

Marta Riniker-Radich

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Milano

Istituto Svizzero

Information

**Patience Will Reward Those
Who Lie in Wait**

Category

Art, Exhibition

istitutsvizzero.it

The work of Marta Riniker-Radich is based on extensive research and confrontation with specific social, political, and economic realities. *Patience Will Reward Those Who Lie in Wait* is the title of the artist's solo exhibition at Istituto Svizzero in Milan, in which she examines the psychosocial effects of contemporary work environments and raises fundamental questions about our relationship to work and life.

The poster Marta Riniker-Radich designed for this exhibition welcomes visitors to the inner courtyard and marks the beginning of a multi-layered, sometimes tongue-in-cheek interplay of text and visual elements, which the artist uses to link the various aspects of this overarching theme. The poster makes us think of an office employee busy at work, who, like a bird of prey, patiently waits for its chance to pounce. Yet, perhaps, Marta Riniker-Radich has an altogether different message in mind.

Post-industrialization, which replaced industrial society in the West during the post-war economic boom, is characterized by the dominance of knowledge and information as circulating resources and by a fast-growing service sector. The white-collar worker is epitomized by the office employee who sits at a desk in an open-plan office, an architectural and organisational structure that also emerged around the same time. In the first exhibition room, Marta Riniker-Radich's series *No Grace Period* (2021) consists of 30 works, featuring drawings and texts, presented in seven plexiglass-lined vitrines. The texts are excerpts from the book *White Collar: The American Middle Classes*, written by the American sociologist C. Wright Mills in 1951. Marta Riniker-Radich combines these quotes with anatomically accurate drawings of human knees, which count among humans' most vulnerable body parts. Phrases such as 'The mind of the quitter always has a negative taint' and 'He has lost all hope of ascension by individual means' reveal a working atmosphere shaped by competition and the drive to achieve. In this world, the pressure placed on individual employees (and their fragile knees) can be immense. The austere, repetitive exhibition architecture brings to mind monotonous work processes or the furnishings of an open-plan office. At the same time, the reflective interior of the display cases might evoke the instability of contemporary working reality, characterized by such flexible arrangements as zero-hour contracts, while the surrounding office buildings are mirrored in the shimmering plexiglass.

In the second exhibition room, drawings address the oppression that goes hand in hand with the realities of the working world and the desire to quit, to succumb to distraction and to retreat into oneself (we can spot a 'pause' button against a purple background). So it is the stressed, burned out office employee, a ballpoint pen always at hand in their shirt pocket, who now and then has to stick their head in an 'ostrich pillow'—to have a moment of respite, hide from their surroundings, or take a power nap with the aim of improving efficiency. The two drawings with 'Ewiger Hass' (Eternal Hatred) and 'Unending Slog' written on them present a bleak take on the need to escape the monotony of everyday work life. The visuals make reference to role-playing games and their accompanying manuals, in which fantastic worlds are constructed as a parallel reality.

The artist complements the works in the exhibition with the fictional narrative *Thomas*, relating the story of an IT service provider who hopes to reinvent himself by opening a small cultural venue and pursuing those interests that are not satisfied by his professional environment. *Patience Will Reward Those Who Lie in Wait* deals with the realities of work in a post-industrial society; at the same time, it can also be read as a commentary on working conditions in the field of contemporary art. Marta Riniker-Radich's works reflect the reality of an artist's life in an environment that is both uncertain and highly competitive, in which work and life constantly intermingle, the pressure to constantly reinvent oneself is strong—and an 'ostrich pillow' would at times be welcome.

Gioia Dal Molin, September 2021

The exhibition poster produced for the exhibition is available in a limited edition of 50. It can be purchased on site for EUR 20 or ordered at milano@istitutovizzero.it (plus shipping costs).

Biography

Marta Riniker-Radich (born 1982 in Bern, lives and works in Frankfurt am Main) has developed a drawing practice that makes use of very simple means yet is intensified by her use of color and layering techniques.

Created in series and made almost exclusively in A4 format with colored pencils, her drawings function as slices of an abstracted reality and interact with works in other media, such as text, objects and site-specific installations, to create larger narratives.

Her projects often stem from specific historical occurrences and situations, such as the California electricity crisis of the late 1990s or the petroleum industry in Texas. These research themes are translated into a network of symbols and fictionalized narratives that highlight the impact of socio-political and economic realities on the development of human behavior. Power structures, both corporate and individual, cronyism, insecurity and regression to childhood are among the themes that emerge in her work.

