



Research and
creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

Visual arts

Artist-in-residence 2021

Mike Bourscheid

From July to December 2021

Jury

Claudine Hemmer
Clément Minighetti
Eric Schumacher



FONDS
CULTUREL
NATIONAL

BIOGRAPHIE

Mike Bourscheid

Mike Bourscheid's sculpture-and performance-based practice involves his fabrication of ungainly or ridiculous appendages and prosthetics, in order to channel alternate personae as a device for addressing aspects of his own Luxembourgian heritage, as well as notions of masculinity, European pomposity, and patriarchal power. Bourscheid represented Luxembourg at the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017, and his recent exhibitions include Kunstverein Heidelberg (Germany), LIAR NYC (USA), Kunstpalais Erlangen (Germany) and Western Front (Canada). He has upcoming solo exhibitions at the Richmond Art Gallery (Canada) and at 1646 in The Hague (Netherlands). Mike Bourscheid is based in Luxembourg and Vancouver.

Photo © Mike Bourscheid

Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

When I arrived at Künstlerhaus Bethanien on July 17th 2021, I was told that my exhibition at Künstlerhaus Bethanien would open October 1st 2021. Having applied to this residency with a very laborious project that would have taken me the whole time of the residency to research and produce, I realized very quickly that I had to let go of my initial project and I had to rethink my whole project for this residency in order to be able to show at least something for the exhibition already opening October 1st.

After having visited the exhibition space together with Valeria Schulte-Fischedick and the other participants of the show, I decided to use the exhibition space as a film set in order to produce a new film called Agnes. Having already started working on some of the costumes, the script and the general idea of the film prior to the residency, I felt a bit relieved and comfortable enough to hit the deadline for the exhibition opening on October 1st.

During opening hours of the exhibition, the film set with its costumes, sculptures and props was shown as an installation called Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories. For the last 7 days of the exhibition, from 7 pm until 7 am, when the exhibition was closed to the public, I filmed Agnes wearing the costumes as well as the props that were previously exhibited and I used the installation as a film set. The set was professionally lit by large LED sky-panels that I rented from a film rental company. Each day, the costumes and props and parts of the set got moved around depending on the scenes that needed to be filmed. The costumes started to have some slight signs of usage and the overall exhibition slowly felt more and more lived-in. The characters of the costumes started to inhabit the space. Depending on the scenes that were filmed during the night, the exhibition might smell like food or cigarettes, hair and peanuts might lay on the ground, the kitchen sink might have used dishes in it or props such as prosthetic noses and make-up might still be visible in the installation. Film lights, reflectors, microphones and some of the camera's equipment were also still on display during public visiting hours.



Photo ©David Brandt

I was able to shoot the whole film during these 7 days and I am still editing it at the moment. I envision to finish editing the film Agnes in September and I will try to show it at one of the movie theaters in Berlin. I have talked to Christoph Tannert about potentially showing the film at Movimiento Berlin. He said he would help me organize the screening and the first release of the film.

The installation Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories and the film Agnes will be exhibited at the Richmond Art Gallery in Canada opening January 28th 2023.

Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories and the film Agnes are both featured in a new monograph which will be published by Distanz Verlag mid to end of July 2022. Focuna has its Logo inside the catalogue as well.

Here is a little timeline of my stay at Künstlerhaus Bethanien:



Photo © Mike Bourscheid

July:

I had to delay the start of my residency from July 1st to July 19th due to waiting for my second Pfizer- Biontech vaccination shot in Luxembourg that I received July 15th. Upon arrival, I set up my studio, met the other artists in residence at Künstlerhaus Bethanien and familiarized myself with the wood and metal shop at Bethanien. After having been told that the exhibition is already October 1st, I immediately started to plan my exhibition. I bought a saddle on Ebay- Kleinanzeigen and started to modify it in order for it to fit my suitcase. I as well had to reinforce and modify the suitcase in order to make it possible for me sit on it and use it like a horse.

