

EVERY DROP – A SEA



Drops fall at irregular intervals,
yet they seem to answer one another —
as if in solidarity
across different bodies and mechanisms.
What emerges is not synchrony,
but resonance:
a fragile coordination shaped
by accumulation, proximity, time.

This rhythm unfolds within unease —
a future postponed,
narrowed, quietly withdrawn.
The present stretches, repeats,
caught in cycles that gesture toward movement
yet rarely arrive.

In this suspended time,
persistence becomes resistance,
and listening, a political act.

A chant gradually raises:

*We are not drops in the sea.
Each drop becomes the sea.
Step by step, we hold our heart
In trembling palms above the golden pavement.*

The proposal **Every Drop – a Sea** is a group presentation which consists of a main installation by **Antoni Rayzhekov**, an outdoor installation by **Georgi Gospodinov**, performances by **Valentina Traïanova** and **Biliana Voutchkova**, and a publication/podcast by **Dimiter Kenarov**.

It takes its point of departure from recent protest movements across the Balkans, sparked by systemic corruption, institutional failure, and their tragic consequences. The project speaks about a shared regional conditions and common struggles — shaped by repetition, endurance, and the persistence of collective dissent.

Between 2023 and 2025, mass protests erupted across the Balkans*, in the wake of fatal institutional failures. Each eruption of public outrage followed a familiar pattern: tragedy, protest, dispersal — rarely structural change. This recurring “Balkan spring” reveals a cycle of resistance that is not spectacular, but sustained; not orchestral, but minor. The project aligns with this minor register, listening to voices that do not dominate, yet accumulate.

Every Drop – a Sea proposes a critical and poetic reflection on civic resistance, where each drop—each voice, body, and gesture — matters. A single drop may seem insignificant, but through repetition it alters rhythm, sound, and direction. The project does not offer solutions, but a form of listening. Drops fall at irregular intervals, yet they seem to respond to one another—as if acting in solidarity across different bodies and mechanisms.

At the core of the pavilion is **Antoni Rayzhekov**’s sound installation **And Every Voice Is a Chorus** (2026) situated in the interior space. Water is fed through intravenous systems into suspended, aging musical instruments. As drops fall from the instruments onto inverted drums equipped with vibration sensors, fragments of protest recordings from recent Balkan demonstrations are activated. Words and slogans — once chanted in public squares, often ignored or silenced — are stretched into resonant, overlapping tones. Individual utterances merge into a fractured, collective choir. The automatised composition unfolds over time. Water slowly corrodes the instruments from within, even as they continue to sound. What appears as a life support system becomes a mechanism of erosion. What enables speech simultaneously destroys its carrier. The work follows the temporal logic of institutional decay: gradual, measured, irreversible. The people’s speech is transformed into fragmented sonic matter; instruments and voices become vulnerable vessels with each syllable. Resistance here is not explosive, but accumulative — like water eroding stone.

* in Greece after the Tempi train crash (2023, 2025), in Serbia during ongoing nationwide protests after the Novi Sad railway station canopy collapse (from 2024), in North Macedonia after the Kočani nightclub fire (2025), and in Bulgaria following the 2026 budget plan that led to the government’s resignation (2025)

Georgi Gospodinov’s text installation **The Learning to Walk of the Protesting Human** (2026) extends this temporal dimension into embodied memory. Installed along the garden and arcades as a textile print on large banners, the text traces how a body without a memory of protest becomes a protesting body. From the hesitant gestures of 1989 (when bodies knew only how to manifest and march but not how to protest) to the present, the work follows the slow learning process of dissent across generations. Visitors physically walk this trajectory, inhabiting the gradual formation of protest as lived experience.

The exhibition is activated through performances by **Valentina Traïanova** and **Biliana Voutchkova**. Traïanova’s opening performance navigates between song, manifesto, and political speech, engaging the architecture and acoustic volume of the pavilion while invoking the instability of ground — both literal and political. Voutchkova’s repetitive performance responds to the installation through violin and voice, turning toward pre-linguistic forms of communication and activation.

The project is further contextualized through a podcast and a publication edited by journalist and writer **Dimiter Kenarov**. Based on interviews with artists, activists, and journalists involved in recent protests, the publication reflects on shared protest conditions, multilingualism, and collective memory across the Balkans.

