



Audio work in context of the

**Art exhibition of FES
„Do you have something to fight for?”**

sprechen über/ talking about

by Saskia Ackermann & Vilmos Verres

English translation: Hatice Demirkan

Intro

S: Okay, shall we start then?

V: Yes, sure.

S: Good. The idea is that we just speak freely, and afterwards I'll see what I can use from this.

I thought we should start with an introduction. And I'd find it especially interesting to talk about the title; the question: "Do you have something to fight for?" – what does that mean to us? And for the exhibition?

V: Yes, the question is indeed fascinating. It originates from Polina Stonushko's work, which is directly referencing the war in Ukraine. But at the same time, we found the title interesting because it's paradoxical or how shall I put it ...

S: Maybe not paradoxical but complex?

V: That's it. It can be applied to so many topics. For example, the workers' movement or climate action. At its core, it's a question. And this makes it even more intriguing. The scholarship holders' works actually pose a lot of questions. They're showing something, but also encouraging the viewers to find their own answers.

S: At the same time, the title implies that there really *is* something we're fighting for. The foundation itself is an expression of the existence of things worth fighting for.

V: Yes, but it also challenges people, doesn't it? Along the lines of: "Why aren't you fighting for something?"

S: It's a bit of a provocation and a challenge: Shouldn't you fight for something? But it also shows there are different things you can fight for. And that's not always a positive thing. You can fight for an authoritarian society, for example, or to marginalise other people.

V: Absolutely, and even within a group sharing similar values, there are different priorities or perspectives.

S: And this is what makes the question so important. It's not about saying: "This is what you need to fight for." It's something individual; everyone decides for themselves.

V: And sometimes the fights are internal. It's not necessarily always major crises or conflicts. Sometimes people simply fight with themselves, with their own identity or other challenges.

S: Yes, the exhibition addresses that point too. You said earlier that the scholarship holders tend to ask questions in their works. I find that interesting too in contrast to the artworks from the workers' movement. They often had clear messages: "Fight for the liberation of workers!"

V: Yes, they often document the status quo or propagate clear goals.

S: And that's where we wanted to intentionally seek out dialogue, in the interplay between historical works and contemporary works. It's also about continuity: What did people use to fight for in the past? What has changed?

V: And what fights have we put behind us and what others are new?

S: But the core question is still: Do *you* have something you're fighting for?

V: I ask myself that question time and again too. Ten years ago, my focus was primarily on queer issues, on equality. But today I have the feeling that much of what I fought for is being called into question again.

S: Yes, I have the same feeling. I feel that protecting democracy and an open society is currently more urgent than I've ever experienced before. But I don't want to get stuck – for me it is also important to advance, towards *more* solidarity.

V: I also find it fascinating how we measure whether our fights are successful. Sometimes it's a success just when things don't get worse. But there are fields in which a lot has been

achieved – take queer culture, for example. Things have changed there, although there are still some threats.

S: You're right.

Okay, shall we proceed to the first section?

Portrait und Repräsentation

V: Portrait and representation. Personalities from the workers' movement and social democracy

S: What I noticed first about the many portraits were the classic depictions of Karl Marx and Rosa Luxemburg. They're among those I have a special fondness for. That's not only true for me, but for the radical left of my generation.

And then – in a completely different way – I was struck by the portrait of Regine Hildebrandt. Her active time was the time of political upheaval in the GDR and the first years of united Germany. I was born in 1993, raised in West Germany, and had never heard of her. But I was immediately impressed by the image.

I think it's great how she sits there in a suit that's *much too big* for her, I think. She almost looks a bit lost in it. But at the same time, she radiates so much self-confidence and poise. It's neither provocative nor exaggerated. But in a very authentic manner, it breaks with the stereotypes of femininity I come across elsewhere. I really like that.

When we talked about this portrait in the curators' team, Franziska practically raved about Regine Hildebrandt – how important she was and that we're lacking having someone like her these days.

V: Yes, when Regine Hildebrandt died in 2001, she really left a big hole behind. Of course, there were other people with similar perspectives in the GDR and later on in the Federal Republic of Germany, but no-one occupied this position the way she did. She had this rapport with people; she really listened, understood and was interested. And that came out of her own reality. People felt represented by her. And she wasn't someone who was confrontative – she didn't follow the motto: "us against them", but instead was in favour of fostering common *understanding*. That's often missing today, I find. Advocating for each other has more or less receded into the background. Particularly today, in a polarised

world, that would be all the more important. But it's incredibly hard to walk back towards each other once again from opposite poles.

