

*FABIAN REETZ*  
*SELECTION OF WORKS 2022-2025*

## CV

- \*1997 Bad Salzungen DE
- 2025 Fine Art Diploma, Bauhaus University Weimar DE
- 2022 currently Fine Art Studies, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, class of Iman Issa AT

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 East German Gothic Studies, Galleri Taxi, Bergen NOR (upcoming)  
East German Gothic Studies (a monument to the ruined days), Klockner Museum, Hall in Tirol AT  
East German Gothic Studies (grinding halt), Cazul, Bucharest RO
- 2023 East German Gothic Studies (double negative), 11m3 Projektraum, Weimar DE  
East German Gothic Studies (to keep oneself warm), Plain, Vienna AT  
East German Gothic Studies, Irre Space, Weimar DE
- 2022 I can't climb out the way I fell in, Aquarium, Wien AT
- 2021 pretending to swim, Diskurs Berlin DE

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 The Barn, Soy Capitan, Berlin DE
- 2024 orbit, Seoul KOR  
es muss wieder weniger werden, B21, Bottrop DE
- 2023 too small to fail, raumondemand, Berlin DE  
Zwischenräume, Neue Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, Gera DE  
Walder, Exile Erfurt DE
- 2022 Unmonumental Moments, Jenaer Kunstverein DE  
Home Zone, Nova, Kunsthaus Erfurt DE  
Conditions and Frameworks: Infrastructure as Form and Medium, Exhibit Gallery, Wien AT
- 2021 sample from mars, Geidei, Tokyo JPN
- 2020 Wiedersehen, Diskurs Berlin DE  
I put a spelling on you, Blech- offspace for contemporary art, Halle  
Turbo Turbo, Altes Funkhaus, Weimar DE
- 2019 Utopia Planitia, Egon Eiermann-Bau, Apolda DE  
Hospitality, Haus 1, Berlin DE

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

- 2021 Scholarship: Bauhaus-Stipendium
- 2022 Solitudo Artist Residency, Hvar, Croatia

## LINKS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj961iWUMYg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTp8QyKXOfY&t=72s>

<https://artviewer.org/walder-at-exile/>

## *EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (SOURCE MATERIAL)*

I borrowed the structure and some arguments for the following text from Gilles Deleuze's text "What is the creative act?" that appeared in *Two Regimes of Madness, texts and interviews 1975-1995*, edited by David Lapoujade, 2003

What is the East German Gothic Study?

What do you do exactly when you cover houses in slate? What do you do in writing fanfictions? In making a movie? In dressing up?

What does it mean to have an idea about subculture? If someone is involved in subculture, what does it mean to have an idea? Having an idea is rare and already informed by the mode of the thinking that brought it up. Sometimes it is an idea in knitting, in photographing or in carving wood.

Let's say that I am an artist and you are a slater. It would be easy to say art is ready to create, so why not do art about covering a house in slate? No one needs art made about covering a house in slate. It seems to make sense at first, but in fact takes everything away from it. The only people capable of creating effectively here are the slaters themselves, or people involved with building houses. Those need no artists to create art about their field. So there is not much point for an artist to decide: "I am going to make a sculpture and it's about slate", or for a filmmaker to claim: "I am going to do a film about fans of this group." A stubborn necessity must drive those proposals, it isn't enough for it to be fun or fitting in something others do. Those things must need to be done, otherwise there is nothing.

Arusha Baker has been filming fans of a group since the mid 1990s. I asked her what she does and why and she answered that it wasn't until she tried to do this that she knew that this is what she wanted to do with her life, to make films or be in the process of making films. She is now also involved in producing films for the cinema. Her first bunch of material was 40 hours long, which seemed like a lot to her. But there are many missing pieces, the audio is bad, she filmed her friends, some didn't want to be filmed. The material is not there to tell a story, she never decided to treat it like that.

She rather created a website, set up her archive of the last 30 years of documenting fans. So there exist those blocks of movement, colors and sounds.

Gallithious is the pseudonym of a writer that produces fanfictions. They are not to be found easily. They appeared on wattpad, then they moved on to AO3. You need a password to enter, sometimes you even need to reach out to her to get the latest update. She cooperated first with another writer until she noticed she had enough impulses to create her own fanfictions. Now blossom fades red inside and desire hides behind the churchyard wall. She uses the way back machine to get internet fossils consisting of grainy 1980s photos that invoke a storyline. It's about the little things, a gaze, the way things are said, touch. Her day job is completely different, that allows her to go all the way with what she is creating. She was not born when they were releasing album after album every year. Yet she gets closest to them in her bedroom.

It's been 30 years since the slate mining in Lehesten ceased. In the region of the Thuringian Forest, many single-family houses and church towers are traditionally covered with slate stones. Slate mining and processing were significant economic activities for many centuries and shaped the region's architectural style. The layered stones protect roofs and walls from all weather conditions. However, the slate industry declined drastically after World War I, making the material more expensive, which led to slate roofing being excluded from new construction projects for cost reasons. One can follow precise sets of rules to cover walls and roofs, there is a whole bodily vocabulary embedded in this craftwork that reveals as much about covering houses as about the people living there.