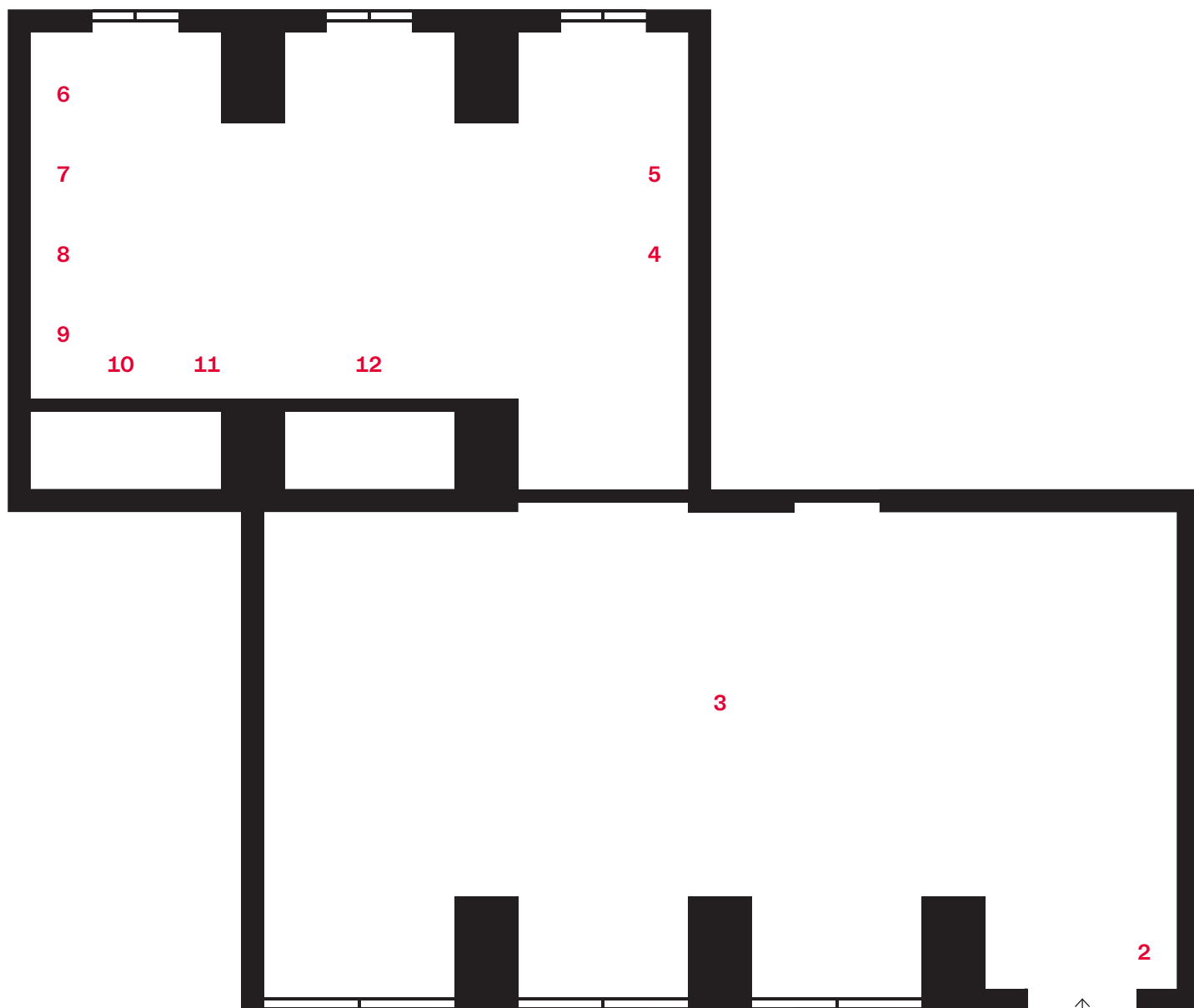
Marta Riniker-Radich studied at the HEAD in Geneva and has participated in numerous artist residencies (Fieldwork Marfa, Studio Roma/Istituto Svizzero, Landis & Gyr Stiftung in London, among others). Her work has been exhibited internationally and she was the recipient of the Swiss Art Award (2010) and of the Manor Kunstpreis (2016). Recent solo exhibitions include the Swiss Institute, New York, Kunsthhaus Glarus, and Eclair, Berlin.

For information:

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In the courtyard:

1 Marta Riniker-Radich, *Patience Will Reward Those Who Lie in Wait*, 2021, print on plexiglass, 70 x 100 cm. Printed edition of 50 copies, inkjet print on semi-matt paper, 70 x 100 cm. Poster for sale at Euro 20

2 Marta Riniker-Radich, *Thomas*, 2021, text

3 Marta Riniker-Radich, *No Grace Period*, 2021. 30 colored pencil and pencil on paper; inkjet print and various materials on paper, all 21 x 29,7 cm, wooden frames, 7 vitrines 100 x 170 x 92 cm, plexiglass

4 Marta Riniker-Radich, *And now the inevitable is staring them in their wobbly faces and leaving footprints in their home*, 2020, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

5 Marta Riniker-Radich, *And now the inevitable is staring them in their wobbly faces and leaving footprints in their home*, 2020, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

6 Marta Riniker-Radich, *And now the inevitable is staring them in their wobbly faces and leaving footprints in their home*, 2020, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

7 Marta Riniker-Radich, *And now the inevitable is staring them in their wobbly faces and leaving footprints in their home*, 2020, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

8 Marta Riniker-Radich, *Untitled*, 2021, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

9 Marta Riniker-Radich, *No Fly-by-Night Pamphleteer*, 2021, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

10 Marta Riniker-Radich, *No Fly-by-Night Pamphleteer*, 2021, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

11 Marta Riniker-Radich, *Untitled*, 2021, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm

12 Marta Riniker-Radich, *Untitled*, 2021, colored pencil and pencil on paper, 21 x 29,7 cm