S: The portrait is also one of the images where I linger. When we looked through the collection, I had the feeling: one person in a suit after the other. I don't even know who many of them are, and some portraits appear merely representations of power to me. But in Hildebrandt's case, I feel *curiosity*: Who is this person? I have a feeling that there's more involved than just a politician.

Are there some works that have a special appeal to you?

V: I liked Orlik's Friedrich Ebert portrait. It's clear that we had to include it in the exhibition simply because of its subject. It's such a traditional depiction – similar to the portrait of Helmut Schmidt, where he is standing there dutifully and is represented only as a politician.

But in Orlik's work, I find it fascinating that he shows Ebert doing something. He's holding a piece of paper in one hand, while his right hand seems to be gesturing something. It's like a snapshot, a moment in time. But still very traditional compared to the more experimental works we also have. There are, for example, Meike Porz's wax paintings. They look so fragile, much more sensitive and impermanent than the robust oil paintings in gold frames.

S: When I look at these paintings I cannot *not* think about gender. Men are almost always depicted in suits. These depictions often appear so rigid, while the portraits of women often have more depth. Looking at Orlik's Ebert, I think: "What a pity for these men that they're only shown in this one way." That's probably not completely true, because I believe that a lot of people see much more in the persons shown. But their depictions are often fixed that way.

V: I think that Fetting's portrait of Willy Brandt is a bit of an outlier in this respect. It shows him from behind. This perspective raises questions such as: Are we standing behind him? Or is he turning his back on us? For me, he seems pensive, in his body language as well.

S: Yes, and that's what I like so much about drawings. They often transport only a moment in time, not a heroically defined depiction. This allows for more ambiguity and humanity. The lines are not that settled, they appear a bit transparent and shaky. I see that in the portrait's content as well, a bit of hesitation and doubt, or self-doubt.

V: And then there's the colour green. Maybe that's a hopeful glow?

S: I don't really understand that green there, but it works well.

V: The drawing was made three or four years after his death. Maybe green expresses hope in times of change – or else it expresses that an important voice and perspective is lacking, and has been lost.

Arbeit und Macht

S: Labour and power. Critical views of capitalism and society.

That makes me think immediately of Gerd Arntz's work.

V: The woodcuts, yes.

S: Exactly. Especially this one labourer. I've grown really fond of him. But actually I can't take him that seriously, as he is so iconic, such a stereotype. But somehow, it's all in there, everything the workers' movement stands for.

V: That's a powerful image, indeed – the flat cap, the bridge at the top as a construct, as labour to be proud of, because it was created by physical work and working with the material.

S: When I think of work today, it's a completely different type of work. These days, it has hardly anything to do with the body or with material. Sure, that exists too, but in my office work and in cultural activities I'm so far from what is happening in factories these days. In any case, the term labour has generally become much more diverse.

V: There's that type of work that creates something tangible – something you can take a step back from and say: "I was part of that, I helped create that."

But if you're delivering parcels for Amazon on a piecework basis, constantly dropping deliveries at people's doors but not being perceived as a "worker" in the conventional sense, and if you don't have some finished work you can look at – I don't think that's work that would be perceived as "meaningful".

Have you ever done some work where you had the feeling of exerting *power* in some way? I mean as in *making a difference*, maybe in connection with major workers' movements when demands were pushed through with strikes?

S: To be honest, as an employee I don't really have a feeling of belonging anywhere. I tell myself I'm part of the workers, with labour rights and a position vis-a-vis people who have a lot more money and liberties. But I don't *feel* it.

Maybe that has to do with the particular job sector I'm in. I work in extra-curricular young adult education. In the care sector or in hospitals, people often work together in larger groups. Maybe there's more a feeling of community there. But I believe it has to do with the times we're living in too.

V: I often think about this question: What will remain? Meaning, is there any purpose in my work? I work for a public radio broadcaster. That may not be education or strengthening democracy on the street. But I believe I contribute, to the best of my abilities, that all of that keeps going.

S: I consider work as having a purpose when it is socially committed or enables others to achieve something. It's not always about specific results, but about encounters during which something happens. Then I have the feeling I've made a difference.

What I sometimes ponder is the question about the closeness or connectedness between work and existence. Of course, that's fairly obvious when you look at it from a money point of view, but I find it striking how far apart they are sometimes these days. I then often think of what things were like in the past. Maybe farmers are a good example. Their work was directly linked to producing things to survive. They had to constantly work in the fields, look after animals to ensure they themselves had something to eat. But even in the 16th century, this work was closely linked to issues of power because they had to pay tribute to their feudal lords.