The project brings together a constellation of diverse Bulgarian voices with an international discursive strength. Each approaches the topic of protest from a distinct angle — sonic, textual, embodied, performative, and analytical—creating a dialogue that mirrors the multiplicity of perspectives, experiences, and languages within civic resistance. Their diversity becomes a reflection of the project’s theme: that collective action and memory are built from many singular contributions, each necessary to form the whole. **Every Drop – a Sea** gathers voices that persist, accumulate, and resonate in a poetic synergy—until each drop becomes a sea and each voice creates a chorus.

The Bulgarian Pavilion is conceived not only as an exhibition, but as a space for experience, encounter, and discussion. Grounded in local histories and urgencies from Bulgaria towards the Balkans and Eastern Europe, it opens onto broader questions of power, responsibility, and the global rise of authoritarianism — inviting visitors to listen, reflect, and position themselves within these shared conditions.

Set in Venice, where water defines both vulnerability and persistence, **Every Drop – a Sea** transforms the exhibition space into a threshold where the fluidity of water, public protest, and institutional space remain in an evolving tension.

Kalas Liebfried (Kaloyan Lyubomirov) & Antoni Rayzhekov



From the street, the audience first encounters our newspaper stand featuring the project's publication—a black-and-white A2 edition printed in 5,000 copies — which further contextualizes the project through a newspaper publication edited and advised by journalist and writer **Dimitar Kenarov** in collaboration with **Kalas Liebfried (Kaloyan Lyubomirov)**, based on interviews with artists, activists, and journalists involved in recent protests and unfolding shared protest conditions, multilingualism, and collective memory across the Balkans. During the Biennale, Kenarov will host a one-day live podcast session from the pavilion.

Step by Step, Drop by Drop or The Protesting Human Learns to Walk

Georgi Gospodinov, 2026



Text Installation
textile, digital print
six banners, 300 × 100 cm

This text installation will explore and recall how a body untaught in protest becomes a protesting one. How our bodies, with no memory of protest, learn to walk and create such memory drop by drop, step by step. At the first protests of 1989, our bodies had to acquire, through movement, the experience of protesting. Until then, we only knew how to march. I remember the fear with which we looked around and raised, quite timidly, two fingers in the “Victory” sign. The gradual standing upright of the protesting person, traced along the timeline of the last 35 years since the pivotal 1989, will be walked through the personal memory of the body that has passed through all these protests, including today’s. Today’s protesters are the children of those who protested over recent decades.

Individual passages of this text will accompany the visitor from the entrance through the colonnade to the event spaces. Thus the visitor traverses — physically and through the text — the first steps of the protesting person.



And Every Voice - A Choir

Antoni Rayzhekov, 2026

six water-reactive sound sculptures

6 old musical instruments (piano, trumpet, tuba, panpipe, clarinet, cymbal), 6 glass IV glass bottles, 6 irrigation/drip systems with electric pumps, 6 waterproof drum containers on metal stands, steel chains, portable gantry crane, 6 vibration sensors and electronics, 6 guitar amplifiers, found audio recordings from Balkan protests

Antoni Rayzhekov's installation *And Every Voice – A Choir* (2026) builds on the earlier series *Until the Last Drop* (2022–2024), refined across five exhibitions in Varna, Sofia, Salzburg, Istanbul, and Munich. It transforms the established mechanism by introducing inverted drums, a drainage system, and a shift from musical fragments to found protest recordings — extending the artist's ongoing investigation into the entanglements of sound, technology, and political context within his broader sound-based and archival practice.

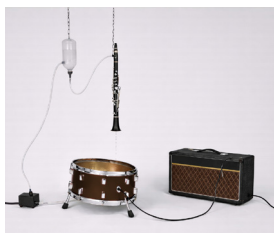
Video references

[Until the last drop](#), 2022

[The Evasive Choir](#), 2021

[On responsibility of knowledge](#), 2023

[GENERATION COMFORT](#), 2022



Valentina Traianova will create a vocal poem written in several languages, dialoguing with the voices of the installation, *And every voice - a choir* will be addressed to the audience by a “skating cantatrice.”



