

Driton Selmani
ONLY TIME WILL TELL
(2019)

Who is the speaker and who
is the listener?

How
much time – and silence
– does it take for the
nameless to become a
speaker, and how much
for the listener to be
able to fully hear the
undesirable testimony?

Double Wall of Silence
19. 12. 2019 - 16. 1. 2020 /
Škuc Gallery, Ljubljana

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Double Wall of Silence
21.05—02.08.2020 /
Hestia Art Residency &
Exhibitions Bureau Belgrade

Š K
U C
G A L E
R I J A

With works by Daniel García Andújar,
Louis-Cyprien Rials, Driton Selmani,
Ariel Schlesinger, Vangjush Vellahu
Exhibition events:
19. 12. at 6:30 pm Guided tour with
the artists Daniel García Andújar,
Louis-Cyprien Rials, Driton Selmani,
Vangjush Vellahu and curators Anja
Obradović & Hana Ostan Ožbolt

Driton Selmani – *Only Time Will Tell* (2019)

“The starting point of the group exhibition is the investigation of corporal and global aspects of identity and language, as well as the tensions that arise between collective and individual experiences. Migration as a dominant experience and topic in the last years has heated up discussions about movement and mobility, national borders, loss of cultural and social identity, refugees, minorities, danger, and trauma. The power of inscribing one own experiences and memories states the question of forms of narration – who is a speaker and who is a listener? How much time – and silence – needs to pass, that a non-speaker can become a speaker and that a non-listener can hear the un-wanted and rejected testimony? How is the communication made possible and what happens if a story remains untold? Juxtaposing works by six artists, playing with appearance and disappearance, presence and absence, and creation and loss, the exhibition focuses on the power of unspoken and silence as a form of language. A significant element in our project is the aspiring people around the world and other untold stories, as well as stories that are very harsh and therefore require a certain silence if they ought to be spoken about. Having as a reference the work of Jonas Staal developed about the Rojava region where the Kurdish people have established a form of democracy in Northern Syria, we engaged in looking at other stories that are less known, both historically and geographically. We take off from a very current issue extremely present in the media to uncover past stories in a less mediated and more meditative spirit, creating a space to reflect on them at a slower pace, far away from the frenetic world power game”.



Driton Selmani — *Only Time Will Tell*, 2019
LED Plexiglass, CNC cut letters, metal holder,
Dimensions: 300 × 70 × 160 cm, Installation view: SKUC Gallery, Ljubljana
Photo: Klemen Llovár

The photograph shows an art installation in a dark, industrial-style space. The central piece is a rectangular metal frame with a glowing white sign that reads "ONLY TIME WILL TELL" in a bold, sans-serif font. The sign is made of LED Plexiglass with CNC cut letters. The frame is supported by a metal holder. The background is a dark, textured wall with some peeling paint and a small, dark rectangular object. The floor is dark and reflective. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

ONLY TIME WILL TELL

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The Other

Re-Imagine the Future

28.09.2023-18.02.2024

Opening: 27.09.2023, 7 pm

Curated by: Andreja Hribernik

Kunsthaus Graz, Lendkai 1, 8020 Graz

Kunsthaus
Graz

With works by Nika Autor,
Kader Attia, Rossella Biscotti,
Black Quantum Futurism
(BQF), Anetta Mona Chişa &
Lucia Tkáčová, Jasmina
Cibic, Lana Čmajčanin, Olafur
Eliasson, IRWIN, Bouchra
Khalili, Kapwani Kiwanga,
Marina Naprushkina, Driton
Selmani, Société Réaliste,
Jonas Staal, Helene Thüm-
mel, Hannes Zebedin

The Other Re-Imagine the Future

“The Other addresses themes of identity, history, belonging and exclusion. In common perception, the concept of ‘other’ is almost always associated with a demarcation, a separation or a distinction attributed to something or someone. . The Other is a person who does not belong. From a Western perspective, the Other is defined as East, Far East, or exotic South. In the present, there has been a shift in the perception of the Other. According to Arjun Appadurai, someone’s differentness turns into a distinction that has no trajectory. Even more, it becomes fluid and dispersed.

Despite the charged concept of the Other, the exhibition is also about the potentials inherent in the concept of Otherness in relation to the current system, one based on the exploitation of people, nature and resources and to which there seems to be no alternative. The exhibition invites us to understand the concept of the ‘other’ as a way to dare to explore those asymmetrical relations that, on the one hand, maintain the exploitative relationship and, on the other, turn to historical and contemporary alternatives that support solidarity and comradeship, and rely on them”.