It's a harsh tone to be found in literature for roofing schools with sketches that show how the covering is done right or wrong. During the GDR it was used, among other exports, to stabilize the currency. As we know, this didn't work and the region faced heavy economic and social changes since the 1990s.

A slater can speak to a filmmaker, a filmmaker to someone that writes fanfictions and the other ways around. They speak in terms of their own creative framework, not about creation itself. All those people can have an exchange that borders on similar limits. Talking three hours with someone involved in subculture can be disappointing as no words seem to communicate the things you want to get close to. Language seems unable to communicate the violence that belongs to inhabiting a space that is half hidden and up to discuss for everyone else. That's why I am interested in incomplete spaces. I am showing you a curtain, but not the house while you listen to someone talking about wanting to go to a concert that gets chased by skinheads. I show you butterflies dying slowly in a spiderweb while you hear the noise of someone showing me self-recorded tapes. There is no predetermined connection to the places I show you and the things I make you listen to. What connects those visuals and audios is the hand. Concept or theory can't bring the bits and pieces together. They have to be connected manually, let's say with dance moves ripped off the music that gets them going. They produce the particular gestures needed to tear apart and bring together the material with sensitive fingertips.

A voice is speaking about fanfictions. At the same time we seem to be in an attic while hearing water drops and muddy steps. And finally we see the camera filming wet stones glistened in the dark while the voice keeps talking and attic and wet stones appear after each other. repeatedly it's not revealed where we are. That is why where we are and what we are looking at and hearing gains meaning.

I am coming back to stating that I have an idea. Having an idea in filmmaking is not the same as having an idea in covering houses in slate. However, some ideas also work in other disciplines. Deciding to make a film means you have to engage in working with a camera. There can be refusals to learn how to film properly, prepare dramatic settings, to pan smoothly, but in the end, you have files that recorded some sort of colors and movement. So what does really interest me when I adapt the space between covering a house in slate and dressing up for a night underground in a film?

Well, I have an idea that I applied to sculptures, found objects, laser engravings to see if those approaches can be the same thing,

some kind of a series of unresolved studies. Though the sources are all transformed to an extent that I am in control of, gathering material as a kind of pool that could lead to a study, and treating it as if this source material is a study, is a different thing.

There are self-recorded tapes in many attics of people that lived through the 1980s in the GDR. There are never enough slate stones available from one source to cover another house in them; there are also no possibilities to play the tapes properly, cause they get tangled up and tear when they get played now. Making a film about those things is first driven by the urgency to gather and show all those disappearing things. But the questions occurring are rather: What is a house covered in slate or an attic full of gothic tapes? Not in general, but at this time? That's the core of this film.

It's haunting every sequence.

At this point, it should be obvious that text is not going to resolve what I was on about in the first place. Communication exhausts at grasping my idea, but let's situate it a bit more precise. In former works of the series, I used sets of slogans like "I blame the german reunification", "we stay devoted" or "wir sahen aus dem Fenster, wie der Palast der Republik in die Luft gesprengt wurde" in laser engraved posters, someone owning a mine even bought one with "end of mining remembrance day". I played with the way information is communicated to us, what achieves to make us believe something. But I came to reduce the words away from recent laser engraved works, because the works have nothing to do with communication and information being transmitted. I became rather interested in what a curtain actually is and how language and memory is revealed and hidden in it. In the text working with to shape this one, Deleuze goes on to talk about art as an act of resistance and counter information. I am a bit reluctant yet to draw that connection as the pathos he applies does not sit well with my approach. but I am thinking about Arusha Baker's stubborn drive to get this documentary finished against all odds. As she writes on her website: "till death do we try"

Fabian Reetz

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (SOURCE MATERIAL)  
STARRING ARUSCHA BAKER, INGO REETZ, JAYNIE HURKMANS  
CUT AND EDITING WITH OLIVER HÖSSEL  
FILM  
22:50  
2025

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (LANGUAGE)  
IN COLLABORATION WITH JURO CARL ANTON REINHARDT  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER, WOOD, SCREWS  
240 × 220 × 100 cm  
2025

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (LOVELETTERS)  
SLATE, WOOD, NAILS  
(2×) 60 × 50 × 50 cm  
2025





I was working, working, working, working, working.







