

P r e s s e i n f o r m a t i o n

Frankfurt/Main, 19.09.2018

Lara protects me: A Georgian Story
21 September 2018 until 20 January 2019

Press preview: Wednesday, 19 September 2018, 11 am

Opening: Thursday, 20 September 2018, 7 pm

Tbilisi, they say, is the new Berlin. Late-night partying and space for personal development are luring ever more people to Georgia's capital. Located at the intersection of key trade routes for centuries, Tbilisi has always brought different peoples together – whether involuntarily, through occupation or conquest, or willingly and generously by offering refuge to those driven from elsewhere. The populations seldom merged; instead, the separate groups learned to create permeable boundaries, leading to an eclectic mix of cultures existing side by side.

As part of Georgia's Guest of Honour programme at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair, the Museum Angewandte Kunst presents the exhibition *Lara protects me: A Georgian Story*. A mysterious message that the curator Dr. Mahret Kupka found on her travels in Georgia becomes the point of departure for a quest. Who could the mysterious Lara, the author of this letter, be? What can contemporary creative producers tell us about her? Georgian artists, designers, curators and authors offer possible answers and invite us to explore their country and its history. Video works, photographs, art and design objects create a multi-faceted portrait of a new Georgian self-conception and a young dynamic art scene that permeates throughout fashion, music and fine art.

With **Situationist** the exhibition presents an internationally acclaimed fashion label known for its raw and unusual style that often appropriates Georgian writing and symbols. The label and the self-taught fashion designer **Irakli Rusadze** (*1991) stand for non-hetero-normative, minimal fashion. The exhibition focuses on the label's close ties with the young art scene in Tbilisi, such as the artist **Giorgi Geladze** (*1996). In his practice, he incorporates everyday Georgian sentences and transforms them into algorithms that evoke different emotions by the means of various materials, combinations, colours and forms. On show are also works by the Berlin-based photographer **David Meskhi** (*1979). Photographs produced for Situationist are presented alongside other works such as a series featuring gymnasts, a subject he returns to again and again.

Tamra is the fashion label of the artist, fashion designer and documentary filmmaker **Tamuna Karumidze** (*1975). Her collection *Dreamcatchers* zooms in on the Georgian skateboard scene and the identity of Georgian youth culture. This topic is also the focus of her internationally acclaimed documentary film *When the Earth Seems to be Light*, a joint production by her, David Meskhi and Salome Machaidze. For *Lara protects me*, she has developed a textile object.

In her series *My Place* the photographer **Dina Oganova** (*1987) makes portraits of young Georgians who were born in the last years of the Soviet Union and have grown up in an independent Georgia. Every ten years the photographer wishes to return to her protagonists in order to photograph them in the privacy of their own bedroom and will continue collecting their stories.

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In **Salome Jokhadze's** (*1997) colourful illustrations of the series *Contemporary Georgia* the new attitude towards life meets Georgian tradition: The drawings include comic-like portrayals of women or skateboarders in traditional Georgian costume.

The artists **Tamar Chaduneli** (*1991) and **Ana Chaduneli** (*1990) will jointly present a series of new drawings developed for *Lara protects me*. Since 2017, Tamar Chaduneli has been studying at the Städelschule, in the class of Willem de Rooij. Her practice unites different analogue and digital technologies such as drawing, painting, animation and video games.

The **Patara Gallery** was founded in 2017 by Gvantsa Jishkariani und Nata Kipiani as an experimental art space, which is located in a former kiosk of a pedestrian underpass in the center of Tbilisi. In the middle of souvenir and cell phone shops, the space, which is no larger than two by two metres, presents the works of international artists. In the Frankfurt exhibition the small gallery will be reproduced in its original size and will simultaneously present the exhibitions on show in Tbilisi.

Electronic music plays an important role in Georgia's capital. The sound artist and musician **Irakli Kiziria** (*1977), co-founder of the techno duo and label I/Y and the Intergalactic Institute for Sound, has developed a soundscape for the exhibition that wishes to reflect the atmosphere of the capital. To this end, field recordings were mixed with airy electronic sounds. These ambient tracks are part of a new album that is available at the Museum as a limited LP. The album and sound installation is a collaboration between Kiziria and **Zuska Babunashvili** (*1994), a.k.a. **Zesknel**, a resident DJ of the club Bassiani in Tbilisi. The club, which is especially known for its liberal atmosphere, recently received media attention because of violent drug raids by the police. These were followed by spontaneous dance demonstrations that peacefully protested against the brutal police actions and political grievances of the country.

One of the most riveting publications from Georgia is represented with the bilingual magazine **Danarti**. The magazine was founded by Elene Abashidze, Ana Chorgolashvili and Natuta Bagrationi in 2011 and deals with different topics such as the architectural turn in Tbilisi or LGBTQ+. The fifth and latest issue will be presented in Frankfurt. The edition "Surviving the 90s" was published in December 2017. Here, the makers of Danarti dedicated themselves to the still-prevailing problems inherited from this decade, which has sparked a series of important debates.

At the Museum Angewandte Kunst these different voices paint a many-layered portrait of Post-Soviet Georgia. They make the spirit of renewal and the zeitgeist of a new Georgian generation tangible – a generation, which has come of age in a time of great political upheaval and change, that was tainted by war and economic crisis. They look ahead with us with confidence in order to meet the new challenges of the twenty-first century with creative self-empowerment.

The exhibition is accompanied by a trilingual catalogue that highlights different protagonists in interviews and essays (Revolver, 22 Euro).

With:

Ana Chaduneli and Tamar Chaduneli, Danarti, Giorgi Geladze, Salome Jokhadze, Tamuna Karumidze, Irakli Kiziria and Zuka Babunashvili, David Meskhi, Dina Oganova, Patara Gallery, Situationist

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In collaboration with Creative Georgia and the Georgian National Book Center, on the occasion of Georgia's appearance as the Guest of Honour at the 2018 Frankfurt Book Fair, with the generous support of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia.

Panel discussion

Thu, 8 November, 7 pm

Post-Soviet Lifestyles? Art, fashion, music, architecture and design from the young Georgia

Curator's tours

Wed, 26 September, 6.30 pm

Wed, 7 November, 6.30 pm

Sun, 20 January, 3 pm

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Director

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Curator

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Opening hours

Tue, Thu-Sun 10 am – 6 pm, Wed 10am – 8 pm

Admission

12 Euro, reduced 6 Euro

The reduced admission price applies school and university students, persons with disabilities and their escorts and unemployed persons. Valid identification required.

Press contact

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Press downloads

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