August:

Research for buying material (wood, leather, fabric, etc.) in order to make the costumes and build all the props and the film set for Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories. I bought fabric at Berger Stoffe and Hüco Stoffe and started to make 2 more costumes for the show as well as hugging/boxing bag. The boxing/hugging bag will be an important character in the film. I also started to make drawings for the film Set and I ordered all the materials to build the set. Because the film set needed an entrance door, I bought one on Ebay-Kleinanzeigen and I modified it in order for it to be fully functional and freestanding.

I made all the props for the movie. Here are some of the sculptures and props I made in August: 7 Latex noses, crayons in the shape of vegetables and fruits, wooden flowers, display hands for the gloves, bread shoes, a broom that has a lipstick embedded in the handle, 3 wooden hanging displays for the costumes, a custom confession table with a wooden saddle on it, a little stage with plaster casts of my face, a sleeping mask that has my wisdom teeth in it and a special set of bedsheets.

I visited many galleries, I saw a Pollesch piece at Volksbühne, I went to see Pauline Curnier Jardins fantastic show at Hamburger Bahnhof and I saw the exhibition Fire in my belly at Julia Stoschek Collection twice.

Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

September:

I continued working on the costumes and props for the exhibition. I built the main round stage and figured out together with the technician how we can make the sink and the cooking stove fully functional for the film. I installed the show Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories. I started planning the film shoot and reserved the movie rental equipment. I organize the shot list with my camera person and I hired an audio person from Oslo that was referred to me by a close friend whom is a film maker. I visited Neues Museum, Alte National Galerie, Bode Museum and Berlinische Galerie. I installed my exhibition Idealverein at Heidelberger Kunstverein (Exhibition 10.09.2021- 31.10.2021) between September 7th and September 10th.

October:

I finished installing Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories. Opening of the exhibition Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories at Künstlerhaus Bethanien (02.10.2021- 24.10.2021). My film crew arrived in Berlin on October 20th and we started plan the film together, especially which scenes are filmed on what day. My camera person was Tom Richardson (UK) and my audio technician was Emil Olsen (Norway).

Agnes was filmed from the the 21st to the 25th of October in the exhibition of Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories.

November:

Sorting through the footage, making copies of the files, matching up audio recordings with video clips, Folley audio recording for the film Agnes in my studio. Doing research for writing the dialogues for the puppets in the film. Prepping and editing the film. I organized a lot of studio visits. Visiting Copenhagen for 3 days (I visited a bronze foundry in Trakonar and the Mikka Rottenberg exhibition at the Louisiana Museum of Contemporary Art in Copenhagen).

December:

I participated at the OVNI Film Festival in Nice (Dec 5th to Dec 10th) with the video work The wellbeing of things: A 5km race. I visited a stained glass whole seller in Brandenburg and I bought a bunch of stained glass. My wife Vanessa Brown showed me how to work with stained glass and I used a lot of December to learn how to cut and work with stained glass in order to make large stained glass Vitraillies. Last studio visits, finishing up last projects in the wood shop and wrapping up the studio.



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Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL



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Selection of shows visited:

- Volksbühne, Die Gewehre der Frau Kathrin Angerer, Rene Pollesch; Future, Constanza Macras; Herr puntila und das riesen Ding in der Mitte, Rene Pollesch
- Katharina Voß and Janin Afken, Berlinische Galerie
- Many Galleries
- Fire in my belly, Julia Stoschek Collection
- Neues Museum
- Altes Museum
- Kunstwerke
- Hamburger Bahnhof
- Shannon Bool at Gut Kerkow (Dinner invite) (curated by Galerie PSM)
- Kasia Fudakowski at Gut Kerkow (curated by Chert/ Lüdde)

Studio visits with:

- Magda Mai (curator at Berliner Kindl)
- Leon Kruijswijk (curator at Kunstwerke)
- Rodney LaTourelle
- Johan Gustavsson (1646 Den Hague) (Lead to an exhibition in 2023)
- Mitch Speed, artist and writer for Frieze magazine
- Alison Huegel (writer for Berlin Art Link, wrote an article about my work)
- Linda Peitz (Independent curator)
- Lauryn Youden (Independent curator)
- Alex Müller (artist curator, Lead to an exhibition)
- Shannon Bool (artist, represented by Gallery Daniel Ferria)
- Stephan Klee (Haunt/ Frontviews)
- Grund (Lead to an exhibition in December 2022)
- Heike Fuhlbrügge (Rohkunstbau and me-collectors room)
- Olaf Stüber (Independent curator)
- Kata Krasznahorkai (Independent curator, curator at NGbK Berlin)
- Miki Shimokawa (LOAF Kyoto Japan)
- Alexandra Landré (Artistic director at Stroom Den Hague)
- Gilles Neiens, curateur indépendant
- Carola Uehlken, independant curator
- Kandis Friesen, artist from Quebec, Canada

Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

I overall had an amazing time during my residency at Künstlerhaus Bethanien. The wood shop is great and the shop preps were very helpful. Valeria Schulte-Fischedick was also very friendly, welcoming and helpful. I felt very taken care of. The newsletters she sent out about exhibitions and events happening in Berlin were super helpful. I also made friends with some of the residents and my time there felt very social and inspiring.

I was shocked when I heard that the exhibition was already planned for October 1st and I was quite sad to let go of my initial project. The crazy deadline also put me in an overwhelming production mode in order to hit the deadline for the exhibition. I am really lucky that I secured myself a little film fund for making the film Agnes before I even went to the residency and that I already had a plan B lined up. I didn't visit many exhibitions, I didn't do many studio visits and I didn't meet many new artists in July, August and September because I was too busy working on the show non-stop. I wish the residency would have been a bit more balanced energy wise because of that reason.

About the BE Magazin:

I had a quite bad experience with one of the writers from BE Magazine and I felt like there was no listening and respect in regards to what is being written about my work. As a result, I canceled the text that was written about my work and I decided to only show images of Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories in the magazine.

After having talked to the writer and the manager of the magazine, I realized that the writer has not enough time to properly work together with the artist on a text until both are happy. I think that should be important especially because Be Magazine is a portfolio magazine. The time properly spent on a text and the wage paid for it is out of balance. Knowing that, I can totally relate and understand the writer's reaction and I can fully understand that they had a lot of pressure to write a good text in a very short period of time for that amount of money. I would suggest to Kultur|LX to set aside a larger budget for the writer that is in charge of the text of the Luxembourgish resident and that they are paid more money for their work. It is very important to me that people are paid accordingly.



Photo © Mike Bourscheid

The residency at Künstlerhaus Bethanien led to a solo exhibition, scheduled for September 2023 at the artist run center 1646 in The Hague. The studio visit with Johan Gustavson from 1646 was initiated by the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, the other studio visit was initiated by myself. The studio visits organized by Künstlerhaus Bethanien were all very interesting and some have potential for future collaborations. I also made a list of curators, collectors and fellow artist that I would like to have a visit with and I asked if Künstlerhaus Bethanien could contact them via their official email. That worked great. They contacted everybody on the list and most of them came for a studio visit. I was blown away! I talked a lot about my newly shot film and a lot of the curators were interested in following up once the film is

Research and creation residency
Künstlerhaus Bethanien

RESIDENCY PROPOSAL

finished to talk about future collaborations. The exhibition also had a great turn around and I met a lot of people through that show. I also made long time friendships with fellow residents. It was really nice and inspiring to be surrounded by so many interesting and talented artists. Having access to a wood shop really helped me deepen my wood working skills and without that wood shop this new body of work wouldn't have been possible. I made a lot of new art works during the residency and they are just waiting to be exhibited. The works that were part of Sunny Side Up and other sorrowful stories will be either shown in January at the Richmond Art Gallery in Canada. I will send the short film Agnes that I made in the film set of Sunny Side up and other sorrowful to some film festivals. I also already talked to Christoph Tannert and Olaf Stueber and they were both interested in helping me find a venue for premiering the film in a movie theatre in Berlin. I am also gonna talk to Kevin once the film is ready to screen it at the Black Box at Casino Luxembourg. The residency also allowed me to live rent free for 6 months and to have access to an amazing studio. Having no financial worries when working on bigger projects is so important and helpful. By finally having enough time to read books without feeling guilty is really nurturing my practice and it really helps me understand more the world I am living in. So overall, this residency led to a lot of new opportunities, friendships and professional connections as well as it helped me deepen my practice.



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