DETAILS EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (LANGUAGE) AND (LOVELETTERS)  
EXHIBITION VIEW AT BERKAER STRASSE







EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (THE LOVERS)

EXHIBITION VIEWS AT SOX CAPITAN





## *EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (A MONUMENT TO THE RUINED DAYS)*

Fabian Reetz presents an adaptation of the series East German Gothic Studies in the Art Box of the Klocker Museum. The works explore the connections between the mining and use of slate in Thuringia and the Gothic subculture that emerged in the 1980s. Historical events, traditional craftsmanship, and subcultural strategies are intertwined and reinterpreted. The result is an installative archive that examines the characteristics of Gothic culture shortly before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, questioning the relationship between personal and collective search of identity as well as analyzing economic precarity as a driving force behind its emergence.

In the region of the Thuringian Forest, many single-family houses and church towers are traditionally covered with slate stones. Slate mining and processing were significant economic activities for many centuries and shaped the region's architectural style. The layered stones protect roofs and walls from all weather conditions. However, the slate industry declined drastically after World War I, making the material more expensive, which led to slate roofing being excluded from new construction projects for cost reasons. Slate mining in the region ceased entirely in the 1990s.

By working with slate plates using a „Haubrücke“ (a traditional roofing tool) and a slate hammer, Reetz adapts this traditional craft for his works. He covers panels, sculptures, and architectural elements with hand-split stones, as seen in his exhibition at the Klocker Museum. The artist intentionally obscures stylistic details that would be necessary for dating the work to a specific time period with the slate, making it impossible to specify a particular stylistic epoch. While the actual protective function of slate for buildings is not needed for a column as interior element, the protective role of the slate must be redefined.

To develop a distinct and self-assured presence, activities such as dyeing and sewing clothes, recording music, listening to Western radio broadcasts, and exchanging ideas in youth clubs and gatherings were essential in the emerging Gothic scene despite constant surveillance.

despite constant surveillance. The Gothic scene is heavily influenced by its aesthetics, which generally convey a very dark and eerie impression. Typical Gothic clothing is, in the truest sense, multilayered: often, many different garments dominated by the color black are arranged and worn on top of each other, frequently blending different historical clothing styles. Formally, he identifies parallels here with the layered slate tiles that protect the facades of buildings. In the installation East German Gothic Study (a monument for the ruined age) slate is treated like a material for clothing.

In the display cases at the museum entrance, Fabian Reetz presents an installative archive that offers proposals for the institutionalization of subcultural experiences. East German Gothic Study (Robin Gallith) features a slate stone that has been meticulously split in half.

The interior surfaces of both slabs are intricately engraved with a laser, revealing an excerpt from a fanfiction by Gallithious, originally posted on the website. AO3 This text, filled with conjectures and speculations about figures within the Gothic subculture, is mirrored on one of the slabs to accentuate the stone's rupture.

East German Gothic Study (a shallow grave), a collaborative piece with Valerie Zichy and Juro Carl Anton Reinhardt, is a laser-engraved work on paper that showcases ornamental designs derived from illustrations found in the „Pfingstbote“ a companion booklet to the Wave-Gotik-Treffen in Leipzig. The work incorporates a lace doily, archival imagery, and a text rendered in the voice of an unreliable narrator, which conveys painful experiences across overlapping historical contexts. Here, the Gothic aesthetic is employed as a means of engaging with events that have been hastily suppressed.

(Lena Ganahl, excerpt exhibition text)

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (A MONUMENT TO THE RUINED AGE) 2024  
SLATE, NAILS, BURNED WOOD  
300 x 200 x 180 cm  
KLOCKER MUSEUM, HALL IN TIROL







DISPLAY CASE I  
EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (ROBIN GALLITH IIII) 2024  
SLATE, STEEL  
90 x 32 x 15 cm