I'm thinking of Franz Skarbina's water bearer. This picture makes me feel that it's showing a necessity. The water bearer was definitely not thinking about working hours – he did what was necessary. This direct link between what he does and who he is, is something I don't see very often any more. It seems like an abstract idea.

I find that really interesting when I talk to people today who work in agriculture today. There are no fixed working hours or vacation days for them. Nonetheless, they're often passionate about their jobs, enjoy working outside or in the stables and don't want to do anything else. Of course, I don't want to romanticise that, but when I look at people who own their farms, I see great conviction and connection to what they're doing.

In contrast, I see a lot of people who work in office jobs as resigned and unhappy, but without any real alternative, because after all they need the job. They do only what's absolutely necessary to make the situation bearable, and I find that hard to understand.

And then I think of Yevgenia Beloruset's who shows a different context in her works. Because with the current situation of the war against Ukraine, work has a different kind of necessity. When somebody here works at a power plant, it looks like a job just like any other. But watching reports about Ukraine and seeing people generating power or maintaining infrastructure under extreme conditions, that's essential again. It shows how work can be directly linked to materiality and what's essential for life.

V: Yes, Beloruset's works make that point come across clearly. It's about transforming work into value and what's essential. The *Water Bearer* and the Ukrainians she is portraying are somewhat closer to one another than I am to my office colleagues.

S: Yes, precisely. And at the same time this reveals what's lacking in our collection – traditional and widely spread types of contemporary work. Our collection hardly shows that. There are works such as Klaus Staeck's poster on migration and work, dealing with topical issues like the skills shortage and the right to work. But we don't see any people at their computers, any managers, any HR specialists hired by companies to hire more staff – how abstract.

Maybe we should ask ourselves how we can make this diversity and meaning of work more visible. What are we actually fighting for?

Gesellschaft gestalten

V: Shaping society. Fights for democracy and justice.

S: What does that mean: *shaping society*? It sounds understandable at first, but society is something very big. In fact, I have no idea what that's supposed to mean.

V: I think society is where people come together in certain numbers and develop rules for how to get along. The more diverse a society is, the more complex the rules. There are also many unspoken rules – or maybe not rules, that sounds harsh, but ... standards and values that shape how we live together.

S: Okay. When I think of German society, for example, then we can say that despite many differences, there are certain standards and values that we share and that shape us as a society. And then, discussing these values is part of shaping what our society is, right? Then it's about checking over and over whether these standards still fit.

V: Yes, questioning things is part of that, even if you end up with the status quo again.

For me, doing volunteer work is an important field where this is happening – whether at a sports club or in a village association, society is shaped there at a small scale. Because that's where how people cooperate is shaped or mutual support is organised.

S: True, civil society plays a huge role there, I mean independently of politics or economics. The same applies when it's about cultural activities or protest. This *shaping* is often creative, a negotiation of values that have an impact on us.

V: Shaping also requires dealing with the issue and having an ideal vision of what a society should be like. It's the same as a sketch: you try and get as close to this ideal as possible.

S: That's true, visions and utopias are also needed.

V: Indeed, a positive frame of reference, and I have the impression that that's often missing today. I think to shape something always requires preserving part of what existed before but perhaps re-designing it. That's why everything intended to fundamentally shake up the status quo or kind of re-set everything does not constitute a constructive way of shaping something. In my understanding, something based on prior destruction is not shaping as such.

S: That means we're not talking about revolution here, but about reforms. Or rather transformation. And not necessarily at the political level, but shaping how we interact with each other so that everyone can feel comfortable. This also entails taking responsibility. Meaning that every member of society has the responsibility to co-shape it, not only through political representation.

V: Yes, and it's about accepting that I'm also part of society, and that I have the same position and strength as any other member of this society. That I'm not superior to anyone, and my voice is not more powerful. This also means, however, considering whether everyone is adequately represented. Yes, this is the point where groups say they're not represented or heard here, and they then start to organise themselves.

S: Yes, protest and commitment often arise on the basis of something lacking, out of necessity or under pressure.

V: Whether in Iran, the Maidan Uprising or elsewhere: when civil liberties or privileges or simply prospects for the future are threatened, people will react. And art plays an essential part in preparing, in accompanying and later in documenting or interpreting what has happened.

