gehören, nichts zu tun. Durch die radikale Verweigerung der Kontrolle über künstlerische Entscheidungen sucht die Arbeit im gegenwärtig stark identitätsbasierten Kunstdiskurs nach neuen Wegen, die Individualität der Autorschaft infrage zu stellen und kollektive Spuren aufzudecken. Da mit dem Werk auch die Arbeit der Menschen sichtbar gemacht wird, die in der Präsentation sonst unsichtbar bleibt. Dennoch behält der Künstler die Kontrolle, schließlich befiehlt er einer anderen Person zu arbeiten bzw. nicht zu arbeiten.

Holiuk ist sich der Gewalt und des Ungleichgewichts der Macht bewusst, die vielen Versuchen einer egalitären Ästhetik innewohnen. Offen bleibt zudem auch die Frage: Martin Puchberger, hat die Stunde am Ende des Tages gefehlt?

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From the curatorial text ‘Regionale 24. Will I still perform tomorrow?’ (in German) by Marilena Raufeisen. Available at: https://www.kunstvereinfreiburg.de/vn/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Saalzettel_Regionale-24.pdf (Accessed: 17 December 2024).



Tom Senn, installation view, Kunsthalle Basel, 2023

A Call to a Friend, 2022

Solo exhibition at Laboratorium CK Zamek in Poznań, Poland

View full documentation at kubaparis.com





(untitled), 2022

Medical silicone foam cast of an enlarged iPhone 8
frontal camera module, colour pigment, stainless
steel, beechwood





(untitled), 2022

Ceiling track spotlights, glass electricity insulators





(untitled), 2021
Wall clock, lenticular print



Internet, 2022

Soviet military field phone TA-57, air freshener,
1920×1080 mm chroma key-coloured MDF plate

