

curated by Luiza Teixeira de Freitas: Between 58 and 131 infinitely.

Opening: Friday, 8th & Saturday, 9th September 2023, 12–6pm

Duration: 8th September until 28th October 2023

Galerie Martin Janda is part of *curated by 2023 – The Neutral*, the gallery festival with international curators in Vienna. The exhibition *Between 58 and 131 infinitely.* is curated by Luiza Teixeira de Freitas and runs from September 8 until October 28, 2023.

The power of choice. To choose or not, to take a stance or to be neutral, or even taking a position to be neutral. Drawing from the complex and subjective concept of neutrality, this exhibition at Galerie Martin Janda brings into dialogue the practices of **Sara Bichão, Alejandro Cesarco, Milena Dragicevic, Alexandre Estrela, Roman Ondak, Sjiben Rosa, Tadaskía, Belén Uriel, Jaime Welsh** and **Michel Zóximo**, exploring and looking at this concept in factual, abstract, or rather direct ways.

For *Between 58 and 131 infinitely.* which is part of the annual *curated by* festival in Vienna, the presented artworks revolve around the realm of the *neutral* within literature. At play in this exhibition is the intertwining of ideas that allude to the way in which literary works mirror the notion of the *neutral*, using several narrative techniques throughout the story. Ones that frequently intersect and include first or third person, and a kind of stream of consciousness; traditional spelling and linguistic rules that are often bent and sometimes outright broken.

The exhibition takes its title from Julio Cortazar's iconic *Hopscotch*, where readers are presented with the thrilling choice of ending the story at chapter 57 or roaming infinitely through the promised non-sense between 58 and 131. There were other literary inspirations that should be taken into account; like *The Winners*, also from Cortazar, where a noisy and heterogeneous group of people win a prize for a luxurious cruise trip and are suddenly quarantined, having to let go their personalities and adapt to survive with the other; Herman Melville's iconic *Bartleby* and his passive resistance "in preferring not to"; Nick Carraway, the narrator in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and his neutral standpoint throughout the novel allowing readers to form their own impression of the narrative. This also happens, in a completely different setting, in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. Also, the loss of individuality translated in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* or the emotional detachment in Albert Camus' *The Stranger*. The list of how literature references neutrality, in its many ways and forms, is in fact endless.

The quest for the *neutral* through metaphors, poetry, and dreamlike literature, or better said, a sort of freedom is an infinite endeavor. The concept of the *neutral* in literature is often subjective and varies depending on each interpretation of the specific context of the work. Some literary works go even further and blur the lines between neutrality and uncertainty, leaving readers to engage in an even deeper reflection or critical analysis. The decision to remain neutral can be complex and challenging, a virtue or a failure. Through this exhibition the hopes are in encouraging critical thought, challenging binary mindsets, and fostering empathy.

Luiza Teixeira de Freitas

Sara Bichão, born 1986 in Lisbon (PT), lives and works in Lisbon (PT).

Alejandro Cesarco, born 1975 in Montevideo (UY), lives and works in New York (US).

Milena Dragicevic, born 1965 in Knin (YU), lives and works in London (UK).

Alexandre Estrela, born 1971 in Lisbon (PT), lives and works in Lisbon (PT).

Roman Ondak, born 1966 in Žilina (SK), lives and works in Bratislava (SK).

Sijben Rosa, born 1988 in Alkmaar (NL), living and working in Amsterdam (NL) and Lisbon (PT).

Tadáskia, born 1993 in Rio de Janeiro (BR), lives and works in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (BR).

Belén Uriel, born 1974 in Madrid (ES), lives and works in London (UK) and Lisbon (PT).

Jaime Welsh, born 1994 in Lisbon (PT), lives and works in London (UK).

Michel Zózimo, born 1977 in Santa Maria (BR), lives and works in Porto Alegre (BR).

Luiza Teixeira de Freitas (*1984) is an independent curator based in Lisbon. Among the various projects she is involved with, her curatorial work with private collections stands out, as well as her active relationship with independent publications and artist books, having launched her own publisher Taffimai in 2018. Although based in Portugal, she frequently works with projects in São Paulo, New York, London, Los Angeles and has also a strong connection with the Middle East. Luiza is a strategy consultant at the Delfina Foundation in London, on the Board of Directors of Bidoun, and also, President and Board member of Operação Nariz Vermelho, Portugal.