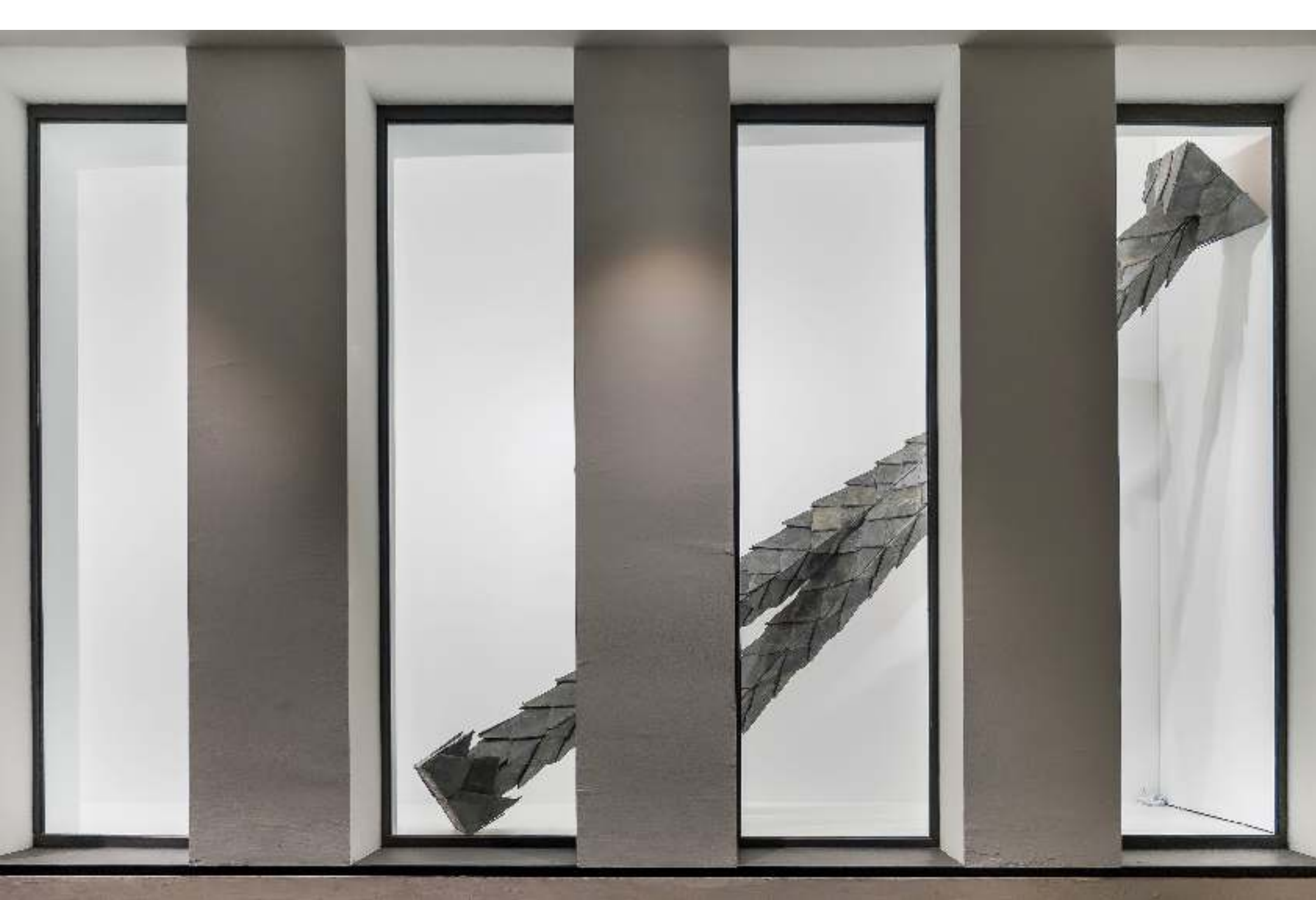




DISPLAY CASE II  
EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (A SHALLOW GRAVE) 2024  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
COLLABORATION WITH JURO CARL ANTON REINHARDT AND VALERIE ZICHY  
87 x 55 cm

EXHIBITION VIEWS, KLOCKER MUSEUM, HALL IN TIROL











EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (WIR SAHEN AUS DEM FENSTER, WIE DER  
PALAST DER REPUBLIK IN DIE LUFT GESPRENGT WURDE) 2024  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
84 x 59,50 cm



Made of burnt wood and slate, the traditional technique for covering walls and roofs in the Thuringian forest, EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (GRINDING HALT) reproduces a bus station found near Lehesten. Reetz proposes a waiting room situation through delicate engravings and DIY jewellery that renegotiates traces of different social groups. The station appears as speculative place surfacing melancholy and frustration.

One is stuck, uncertain whether the bus will come on time. Familiar patterns are in doubt. It's unclear whether you will meet someone or freeze in that bleak landscape.

(Bianca Bajenaru, excerpt exhibition text)

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (GRINDING HALT) 2024  
SLATE, NAILS, WOOD, JEWELRY, FOUND NEEDLES, CHEWING GUM  
2,50 x 230 x 160 cm

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (END OF MINING REMAMBRANCE DAY) 2024  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
84 x 59,50 cm

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (WE STAY DEVOTED) 2024  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
84 x 59,50 cm

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION) 2023  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
84 x 59,50 cm

CAZUL101, BUCHAREST













As it is typical for villages in the Thuringian forest, simple family houses and church steeples are covered in slate. After the end of mining in this region, the material became more expensive and since then, there have been hardly any new building projects of this kind. The history of the milieu living there can be understood by the way roofs and facades are covered. It is the same community in which subcultural gothic style strategies have evolved due to a shortage. As contribution to the exhibition Reetz speculatively applies these strategies to the covering of a fragment.