Of Ghosts and Cosmonauts, 2022

performance by Valentina Traianova with Asli Seven; installation by Vitto Valentinov, The Image Generator, OKI, Krasno Selo, Sofia, Bulgaria



Pick-up (test) , 2012

performance by Valentina Traianova with Erik Minkkinen
PLOTHR, Rouen, France



Чимка: Photomusix / Cristina Marx

Biliana Voutchkova is responding to the installations in the exhibition, with her performance, which employs sound beyond speech and creates a ceremony to forge a visceral connection rooted in collective memory, earth, and shared solidarity.

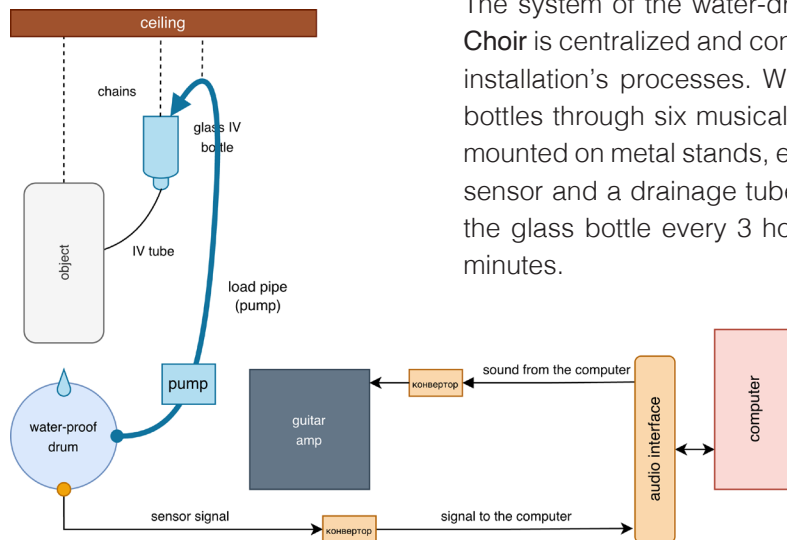


ECOCIDE#1 – SYMPOSIUM, 2025; Lothringer 13 Halle, Munich
Biliana Voutchkova performing within Antoni Rayzhekov's
Until The Last Drop sound installation