S: Or works of art succeed in illustrating overarching correlations. In any case, pictures hold immense power when it comes, for instance, to bearing witness. Particularly in a world shaped by media images, visibility is crucial.

V: Looking at the works of art, I like it a lot that we have Johanna Failer's *Meeting Points* here, because the installation is so tangible. I think the constellation of chairs stands beautifully for what we've just talked about – diversity and variety.

S: In her paintings, she tends to show settings that clearly originate from contexts such as companies or the world of politics, where not all people get together, but only a certain selection.

V: Yes, but in the installation she opens that up, because she doesn't show a specific place but creates a new room here with a variety of individual chairs.

S: You're right. What I particularly like in this section is the co-existence of these classic, militant depictions of the workers' movement or the Silesian weavers' uprising and Peasants' War in the case of Kollwitz or Meidner's very iconic socialist red flag. But then it also stretches into newer conflicts. Looking at these works side by side, I wonder what they have in common and what has changed over time.

V: True, Kollwitz's etchings show a form of protest that we immediately associate with the term; a group coming together and absorbing the individual, thereby conveying the group's strength.

S: Yes, and next to it we see Stephanie Bergwinkl's video on climate activism which is very different from – let's say the peasants' uprisings. Back then, it was about acute oppression and today it is about threats that will only be felt in the future. In the past, peasants were able to attack their oppressors directly. The correlations are more complex today. Those affected by the climate crisis are geographically very remote from those responsible for it.

V: This makes it more difficult to actually exert *pressure* by protesting, to convey the *urgency*.

S: And the question is how to give *one* common voice to this diffuse mass of people who are distributed across continents and live in different societal forms?
What about a cut now?

V: Yes, now that the mood is down.

S: Okay, let's move on quickly, on to the next topic.

Identität und Selbstbestimmung

S: Identity and self-determination. Between freedom and discrimination. Another cheery topic.

V: They're all cheery topics, aren't they?

S: Yes, but I think this one can be seen more positively than the others. Especially in the fields of gender, sexuality, diversity, there's a lot going on. In our society, a lot of things have become more natural, though there may be headwind – all that back lash. Nonetheless, a larger variety of people is becoming visible, and they can advocate their interests more strongly.

V: We didn't find hardly anything on this in the collection. Which makes it even more important that the scholarship holders' works are filling that void. In Cihan Çakmak's case, I find particularly powerful how personal her work is. Her quiet pictures hold an incredible power – they show her will to utilise her right to personal development and autonomy.

S: And she does that without conventional symbols, like a raised fist in battle. I think this shows very well how art can be part of societal transformation, once it breaks with stereotypical depictions and shows its own images instead, apart from normative concepts. That's why I find Magdalena Kallenberger's work important, because she enters into this process of questioning and re-interpreting existing depictions. Kallenberger illustrates that these are negotiation processes, taking place militantly at both the individual and societal levels.

V: In contrast, I find historical works by Conrad Felixmüller or Rudolf Koch interesting. Here, we encounter women as sexualised and objectified whereas today the negotiation of the depictions today originates from those affected themselves.

S: You're right. Having said that, the cabaret in the 1920s, as we see it in Felixmüller, also provided spaces where women and other groups were able to transcend norms. It was a protected space for self-determination, albeit a restricted one.

V: In contemporary works such as Ksenia Kuleshova's photo series *No Russians Allowed*, which also deals with identity and sexuality, these levels are more complex. She accompanies queer people from Russia experiencing new marginalisation in other countries – as Russians. That adds another dimension to the question of identity.

S: Yes, this shows how identity is shaped by external circumstances. It's fascinating, as this work makes visible that identity is not always something that can be determined by oneself, but rather that it can often be overlaid by state or societal constructs.

This is well in line with my experience of today's world. A friend of mine often uses the term *multi-complexity*: you believe you've found a position but then you're challenged time and again. It is not always easy to position oneself for something.

V: Good closing words ...

Wissen teilen

V: Sharing knowledge. Collective answers to global transformations.

S: This is a very broad field ...

V: Yes, but it is an incredibly intriguing and beautiful field – even if at first it's abstract.

S: I think it's about the connection between two areas: on the one hand, our relationship with the world, meaning humanity's relationship with planet Earth, animals, technology and each other. And then there's the link to education and knowledge.

V: Our relationship with the world is constantly changing. And the crises, be they global or local, can only be overcome if we are willing to question things. Education and knowledge play a vital role here. Education creates access – also to ways of expressing oneself. It means empowerment and emancipation.