(Christian Siekmeier, excerpt exhibiton text)

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (TO KEEP ONESELF WARM) 2023  
SLATE, NAILS, WOOD  
70 x 50 cm  
WALDER, EXILE ERFURT  
GROUPSHOW WITH ERIK NIEDLING, INGO NIERMANN, GENESIS P ORRIDGE,  
KAZUKO MIYAMOTO, KINGA KIELCZYNSKA AND THOMAS BAYRLE  
<https://exilegallery.org/exhibitions/exile-erfurt-walder/>  
PICTURES BY ERIK NIEDLING







## *EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION)*

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION) is a laser engraved poster on slightly yellowed paper. The statement I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION appears in Scriptuale W01 Semibold. The font is taken from the ticket of the second edition of the Wave Gothic Meeting in Leipzig 1994. A humanoid bird figure spreads its wings above the words. The gothic scene that emerges in East Germany during the 1990s is strongly shaped by experiences as subcultural youth movement in the GDR. Activities such as dyeing and sewing garments, recording music, particularly from British New Wave bands, listening to Western radio broadcasts, and exchanging ideas in youth clubs and gatherings, despite constant surveillance, contribute to the development of a self-aware language and behavior. Simultaneously, in most Eastern European countries, fan clubs and loosely connected groups resonate deeply with melancholy and thereby creating a space for desire.

Self-designed posters, shared hair gel for styling, and exchanged boot-legs solidify a reality formed due to the absence of freedom.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, many young goths leave their accustomed social structures and become heavily engaged in adapting to new frameworks and exploring a multitude of possibilities. The post-reunification period is challenging and, despite investment programs like the 1991 „Gemeinschaftswerk Aufschwung Ost“, brings frustration that continues to shape political conditions today. Nationalistic attacks on refugee homes in Hoyerswerda, Ueckermünde and Rostock Lichtenhagen occur. Economic restructuring results in mass unemployment, shrinking cities and villages, and also leaves behind a generation that spent the majority of their lives in the GDR.

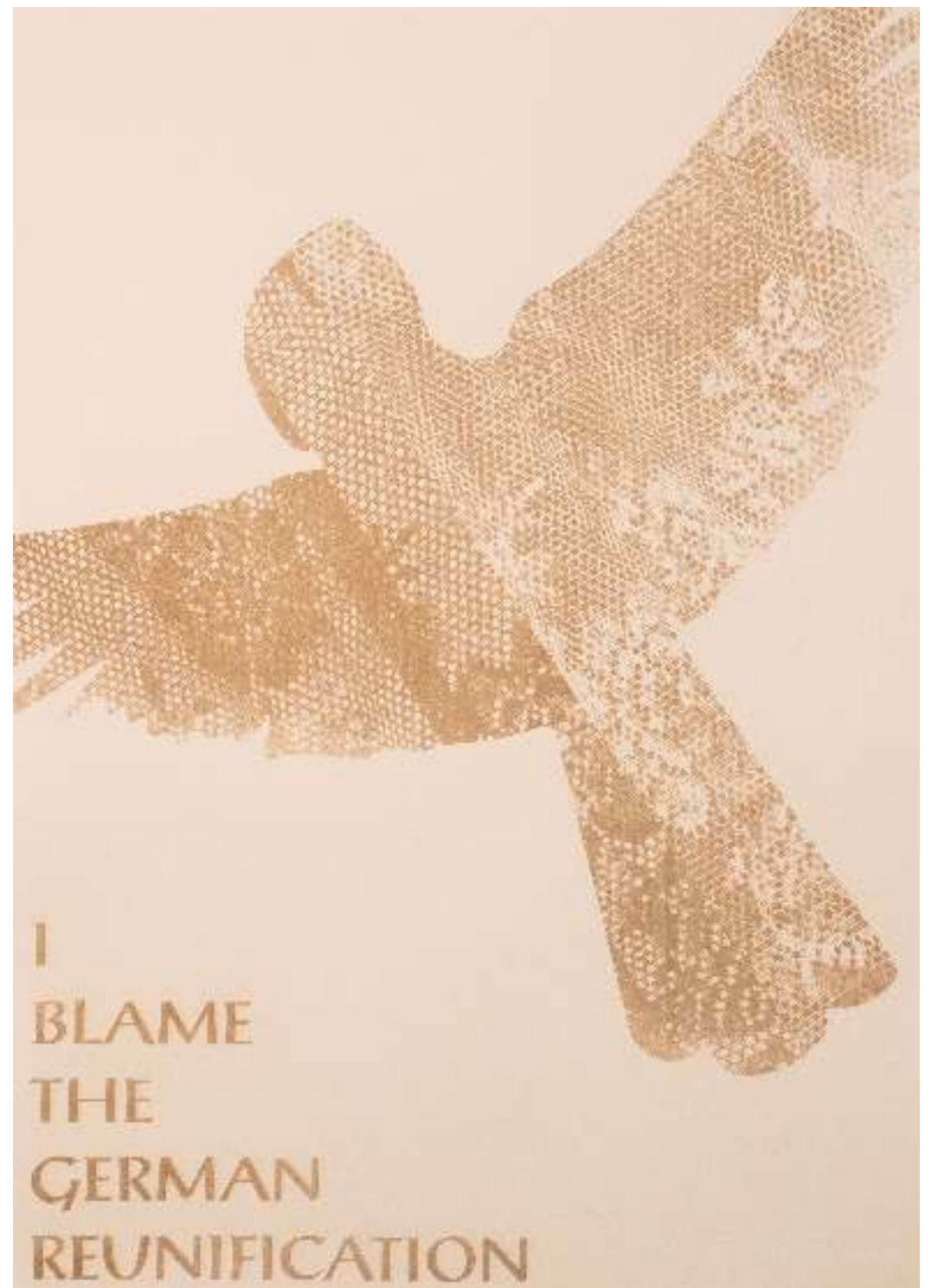
Since the 1990s, nostalgia for the past parallels with the melancholy of unfulfilled longing that is so typical for the gothic subculture in states that were falling apart. The texture of the figure on the poster resembles that of a curtain. Exchanges of viewpoints in the present are still strongly influenced by experiences under the SED regime, primarily