Video references

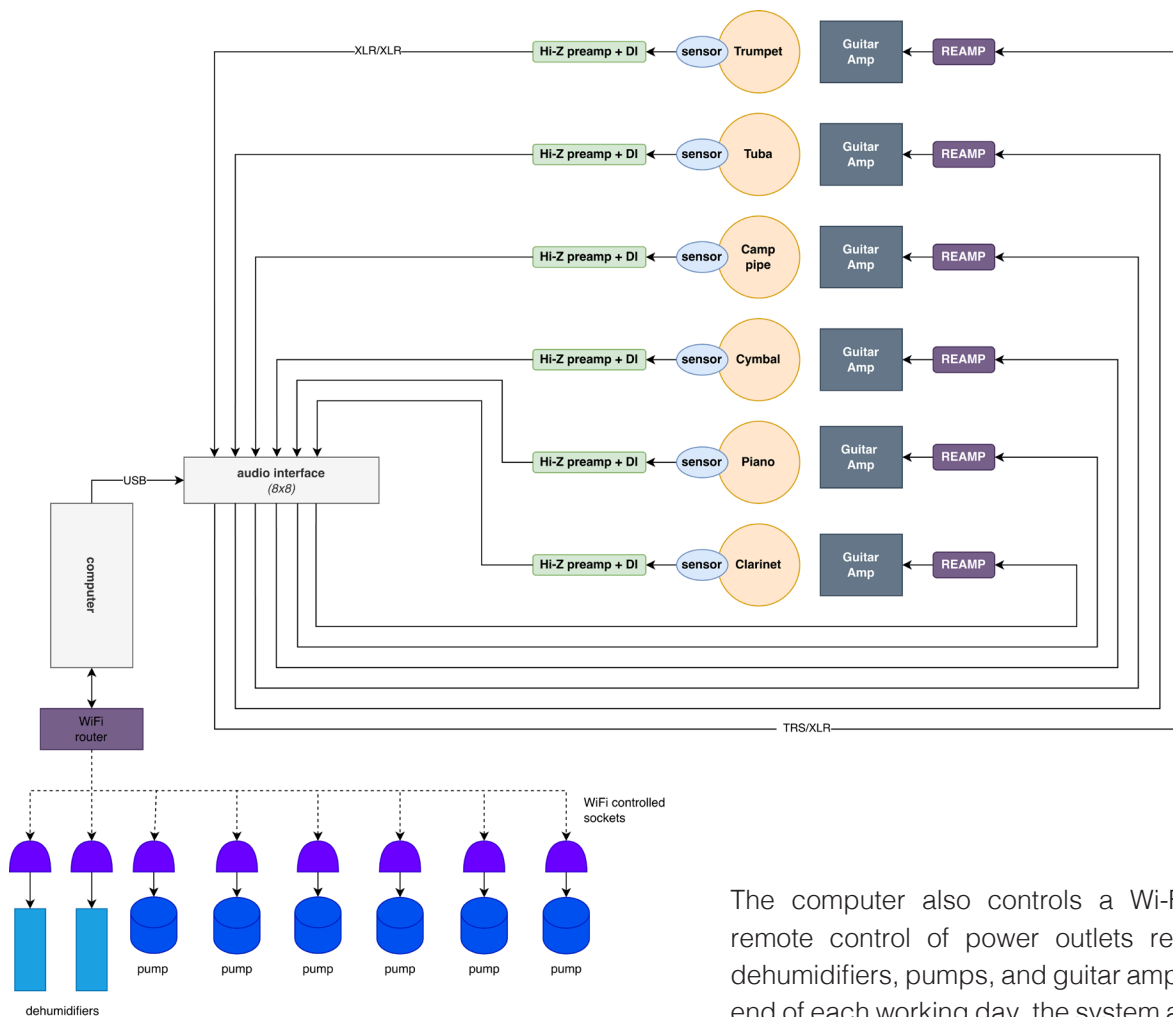
[Biliana Voutchkova & DARA Strings, 2024](#)

[Valentina Traianova performances extracts, 2021](#)



1. Technical diagram of one sound sculpture

The sensor captures the vibrations from the drops, and the signal is sent to the central computer for processing and for triggering the individual sound fragments, then routed back to the respective guitar amplifier for playback.



2. General technical diagram

The computer also controls a Wi-Fi router for remote control of power outlets regulating the dehumidifiers, pumps, and guitar amplifiers. At the end of each working day, the system automatically activates two 20 W dehumidifiers for four hours to regulate the humidity in the space.