S: In today's multi-complex world, it's more important than ever before, because everything is linked to everything else. It's no longer sufficient to simply understand our immediate surroundings.

V: Absolutely. And collective knowledge, the sum of all our individual knowledge, shows how manifold perspectives can be. It's about finding similarities, but also always keeping an open mind – knowledge is never concluded.

S: That's an important point! Knowledge is often rationalised in our society, limited to facts and science, and institutionalised knowledge. But also those people in our society who have less access to education have forms of knowledge that are relevant in their lives. But beyond that, these forms appear without value or are not seen at all.

Or indigenous people, who have a wealth of knowledge that does not correspond to our rational and empirical understanding of knowledge. That's why these types of knowledge were and still are threatened by colonisation processes. But there's so much we can learn from indigenous knowledge. Let's take permaculture, for example, which is based on the philosophy, practices and principles of the Mayans. They knew how to successfully farm their lands in difficult climate conditions, while our rationalised approaches tend to fail when we think of the climate crisis.

V: This requires, however, accepting our own lack of knowledge and being willing to learn beyond familiar thought patterns. But we are much too attached to a conventional understanding of knowledge as *well-read*, aren't we? If I were to select an emoji to represent education, I would probably choose a book.

S: Yes, a book is a powerful symbol for knowledge. And it shows up in the artworks time and again. In the case of Frans Masereel, the reading worker shows how education can lead to emancipation. He's not only a worker but someone who thinks, dreams, educates himself. That's what I like so much about the picture, that he's so immersed in this book. In Lotte Prechner's work, in contrast, the book stands for an elevated intellectuality. I find both perspectives fascinating.

V: True. Both are depicted as players to be taken seriously, which I like. And then there are artists like Qusay Awad, who shows knowledge symbolically as wheat, which stands for growth and dissemination. A seed becomes a new plant which in turn carries a lot of other seeds – just as knowledge spreads and develops further. His work shows how strong the relationship is between humans, nature and culture.

S: Particularly with wheat, which plays such an important role in the world's food supply, its production is most certainly about mass, turning out as much yield as possible and so on. But the artist directly interacts with the material. For me, this stands for haptic knowledge, or perhaps physical knowledge. Through this interaction, wheat becomes more than just a commodity. It represents relationships, culture, humanity.

This could be done with other things too, with chickens or cows or pigs.

V: Yes, but I find a performance using wheat more attractive than one with sausage.

S: Yes, but I would like potatoes too.

V: My German heart, my potato heart.

S: Or apples. I think apples would be nice.

V: Nice, yes.

Kontinuitäten und Umbrüche

S: Continuities and upheavals. Reflecting the past.

V: Well, looking back over these one hundred years, this was a time of upheavals, between the two World Wars. And that's exactly when the Friedrich Ebert foundation was founded, a time of radical change.

S: You're right. I hadn't thought of that yet. One hundred years of upheavals but also continuities. And we have a lot of works that illuminate the major upheavals in particular, such as Soso Dumbadze's mosaic with Hitler's hat in Obersalzberg or Franziska Junge's wallpaper, dealing with memories of the GDR.

V: Yes, I particularly like the topic of the GDR. Sometimes, I feel that we are only at the beginning in this respect. For a long time, the topic only came up on days with symbolic meaning. With the generations growing up in the 80s and 90s, a new awareness is arising. They're dealing with it differently, more intensively.

S: I think the topic is coming increasingly into focus because people with some time distance now have different possibilities to express their opinions about it. I didn't experience the era of German unification, but I have a feeling that with more distance it can be discussed better today. People from the GDR are taken more seriously, because they are no longer seen as the "sulking sufferers". Do you know what I mean?

V: Yes, I know what you mean. But I believe there's also some type of natural reflex, a simplification of complex situations. Life in the GDR is often portrayed in a simplified manner – either as "Ostalgia" with funny traffic light figures and ice cream cups or as oppressive under Stasi observation. But it was a lot more complex than that.

In my family and my in-laws' family, I see how different the experiences were. My mother, who left the system, constantly experienced repression. My parents-in-law in Saxony-Anhalt, however, lived far from the capital and had an easier way of arranging their lives without getting into conflicts all the time.

And then there was this major upheaval. For many people in western Germany, little

changed, while millions of people in the East had to find a new identity. Companies were closed, unemployment was everywhere. It impacted an entire generation.

There's one part of the population that was subjected to pressure to change, did change and maybe lives expecting to be recognised for that, but doesn't experience it. Which leads to different reactions.