discussed in private or, in extreme contrast, increasingly loud and angry.

I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION carries the discontent of various milieus regarding the upheaval of the 1990s in Germany. The poster urges to renegotiate underlying connections of social groups that seem contrary at first and offers a mode of re-imagining an assumed status quo.

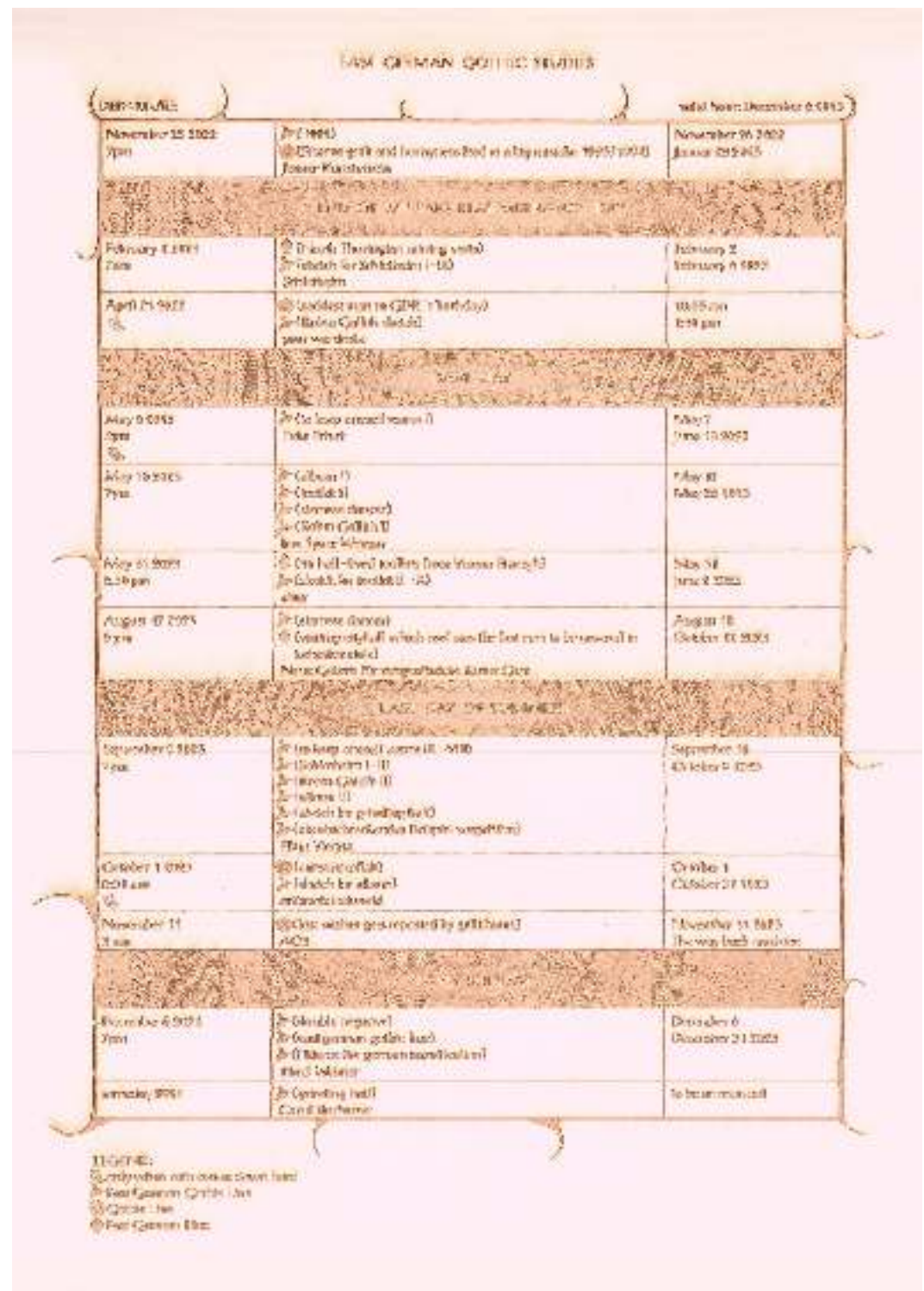
Fabian Reetz

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (I BLAME THE GERMAN REUNIFICATION)  
2023  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER  
84 x 59,50 cm















EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STDY (A BEDROOM SITUATION) 2023  
LASER ENGRAVED SLATE, STEEL  
50 x 28 x 20 cm







The sculptures East German Gothic Study (siamese dancer) engage with the traditional craft of slate roofing and the East German gothic scene. The slate plates hammered onto the three-dimensional wooden beams protect and dress the object.