Driton Selmani — *Only Time Will Tell*, 2019
LED Plexiglass, CNC cut letters, metal holder,
Dimensions: 300 x 70 x 160 cm
Installation view: The Other, Re-Imagine the Future
Photo: Kunsthaus Graz / N.Lackner





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LED Plexiglass, CNC cut letters, metal holder,
Dimensions: 300 × 70 × 160 cm
Installation view: The Other, Re-Imagine the Future
Photo: Kunsthaus Graz / N.Lackner

ONLY TIME WILL TELL



Camera
Austria

Driton Selmani
Only Time Will Tell, 2015
LED, Plexiglas, CNC-milled letters, Bucher
LED, Plexiglas, CNC-milled letters, Bucher

Only Time Will Tell

24.12.2024 – 11.05.2025

MQ Main Courtyard

Curated by: Verena Kaspar-Eisert

Artist Talk: Wed 22.01.2025, 18h | MQ Raum D



With his installation “*Only Time Will Tell*”, Kosovar artist Driton Selmani invites visitors to question the past, present and future. The illuminated lettering “Only Time Will Tell” opens up an opportunity for reflection: Which stories and memories will outlast time? Whose perspectives remain? Which decisions shape the present and the future? And how can we personally influence them?

Driton Selmani deconstructs social, political and cultural narratives in order to uncover deeper layers of reality. His works challenge observers to think about preconceived opinions and truths and to develop new perspectives. Selmani's work always remains in close dialog with the themes of identity, history and the interplay of individual and collective memory.

The work “Only Time Will Tell” combines Selmani's conceptual practice with a profound sensitivity to universal themes such as hope, truth and transience. It follows in the tradition of his earlier works, which always assign the observer an active role in the process of interpretation and reflection.

“Only Time Will Tell” is more than an art installation - it is a call to get actively involved and help shape the present and future instead of passively waiting, in a time that calls for courageous voices and committed action.

Reflecting on Time: A Conversation with Driton Selmani 22.12.2024–21.04.2025

The Kosovan artist Driton Selmani uses poetic and humorous works to deconstruct our perception of reality. In doing so, he does not shy away from major concepts such as time, space, politics and history. His light installation ‘Only Time Will Tell’ can be seen in the MQ Main Courtyard until 21 April. MQ Journal spoke to him about it’s background.

Driton, your installation „Only Time Will Tell“ was described as a call to get actively involved and help shape the present and future. Where should we start?

"Only Time Will Tell" examines the idea that time exists only through the human mind's perception. Each moment is merely a fragment—real only until it passes, while the future exists solely in anticipation. For me, this understanding reveals how time is a construct of our imagination. Ultimately, it feels more cyclical than linear—a realization that encourages us to rethink our relationship with the present and how we shape what's to come...

Your works often engage in themes of identity and belonging. How much of yourself is in your “Only Time Will Tell” installation?

The installation reflects a personal connection, yet it transcends individual experience to become a 'rendezvous of experiences' for others, thus addressing broader themes of identity and belonging. It is both an intimate monument to personal histories and a deliberate statement, inviting viewers to reflect on their own sense of time, place, and the complexities of political and historical contexts.

My perspective on time resonates with the empiricist philosophies of thinkers like David Hume and George Berkeley, who posited that our reality is filtered through individual observation, and what we perceive may not align with any objective truth.

“Only Time Will Tell” embodies this ambiguity, inviting viewers to confront the fluid boundaries between personal memory and collective history. In this way, the work reflects a part of me—my preoccupation with the limits of understanding and how we attempt to reconcile the subjective with the universal.

Words play a central role in you work – are there any poets you look at for inspiration?

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I wouldn't say poets, but I'm drawn to the unknown—it excites me. I Don't Believe In Poets, But In Poems, Yes. My use of language isn't about providing definitive descriptions but rather exploring the mystery and complexity inherent in words and their meanings.

I often investigate the pre-alphabet era, where hearing was believing. The introduction of the phonetic alphabet shifted this dynamic, replacing the magical world of the ear with the neutral, analytical world of the eye. As William Wordsworth wrote:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see; We cannot bid the ear be still; Our bodies feel, where'er they be, Against or with our will."

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For me, language is a powerful medium to provoke thought, evoke emotion, and challenge societal norms. Words are my primary artistic tool, used in diverse formats and contexts to engage audiences viscerally. They encourage a reconsideration of assumptions about time and experience, embracing paradoxes that reveal the elusiveness of reality. Ultimately, words have the potential to reshape perception, spark reflection, and even challenge the simulated realities we often find ourselves trapped within.

One of your works reads “I wish you were a plastic bag so that you could be eternal”. How do current concerns about ecology play into your art?

Ecological concerns are inescapable in the geography I inhabit. I didn't choose plastic as a medium—it's simply everywhere. But I observe, listen, feel, remember, and question,* recontextualizing it in contrast to Peter Handke's approach towards tragedies and silence.

*Quote by Peter Handke

Driton Selmani — *Only Time Will Tell*, 2019–2025

Curator: Verena Kaspar-Eisert

Exhibition duration: until 24.04.2025 | MQ Main Courtyard

Installation view: Museums Quartier Vienna (2024–2025)

A Conversation with Hisko Hulsing



Driton Selmani — *Only Time Will Tell*, 2019–2025
Projection on the historical façade of MuseumsQuartier Vienna
Installation view: MuseumsQuartier Vienna, 2024–2025
Photo: Paul Pibernig



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LED Plexiglass, CNC cut letters, metal holder, 300 × 70 × 160 cm
Installation view: Museums Quartier Vienna (2024–2025)
Photo: Paul Pibernig



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Driton Selmani
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