I believe this is part of the wide range that makes it harder to grow into a specific joint identity.

But I'm very much looking to the next generations in this regard for this to continue to evolve. But it requires the willingness to move towards each other and to create a joint culture of remembrance.

S: When I listen to people from the GDR or those who today live in eastern Germany, I often have the impression that in the time that followed the events of autumn 1989, there was a lack of what we discussed under the topic of *Shaping society*. At the political level and for Germany's understanding of itself, the fall of the wall and unification were very important. But there was no societal coming-together.

I think what you said is very important, that it's not just about big symbolic gestures, but about real life experiences.

Works such as *Aggression* by Wolfgang Mattheuer symbolise major upheavals – national socialism, GDR, unification. In contrast, in Franziska Junge's wallpaper, it's about the personal stories behind them, about how people's identities were shaped by them.

I think it's crucial to look at history not only at the political level, where it's about big names and symbols, but to really start with the people as such.

Krieg, Repression und Vertreibung

V: War, repression and displacement. Experiences of violence

Here I find it particularly interesting that the works we have on this topic often show so much sensitivity, despite this being a hard topic. Goya really shows really brutal processes. But there are also soft works. For example, the small details in Hiltrud Gauff's work – these fine lines that unfold their impact from a distance. Or Raisan Hameed's ladder, simply

standing in the room. It's an amazingly calm work you can engage with in silence. As is the case with many illustrations we show.

S: I find the composition of the media and formats highly interesting. That this vulnerability and personal feeling become so clear. Hiltrud Gauf, for example, has this hand-writing, that's her very personal point of access. It's about how reality is transported in the media – newspapers, reports – but she writes it all down in her own way. To me, that also shows a way of processing things. And the image that emerges looks so strong and fragile at the same time. Precisely because it's hand-written.

V: Yes, there's something immediate about it. We can see that in the drawings too. Whether Goya's or those by Ilse Schütze-Schur and Lea Grundig. It's about bodies in motion – and about bodily harm. Which is close to Gauf's topic: fleeing as motion that develops out of necessity but is dangerous in itself. That was an issue during the World Wars and it still is today.

S: People fleeing are in danger and vulnerable. Schütze-Schur shows women who are not fighting in a war or fleeing, but who are still affected physically – by famine, uncertainty. This reminds me of reports about the war in Ukraine today. The permanent state of alertness, worrying about family members at the fronts, it wears people out and physically harms them.

V: Yes, being alert all the time makes you tired and porous at some point. I haven't had this experience of flight myself. But I believe that eventually you create some type of protective shell. And I feel that many works, such as the ones by Hameed and Gauf, show breaking out of such a shell – like punching holes in it to overcome the shell.

S: I find it also shows how we as people living in safety are confronted with it. Gauf picks up on this in her work: these reports of flight and displacement that we sometimes almost merely nod through. Or TV footage of Putin who as a person embodies the war of aggression against Ukraine. These images reach us, and we need to deal with them somehow. And that was true for Goya as well – he wanted to confront the viewers with realities.

V: Goya produced etchings, today we have social media images we see directly on our smartphones. But the truth in the images is no longer that clear.

S: Correct. Goya's etchings are based on truth, but they are constructed pictures. They nonetheless look more real than some of the things we see on social media. Because there's

often no context. Peter Sorge is also tackling this topic of media images. I find his works fascinating, as they demonstrate how inconsistent the thing is we call reality. We need to ask: What information is being conveyed and how do we make sense of all these pieces of information?

V: I find that intriguing too. While Grundig und Goya have a clear prerogative of interpretation about what they are showing, this is no longer the case in the world of social media. The same images can be interpreted differently by different people. For me, this can be also seen in Soso Dumbadze's work – he kind of snatches the control over staged images out of Putin's hands and lends them a new interpretation. And at the same time, at a personal level, it's also confronting one's own failure, of closing one's eyes, maybe confronting one's own comfort zone.

S: And this takes us back to the topic of *Shaping society*. We have already talked about how the commitment to shape a society jointly – or in other words: to shape democracy – is often triggered by pressure.

V: That's true. It would be interesting to look at that more closely.

S: I was thinking about whether we've left out anything really important.

V: I believe there's a lot we haven't mentioned. But we did spoke about quite a lot. And we weren't aiming to say something about each picture.

S: I agree. That's it then, isn't it?

V: We're done, yes.

S: Let me stop the recording.