ANTONI
RAYZHEKOV

AMPLIFIER
УСИЛВАТЕЛИ

INSTRUMENTS
ИНСТРУМЕНТИ

DRUMS
БАРАБАНИ

0.0 0.5 1.0 2.0 m

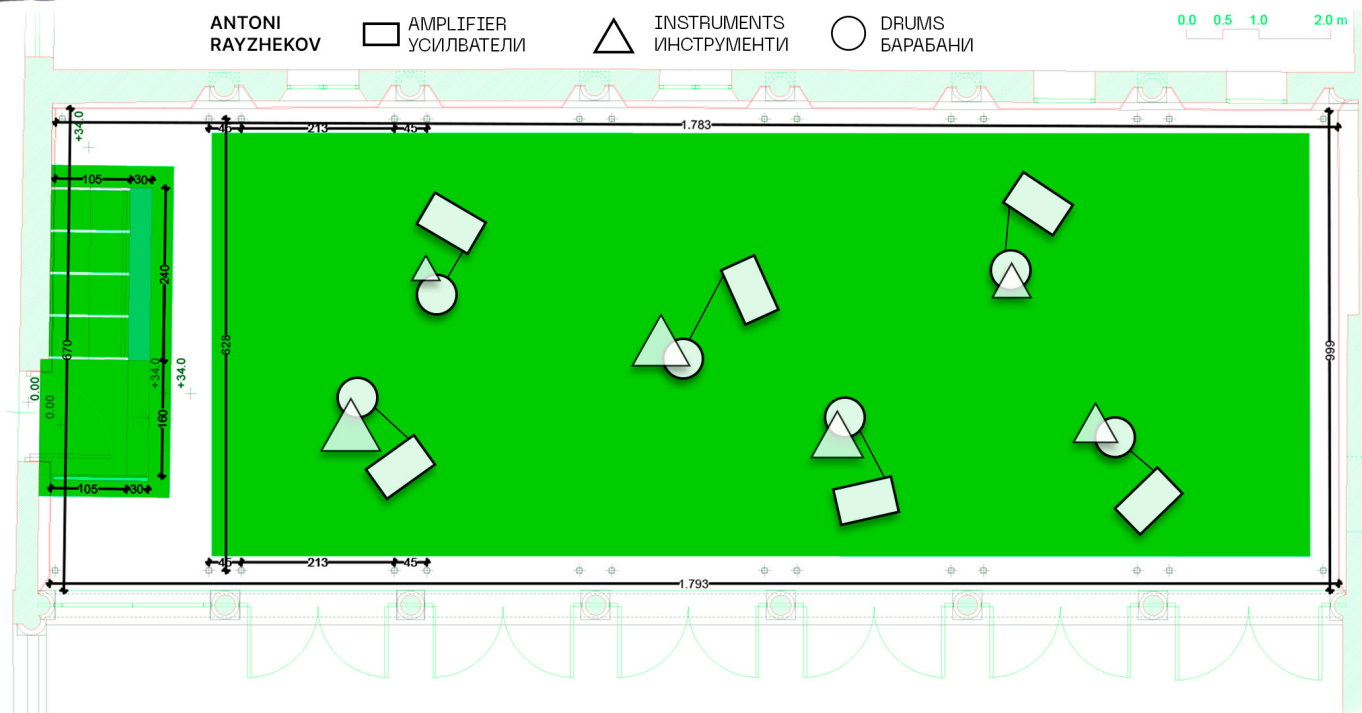


Photo by Christian Kain



Kalas Liebfried (Kaloyan Lyubomirov) (curator) was born as Kaloyan Lyubomirov in Svishtov in 1989 and is a Munich-based curator, artist, and writer. He is the artistic director of the municipal gallery for contemporary art Lothringer13 Halle in Munich. His artistic practice is grounded in the conviction that multisensory approaches can contribute to social and political change. His work addresses the complexity of today's overlapping crises through a combination of critical theory and practice. Central to his approach is the collaborative process, which invites active participation of artists and society in shaping and realizing projects. Liebfried is founder and curator of the international project "Antifascism: Now." (2026–2028, in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut), which will take place in 12 institutions in Eastern Europe and Germany (including MSU Zagreb, DEPO Istanbul, Historical Museum Sarajevo, Ludwig Forum Aachen, and others). Kalas is founder of the parasitic publishing collective PARA, co-founder of the award-winning art center NEBYULA/Rosa Stern Space, and creator of the platform "Fragments of Sonic Extinction", which addresses the loss of natural sounds.

Photo by Matthias Gruber



Antoni Rayzhekov (participant) is a conceptual media artist, educator and researcher, born in Sofia and living between Austria and Bulgaria since 2007. He works at the intersection between sound and visual arts, computational arts, performance and science. Antoni creates audio-visual installations, sound sculptures, interactive objects, body- and lecture-performances, where the audience is often actively involved. His works are based on scientific theory, statistical data or archival information and are focused on exploring social and political issues. Antoni holds a MA in theatre directing and a BA in performing from the NATFA "Krastyo Sarafov" (Sofia). He studied jazz improvisation at

the Vienna Konservatorium (Jazz Department, Austria) and computer programming at LearningTree (London, UK). He has been an associate lecturer in Interactive Media and Experimental Media at the University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten (Austria) from 2012–2020, and since 2022 he is a guest lecturer in Interaction Design at FH Salzburg. Since 2016, he has also a lecturer in the Digital Arts MA program at the National Academy of Art (Sofia), teaching "Performative Media" and "Sound Art." Antoni is currently based in Salzburg, where he is part of the research team at the division for Artificial Intelligence and Human Interfaces at the University of Salzburg. He was a fellow at Akademie Schloss Solitude [2015–2017] – Stuttgart, Germany and Akademie Hallein [2014] – Hallein, Austria. His artworks were presented in Bulgaria at the Sofia Arsenal Museum of Contemporary Art, Institute of Contemporary Art – Sofia, Structura Gallery – Sofia, as well as internationally at the biennial Manifesta14 in Pristina, Kunsthaus Graz – Austria, Gwangju – South Korea, Global Digital Art Prize – Singapore, EXPERIMENTA Biennial in Grenoble France, among many others.



