

The Alphabet was read as part of The Leftovers—An Intimate Dinner & Evening of Performances hosted by Angharad Williams & Gianmaria Andreetta

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At Kevin Space, Vienna

THE ALPHABET

Prologue

I was looking for a job. I saw a frame shop and walked in. I asked if they needed someone. After a quick chat about who I was and what my skills were (Photoshop and InDesign. And art?) they told me that someone had just quit and that I could come in the next day. Soon after, my boss also decided to quit and appointed me to be the new boss and shop owner, and, some might say, an entrepreneur.

And so, I do this now for a living. I no longer make, but I frame. I draw the last line, I say when is enough.

Some people would argue putting works in frames is done in order for them to withstand time and the decay time mercilessly brings along, like its private vulture. But many people are not rational enough to care about decay if not forced by someone else. No, if they're coming out of their own accord, they need a frame to know things have ended, and therefore that new ones can begin. They want little checkpoints.

And frames can be many things. A wooden plank, a metal plank, a paper clip, an elaborate custom artwork turned frame—but a frame is also a week, a month, a context, a countdown, a window pane, an alphabet.

A Anxiety

Anxiety is excitement trapped in a body. But how did it get there?

Anxiety dwells comfortably in cities. It drags around, appearing in reflections of buildings on metallic car parts, tinted windows, and mirrored sunglasses. Just before doors of a bus close, anxiety weightlessly slides in and hides in someone's bag, in the reflection of their face on the black mirror that is their phone while, finally, silent. It is these doubled images, damaged images, incomplete and distorted ones, where anxiety and the city meet. Anxiety is excitement trapped in a body, unable to flee. But when released, however temporarily, it lurks in the reflections of city elements—insinuating that each image contains more than it lets on, but away from our eyes.

Anxiety is always about wanting something and not being able to go for it.

B Barking, which tells me the day will drag out

C Corona

As I sit, I lay my eyes on a small glass jar of Lao gan ma chilli flakes, where five brushes are stored. The size of the brushes ranges from 0,3 to 4 cm wide. I use the jar as a water container and the brushes to paint dark and depressing acylic autoportraits. I am not entirely sure why I do that and whether it's narcissistic. Next to is a ceramic cup with a text I wrote and printed on it, as a potential artwork in the first year of art school. It doesn't matter what it reads, because it's about a man, and all men are the same. Next to it is some adhesive tape my ex-boyfriend bought when he gave me a bonsai for Christmas that died when I went

away for it. On the wall above my laptop are two yellow sticky notes: one reads: *sound piece, different European radios* and the other: *Belly photo? Painting? Or what?*

They have been created in the process of preparing for my diploma, which was planned for June. Before everything happened, that is. They are somewhat painful to look at now. Next to my laptop are my puma gym shorts I bought for 4 eur on willhaben. They make me anxious, because I cannot lift weights and climb walls and run, squat, enlarge my ass and my biceps now. I fear I will put on weight within these 4 walls. And I am vain.

Next to the table, in the window is a small plant pot that I have tried to grow from a rhizome of a cut leaf. Firstly, I placed the leaf in water and waited. Once feeble roots grew out, I planted it into a pot. I read online that even if plants grow roots in water they still might not make it in the earth. I planted it there three months ago. I am still watering and waiting. I try to be persistent. I wonder how long it is for my own good to remain persistent and from what point it is causing me harm. When to fight for life and love and when to stop and fight for myself and the future? Bewildering! Too late...

D Dawn, after an event, day comes later

F Force

Phoenix swallows the killing curse and bursts into flames, dying.

In Slavic mythology and folklore, the Firebird is analogue to the phoenix. In the majority of Slavic languages, it is called *žar ptica*, meaning ember bird. It is a magical and prophetic glowing or burning bird from a faraway land which is both a blessing and a harbinger of doom to its captor. A certain cyclical element is present in the nature of both birds. Life, living, livability, fall and failure. The difference between a phoenix and a firebird is the firebird's ambiguous nature. Phoenix is like an ideal, a firebird is like desire.

G Green light

H Hurdles we left behind

When you come home at 3:30 am, the moment belongs only to you. Having love proves nothing and lack thereof proves little too. There is a correlation between love and the spirit of a city, but I cannot grasp it. The streets are empty and a car passes by every few minutes or so. In that moment, the city is as loud as usual, but the night is pensive, so the cars serve as reminders that meaning is elsewhere, that meaning is nowhere—for certain. Such thoughts are complicated. They are not to be shared. They are mine, and mine alone.

I (I)

When I performed, I spoke and wore costumes. My intention was to explore how fixed or unstable identities were. I've done so by mimicking being part of different subcultures, by swapping my pronouns left and right, by varying the intonation of my voice, making it sound as if I had multiple voices, waiting dormant in my throat. However, at the end of the day, some things persisted: I was always a young good-looking cis woman, displaying a quotidian dose of sexiness, regardless of what I wore and said.

When I was alone, I was able to forget those things. While writing the texts of my performances, I thought a lot about the content, the words, what they meant, what they insinuated, how they failed. I thought about the costumes, what they related to, what they imitated and whether anyone believed the illusion. But my face, my class, my body, my gender? I thought I let them be, for they inhabit depths too great for any performance to

reach them and transform them. Yet, with every instance of seeing the documentation images, it was becoming increasingly difficult to ignore them—they were unmistakably there and the same, every time. Have they equated themselves with my art? Yeah, I guess.

