

# curated by

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12.9. – 14.10. Wien  
2023 Vienna

**SOPHIE TAPPEINER**  
curated by Theresa Roessler

## Interview

### **Which aspects of “The Neutral” are relevant to the exhibition you are curating?**

I am particularly interested in the neutral as a figure of the indeterminate and ambivalent. The exhibition Taking Notes is dedicated to the diaristic, exploring strategies and processes of translation, transgression, and transformation. The neutral as a third term, as described by Barthes, manifests itself in the emerging space between binary opposites—between the subjectively experienced and the objectively categorized, the private and public, between self-reflection and self-fictionalization. As a figure of the neither-nor, the neutral steps between supposedly contradictory positions and allows the correlation between them to be traced.

### **How would you describe your curatorial practice? What distinguishes it from other approaches?**

Curating for me requires a personal sense of urgency, conviction, and receptivity. While this listing doesn't necessarily “describe” my practice per se, it does name the condition of a mental state that is characterized by sensitivity and vigilance, declaring self-reflection and self-criticism as indispensable. Simply put, I understand curating as a practice of listening and as a mode of becoming a guest rather than being the host.

## **How did you decide on the artist(s) you invited?**

“How does life come about?” asks Christa Wolf in *One Day a Year*, and continues: “Is life identical to time, which passes inescapably but mysteriously?” I am preoccupied with this relationship, i.e., how one’s own life must be positioned in relation to the passing of time, and the resulting question of how we can capture and record it in order to make sense of it. The artists in the exhibition *Taking Notes* explore this question in a tentative and poetic way through different media such as photography, moving image, assemblages, and drawings. Partly based on autobiographical narratives that become symptomatic of large-scale societal developments, rethinking the politically and culturally determined, they devote themselves to experiments with time and the translation of memories. They take note of life in different ways, giving their undivided attention to the supposedly banal, the mundane, taking everyday matters as a starting point, as material.

## **What motivates you to curate exhibitions?**

In my understanding, the exhibition genre operates as a snapshot of a moment in time. It represents one possible way, among many others, of formulating different outlooks and reacting to profound transformations and uncertainties. Furthermore, I’m personally very much drawn to the idea of an exhibition as a capsule that temporarily articulates an idea, a collaboration, a question, or an observation, but at the same time also provides an occasion to think beyond its spatial and temporal boundaries, viewing it as something that extends into the world.