Reetz examines not only the relationship between tradition and modernity but also between personal and collective search for identity. Economic precarity is a driving force for the emergence of youth movements like the gothic scene, attempting to free themselves from heteronormative constraints and ideas of gender.

The East German Gothic Studies assemble objects, videos, posters, and texts into a speculative archive.

In the context of the exhibition, the sculptures become a performative object as the artists interact with them. They exist between an authentic, reality-based presentation gesture and a happening.

(Claudia Tittel, excerpt exhibition text)

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (SIAMESE DANCER) 2023

SLATE, NAILS, WOOD

182 x 13 x 13 cm

ZWISCHENRÄUME AT NEUE GALERIE FÜR ZEITGEÖSSISCHE KUNST, HÄSELBURG  
GERA

GROUPSHOW WITH FLORIAN SCHMIDT, EMILY JOHNSTON, CORETTA KLAUE,  
SAMIRA GEBHARDT

PICTURES BY JANNIS UFFRECHT







# EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDIES

2023, INSTALLATIVE ARCHIVE

(LASER ENGRAVED) SLATE, WOOD, NAILS, PAPER, FOUND SILVER PAPER, NEEDLES, WEATHERD LATEX ON GLASS, STEEL

IRRE SPACE, WEIMAR

PICTURES BY NATHALIA AZUERO

In 1987, a pair of black dyed trousers lies in my wardrobe between synthetic fibre and cord.

„Gruftis als selbstorganisierte Jugendgruppen, die sich schminken, ihre Haare toupieren, Ketten tragen und eine Faszination für Friedhöfe haben“ face a limited access to information, records as well as political and social repression. This lack was a catalyzer in the self-effective production of fashion items. The textiles produced are influenced by the images of the gothic scene on West German television.

Self-dyed shrouds and self-made jewellery thus became a fixed and central part of gothic style in the declining GDR.

At the same time, the styles created within the framework of the sub-culture became a sign of inner resistance against established systems such as family and the state. In correlation with this observation and the thoughts of Carol Tulloch (2023), who assumes that belonging in the context of community building always requires loss, Reetz develops works that trace the collective and personal search for identity. In EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (SIAMESE DANCER), the boundaries between old German slate craft and goth strategies blur.

The two fragmented columns are completely covered in acute-angled slate stones. Here, traditional sheathing finds a new, inward-looking protective function in an interior element.

*„I don't want this to be our last goodbye“ You say with a voice, so weak and hoarse, you sound like you're about to cry. „No it won't, I don't want to be without you again, I can't let you go...“ My voice fades at the thought. I couldn't live without you ever again. Not after having you like this. It has been so long since I last held you. „Please, come back Simon You look desperate, so scared of what my response will be.*

(Teresa Fischer, excerpt exhibtion text)

The exhibition is structured as an installative archive that examines codes of East German gothic culture in terms of their relationship between the personal and collective search for identity and the economic deficiency as a motor of their emergence.

Reetz examines the meaning of historical artefacts through gothic appropriation strategies and the logic of museal displays. Images that at first glance appear to have a heteronormative and patriarchal origin are reinterpreted and questioned within this framework.

(Teresa Fischer, excerpt press text)

references:

-Gallithious (2022): „An Angels Kiss in Spring“ on wattpad

-Munoz, Jose Esteban (2019) „Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity (Sexual Cultures)“