J Jokes

Ime went for a run. Ime means *name* in Serbian. Ime is also a name of Ibibio origin, meaning patience and is gender neutral. Ime is also a Greenlandic female name, meaning water. All characters in Haneke's films are called (eng.) George and Ann, (de.) Georg und Anna, (fr.) Georges et Anne.

Ime ran. The streets were smoky and crowded and someone played techno tracks from their window. Ime felt melancholic and young. And then they ran into Flo. Flo had a huge dick, but was very shy.

Flo knew other Flos, but rarely thought about that, it mainly popped up when he met people like Ime, who had such a special name.

Ime and Flo chatted for a while and Flo said goodbye. Flo was shy, but in the end, he always found the right words. Ime walked home and looked towards a window of a building with a small gargoyle statue. For a second, they thought that the gargoyle winked at them, but they could never be sure, because they had damaged vision.

Some weeks later, Julija passed by that gargoyle and looked at it. She also had damaged vision and things in the distance were pliable and flowy. Julija thought how that moment reminded her of a LSD flashback. She enjoyed those, like chemical windows into the matrix, like a confirmation that everybody was in fact insane. She continued walking, losing the gargoyle thought gradually with every step. She was deep in thought about how wonderful it was that when one wrote, one could hide faces. She thought that that was the best thing about writing.

K Knights made of silver

In the autobiographical book "History of Violence" the French writer Édouard Louis meets a man on the street who aggressively flirts with him and wants them to go home together. In spite of the man's aspirations, he appears disinterested in Édouard's work—when Édouard tells him what he does for a living (writing), the man only says: Interesting.

But Édouard proceeds to explain: to him truth means nothing—form means everything, content nothing; it doesn't matter that this man has no interest in what Édouard has to say, as long as he wants to win Édouard over, even if that means telling a lie.

It is curious that he says that, considering he is interested in autobiography and, with it, some form of truth, albeit corrupt or brittle. Maybe Édouard's encounter with the man is meant to be a placeholder, an empty frame for when something complicated, frameless and organic comes along. Édouard is enacting images, words and actions which belong to all of us, yet he makes no distinction between his experience, his porous memory and the ideas of love, admiration, flirt and sex given to us externally—by media of various sorts. He likes to participate.

M Men walking down the street, laughing...

N Noémie

O Overextended

P Paths

In 1974 the avant-garde filmmaker Hollis Frampton said: As I sit writing this text, on one of the days of the only life I shall live, a fine April afternoon is passing outside my window.

In her book *Video Green* Chris Kraus says about a man with whom she is having S&M sex: when Jeigh announces that he's going to teach me the difference between pleasure and pain, my muscles jump. I'm scared, but still excited, because since coming to LA no one has taught me anything.

Fiona Alison Duncan in *Exquisite Mariposa* writes: Los Angeles is built in pockets, bursts, and loops. To me, that makes perfect sense. *Everything makes sense here*, I wrote my friend Misty, who replied, *Of course*. We find calm in the chaotic, sprawling, conspiratorial, the fake and natural beauty, the insanity and inanity of this place. It's good to have your outsides reflect your insides.

R Roulette

S Signs

The comedian Mitch Hedberg's death was formally announced on April the 1st and some believed it to be an April fool's joke. He died of a cocaine and heroine overdose. His biography and his stage life overlapped so precisely that their categories become obsolete. And he had death to prove it.

T Threesome emotions

Q Quirky Is Met with Sympathy

U Ultra sound

V Valentine's Day

W Waterproof

I was washing a few silk and wool garments in the wool program for the first time. Once the cycle was over, I took the garments out. It seemed that for that program the centrifuge had to be completely off, so the clothes were soaked. As I was holding the dripping pieces, I felt the need to feel their weight on my skin. I put on a silk shirt, which stuck onto my body, like a thin ivory film of smoke. Over it, I put on a beige sweater, at least three times heavier than when dry and silk pajama bottoms, pulling down on my waist due to the weight, and finally white socks with small rhinestones. I sat into the armchair, the water dripping into my skin and the upholstery, the weight of water nailing me down into the stuffing.

Y Is The Spiral

Z Zen

She was making a paper flower titled *Style*. Each petal was a watercolor scene from various European cities. The landscapes were alike and undistinguishable, creating an all-city or a diary city. *Style* was a spy project about being a European citizen, about understanding signs even without understanding a language.

While making it, she was listening to Svemirko, a Croatian indie band, similar to Mac de Marco. She went to see Mac de Marco live twice because her ex-girlfriend knew the

drummer. They used to work in the same restaurant. The first time it was magical, not only because the music was sweet and romantic, but also because she couldn't believe someone actually knew Mac. Three years later it was still nice, but it was also business as usual. She was getting older and love was getting older too.

Svemirko's music was zen and familiar. Svemirko sang about cities, about the way it felt to be in them, often alone. In her favorite song called From My Balcony (Sa svog balkona), he writes about not being able to fall asleep, about driving a car at night in the fictitious lane that connected people and not locations. Svemirko would say things like: *sometimes I remember those silent words / And the night gives me that secret sign / Yet life is taking me farther and farther / While I drink in the depths of darkness / In the park, hoping to see you / And I drive that car in the silver lane / And the sleep isn't calling me, it is you who is / From my balcony, I jump straight into dreams.*

She wondered whether these lyrics influenced her style, and whether that was even important. From her window, she jumped straight into reality.