

IZK Institute for Contemporary Art  
Flowers (Not) Worthy of Paradise

Master Studio Project in connection with Knowledge Forms and Visual and Sonic Practice

Milica Tomić, Stasha Tomić, Rose-Anne Gush



Image: *Grandhotel Panhaus, Semmering, Austria, 1888*

### *Flowers (Not) Worthy of Paradise*

“Look within the creole garden, you put all species on this tiny lick of land: avocados, lemons, yams, sugarcanes... plus thirty or forty other species on this bit of land that doesn’t go more than fifty feet up on the side of the hill, they protect each other. In the big circle, everything is put into everything. He who finds the strength to mix has the strength to find.”

Edouard Glissant cited in LOICHOT, V: *Orphan Narratives: The Postplantation Literature of Faulkner, Glissant, Morrison, and Saint-John Perse*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007, p. 149.

The Studio Project, *Flowers (Not) Worthy of Paradise* draws on radical forms of pedagogy (teaching) in relation to gardening and architecture as tools for *unlearning*, exploring how institutionally engineered norms and values might govern our imagination.

By looking at the garden as a space of resilience, as well as a space of healing and surviving, we will reflect on different forms of knowledge that counter the representative, imperial gardens that feature so prominently in the Western imaginary. These gardens contain knowledge that came about as a form of resistance and resilience, as an answer to colonial barbarism and forced acculturation.

Departing from the gardening methodology of the ‘creole garden’ where plants mutually protected each other, employing the rhizomatic concept of planting, the *principle of (horizontal) distribution* (E. Glissant, 2009); and looking for other examples of counter-gardening, for example, the garden

of the former patient of Frantz Fanon that was built in the psychiatric hospital of Blida-Joinville in Algeria as part of his therapeutic process (*occupational therapy*), we will look at different forms of property, soil and cultivation as an entry point for a conversation connecting history to the present and touching upon issues of liberation through care, architecture, revolution, planting, and repair.

We will explore different forms of property, soil and cultivation by employing various devices, such as drawing, photography, archiving, mapping, and site writing. We will use these devices to create a methodology that will enable us to find the (spatial) articulation of the meaning of gardening in relation to trauma, fear, the continuous year-long lockdown. Our aim is also to instigate a process of healing and repair.

#### **Research material and methodology:**

Guest lectures, talks, interviews, film and video screenings, reading groups, designing, gardening, digging and walking. Students are encouraged to blur the boundaries between diverse modes of knowledge production and practice. The Master Studio Project **Flowers (Not) Worthy of Paradise** explore the potentials of artistic involvement and collaboration with renowned, artists, curators, theorists and partners.

The master studio project will be divided into four parts: (1) research (art-based research, gardening and botany survey while reading, screening, and discussing); (2) presentation of the *research sample*. (3) production (film making, gardening, exhibition concept development and other forms, yet to be discovered, and (4) *curatorial design* (Kuehn, 2016), a preparation for the exhibition and **final presentation** at the exhibiting space **Annenstrasse 53**, in collaboration with the *Verein Das Gesellschaftliche Ding. Kunst, Architektur und Gesellschaft, Springerin* (Magazine) and *Art in Public Space Niederösterreich*, in the larger framework of the artistic project "Land, Property and Commons" initiated by Hedwig Saxenhuber (curator, Springerin magazine, editor in chief).

**Studio spaces:** IZK Online Teaching / IZK Research Space / outdoor fieldwork / exhibiting space Annenstrasse 53,

**Studio times:** sessions **Wednesday, Thursday 11:00 – 16:00**; dates after the Easter break subject to change in discussion with students

#### **Working sessions throughout the studio with invited guests:**

Andreas Goritschnig, architect, Breath Earth Collective  
Wilfried Kühn, KuehnMalvezzi architects  
Hila Peleg, curator and writer HKW Berlin  
Atelier „le balto“, landscape architects and artists  
Shela Sheikh, lecturer Goldsmiths University of London  
Jumana Mana, artist  
Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, associate professor, University of Warwick  
Virginia Black, architect f-architecture  
Secil Binboga, architectural historian  
Mohammed Bouroussia, artists  
Siri Black, artist and researcher  
Philipp Sattler, artist, researcher and writer

**A detailed syllabus, time plan, materials and references for the studio course will be published after the first session on 10<sup>th</sup> March.**