

## OVIDIU ANTON | Sauve qui peut

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Fuck the system! But which system? The one that seals the borders, hindering the entry of refugees seeking asylum or quartering them in desolate camps? The one that colonizes public space with its advertising messages while pushing interventionists like graffiti sprayers or skaters into illegality? Or even the art system itself, and the white cube?

Ovidiu Anton's aesthetic employs the stylistic device of paradoxical intervention. It relates intellectually to forms of expression found in youth subcultures, such as spraying, stencil art and street art, but it also turns their approaches and intentions upside down. Anton translates the tattoo, quickly sprayed onto the architecture of money and power in the dark of night, into the slower system of drawing; he transfers wall inscriptions from Marseille to the walls of buildings in Vienna and vice versa; he replicates the functional design of Le Corbusier using 'poor' materials; and in the video "It doesn't matter where" he translates the 'on the run' that is always a part of guerrilla actions in public space into a 'chase' scene that mixes up time and space entirely.

The central work in this exhibition is the installation "Killing Time and Observing the Surroundings", which thematizes the flight of Ovidiu Anton's father from post-Ceausescu Rumania and his temporary stays in transitory spaces like Vienna's railway stations and the nearby refugee camp in Traiskirchen. The artwork uses many layers and media tracks, whereby the asynchrony of video and audio conveys a geographical and psychical loss of orientation. In his most recent video "Street Cat Deluxe", which was created during an extended stay in Istanbul, Anton shows street cats talking about problems of gentrification in the Turkish metropolis: there is something alienating about this humanization, and it also allows the work to utilize the irritation arising from unusually linked video and audio tracks. L'homme en révolte – this is the central theme of the young artist of Rumanian descent. And yet he is not interested in the emphatic gesture of resistance for its own sake, but in its symbolic depiction, its anchoring in continually permutating life-worlds and conditions, which charge it with energy. The work involves a dialectic tension between places and non-places, between social norms and transgressions, between damnation and salvation. Sauve qui peut (la vie)!