

*Information for the media*  
*09/07/2022*  
*International Contemporary Art Festival*  
*Survival Kit 13*  
*Pils 23, Riga, Latvia*  
*September 2nd to October 16th, 2022*

### **Survival Kit 13: Curator, artist list and venue announced**

**The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (LCCA) launches the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of its annual contemporary art festival Survival Kit, one of its key endeavors and a major art event in the Baltics. Focusing on the issues of different freedoms, the phenomenon of cultural revolution and sound and speech as means of resistance, the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of Survival Kit is taking place in the heart of Riga, Pils iela 23 – a central location around which the story of the Latvian Singing Revolution evolves. We are delighted to announce the curator of the 13th edition of Survival Kit iLiana Fokianaki, the concept, and list of participating artists.**

The upcoming edition of Survival Kit 13, is conceived by curator iLiana Fokianaki, and takes as its form of departure the cultural imprint of the Russian occupation of Latvia. The exhibition is titled *The little bird must be caught*, and is inspired by the homonymous title of a poem by Latvian poet Ojārs Vācietis, known and loved in the country not only for his literary talent, but also for his courage in discussing the political conditions of his time. His work addressed the oppression of the Soviet regime, but also spoke about global social issues, from his native Latvia. The poem written during the latter period of the Soviet Union in the late '70s during Brezhnev's rule, warns of the dangers of letting the little bird free to sing, hatch its eggs and continue being. It is an ironic allegory, in favour of free speech and against authoritarianism and repression. The poem reads urgent and timely, in a global reality where free speech and self-determination are threatened by far-right nationalism and authoritarianism. The exhibition, originally conceived in October 2021, has now a new urgency, given the brutal war launched against the Ukrainian people by what Fokianaki terms the "narcissistic authoritarian statism" of Putin's rule.

Following the thematic of *The little bird must be caught*, the curator and her team chose for Survival Kit 13 to be held this year in the historic center of Riga, the backdrop for the marches and demonstrations for what became known as the "Singing Revolution" (*dziesmotā revolūcija*). It was this peaceful four-year-long uprising from 1987 to 1991, that would lead to the restoration of independence of the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania from the Soviet Union, marking the end of the Cold War. Latvia is famous for the hundreds of "dainas"—traditional folk songs—also inspiring and informing the exhibition.

The little bird must be caught focuses on how sound, music, voice, the sonic, utterance have played a role throughout human history in defining, marking, contouring and characterizing historical moments of emancipation: actions against repression and authoritarianism, the relationship of sound to freedom of speech, the power of the voice and the role of the sonic in resistance, revolution and self-determination. The works presented discuss, consider and address, the role of art in historical and contemporary modes of self-determination, resistance with an emphasis on music and the sonic as forms of peaceful protest, declarative gestures and collective performativity.

These enquiries aim to further connect with the aftermath of the global pandemic, that changed our sonic landscapes and made felt the role of sound when the world's slowing down meant a new-found, numbing silence. Simultaneously, it made clear that even in times of health crisis, injustice cannot be silenced, as demonstrated by the global movement of Black Lives Matter that filled the streets, the ears and the minds with slogans about freedom, equality and social justice, the global manifestations of a revived environmental movement, that made us listen beyond the human centred perspective of the world, and the recent solidarity marches for the people of Ukraine in anti-war demonstrations the world over.

**Fokianaki** has a compelling record of group and solo exhibitions and research projects in institutions worldwide. The founder and director of State of Concept Athens since 2013, she has changed the landscape of the Athenian art scene, bringing to the capital of Greece exhibitions of artists such as Basim Magdy, Laure Prouvost, Sanja Iveković, Forensic Architecture, Kader Attia, Metahaven, Kapwani Kiwanga. She has curated exhibitions for international institutions such as e-flux New York, La Colonie, KADIST Paris, Kunstinstituut Melly Rotterdam, Museum of Contemporary Art Ljubljana and has curated public programs for Vera List Center for Art and Politics, Het Nieuwe Instituut a.o. She is currently co-curating a group exhibition for Reina Sofia Museum Madrid and preparing a group show for Framer Framed Amsterdam, both to be realised in 2023. Fokianaki is a lecturer at the Dutch Art Institute, and has lectured in academies, independent spaces, museums, and foundations worldwide. She publishes regularly in journals such as e-flux, Frieze, among others, and has participated in several publications. Her book "Gossips: WomXn Gather" will be published in 2023.

**Participating artists:** Forensic Architecture, Andrius Arutiunian, Sammy Baloji, Rufina Bazlova, Candice Breitz, Juris Boiko and Hardijs Lediņš, Vera Chotzoglou, Sanja Ivekovic, Kapwani Kiwanga, Chrysanthi Koumianaki, Rojava Film Commune, Ansis Epnors, Kristaps Epnors, Dora García, Almagul Menlibayeva, Marina Naprushkina, Ahmet Ögüt, Antonis Pittas, Susan Philipsz, Laure Prouvost, Tabita Rezaire, Mykola Ridnyi, Krišs Salmanis, Erica Scourti, Indrė Šerpytytė, Sabine Šne, Maryam Tafakory, Wu Tsang, Raed Yassin, Valdis Villerušs, Anton Vidokle.

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Images:

1. Visual Identity: Rana Karan and Cécile Kobel
2. Photo of the curator iLiana Fokianaki, by Thalia Galanopoulou

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