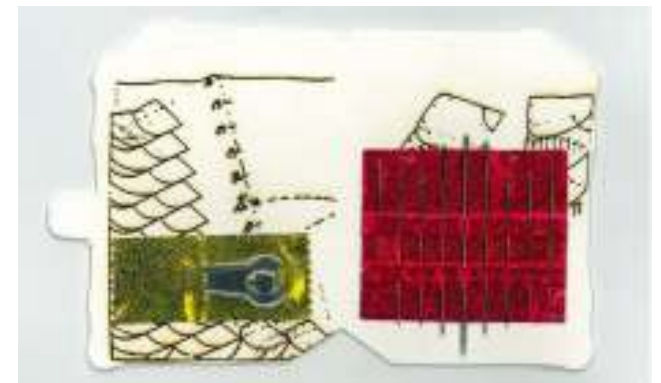
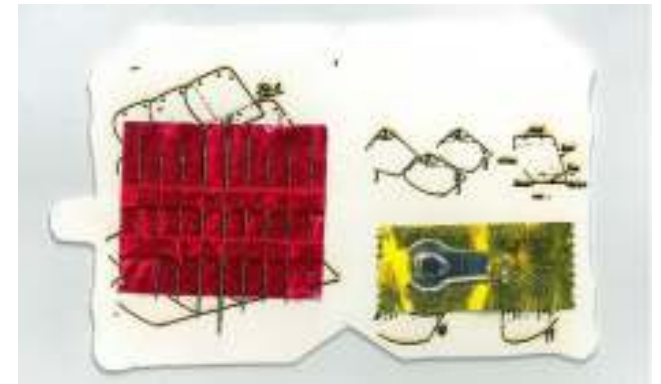
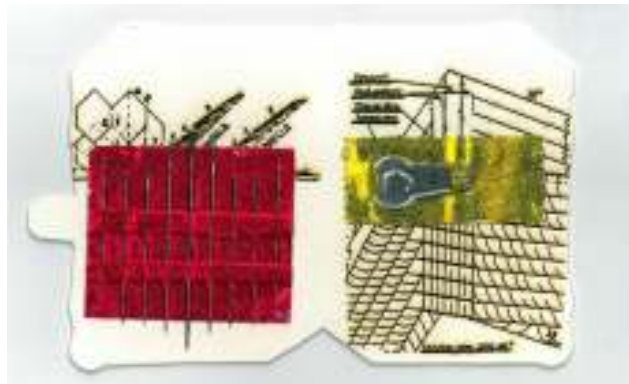
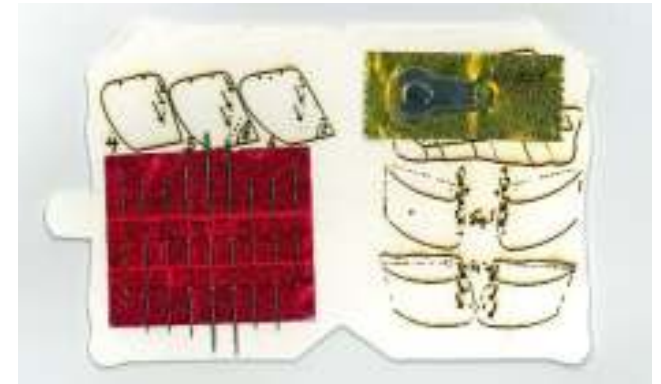
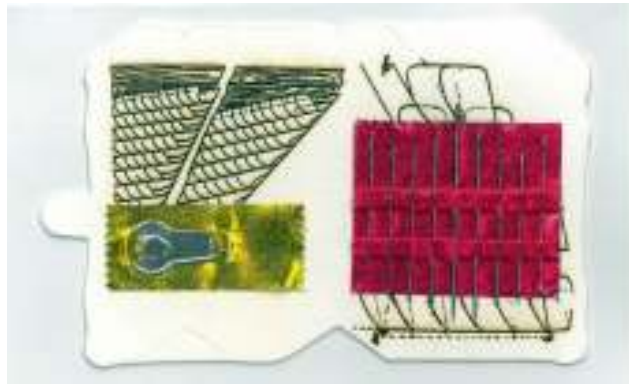


EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (ROBIN GALLITH I)  
INSTALLATION VIEW AT IRRE SPACE





This small edition of toolkits consist of found silver silver-foil, needles for sewing garments and laser engraved drawings taken from a textbook about how to cover roofs and walls of houses. Those kinds of labour have a gendered meaning during the time gothic subculture emerged in the late 1980s in the GDR. The works speculate on how to parallel gendered carework and craftsmanship. It is a mental toolkit to think of the protective qualities of slate as a form of gothic coded clothing item.



EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (TOOLKITS I-VI)  
LASER ENGRAVED PAPER, SILVER FOIL, NEEDLES  
15 x 7 cm





The installation consists of two steel bodies, the front of which is each closed by a pane of glass that is covered with latex. Due to the exposure to direct sunlight and the weather over a longer period of time, the material becomes an irregularly structured surface through this artificial aging process. The surface bears witness to tensions and cracks. This semi-permeable filter partially and restrictedly reveals a further component: a promotion photograph of the band The Cure. It is part of a fan calendar that - among others - had a permanent place in his parents' kitchen in the 1990s and is hung at exactly the same height as there. The installation connects encounters between the private and the public and the influences of fangroups that shape identity and values. The work reflects cult and devotion as well as it questions their temporality.

(Michaela Mai, excerpt exhibition text)

EAST GERMAN GOTHIC STUDY (1992) 2022  
WEATHERD LATEX ON GLASS, STEEL, CURE CALENDAR (FROM CULTURE SHOCK,  
RELEASED 1992)  
SIZE VARIABLE  
UNMONUMENTAL MOMENTS, JENAER KUNSTVEREIN