Photo by Yana Lozeva

Georgi Gospodinov (1968) is the author of Time Shelter (Vremeubezhishte, 2020), International Booker Prize winning novel for 2023, published in more than 35 languages. In it, an enigmatic flâneur named Gaustine starts opening 'rooms and clinics for the past' offering promising treatment for Alzheimers patients. But soon his therapy is being weaponized for political purposes all over Europe... 'Could not be more timely' (The Guardian). The German pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2024 curated by Cagla Ilk was inspired by the concept of Time Shelter.

Gospodinov became internationally known with his previous novels, Natural Novel and The Physics of Sorrow, also with the recent one, Death and the Gardener widely translated and awarded. His works include poetry, theatre plays, an opera libretto Space Opera, an Inventory Book of Socialism (co-authored catalogue of everyday-life objects), social video installations, like The Slap Factory and Future Cancelled, etc.

His complex narratives are engaged with the memory of the recent East-European past and present anxieties of Europe and the world. Georgi Gospodinov is the most translated and most awarded Bulgarian writer outside Bulgaria, with his works published in more than 30 languages. In 2025 he participates in the exhibition "ECOCIDE" at Lothringer13 Halle, Munich (May 8–18)—an annual festival exploring themes at the crossroads of politics, ecology, and society.

Photo by Boryana Pandova



Biliana Voutchkova is a dynamic, thoroughly engaged composer-performer, violinist, interdisciplinary artist, improviser and curator with highly individual, unconventional artistic language. Through the prism of listening, her early education in classical music and the years of development as contemporary artist-performer, she explores states of spontaneity and intuitive resonance embodied in her multifaceted activities. Her work spans a wide range of sound, vision, movement and includes concert performances of improvisation, contemporary composition and original site specific work, exhibitions, long durational / multidisciplinary performances, audiovisual works and installation, formats with focus on the interconnection between inner world and sound space. Based between Berlin and Bern, Biliana works internationally as a soloist and in collaboration with renowned artists/ensembles. She is the founder and curator of the DARA String Festival, composition faculty at the Academy of Arts Bern, and recipient of multiple grants and awards.

Photo by Yana Lozeva



Valentina Traïanova is an artist, performance artist, and singer, born in Sofia and based in Paris. She arrived in France in 1996 and studied in Nice; she graduated from the Jules Pascin Academy (Sofia) and received a DNSEP from Villa Arson / International Academy of Fine Arts E.P.I.A.R. (Nice). She is part of Nicholas Knight's Command-X, co-founder of the duo Lubovda with Antoine Dufeu, and teaches writing (creative, narrative, and design writing) at CY école de design at Cergy Paris University. Her practice is hybrid (drawing, song, writing, dance, sound sculpture) and treats the voice as material; she develops the figure of the "singer-skater" who "glides through time" in institutional and public spaces. She has been widely presented in France and internationally; in 2023 she was in residency at the Emily Harvey Foundation (Venice) with the project "I Am Sinking". She has been shown at Palais de Tokyo, Centre Pompidou, Fondation Ricard (Aperto), Château de Montsoreau, Fondation Fiminco, Monnaie de Paris, MAC/VAL, Centre Pompidou-Metz, MUDAM

(Luxembourg), MNAC (Bucharest), Schauspiel Cologne, S.M.A.K. (Ghent), and Sofia City Art Gallery (OGMS), where she presented the solo exhibition "U0000oooo00" (2018). Among her most recent works is the performance "Lust", presented at Badischer Kunstverein (Karlsruhe) and at Swimming Pool as part of the solo exhibition "Danser Chanter Aimer" (Dance Sing Love) (Sofia).



Photo by Boryana Pandova

Dimitar Kenarov (participant) is an independent journalist, poet, literary critic, and translator. Born and raised in Sofia, he completed his education in the United States (Middlebury College and University of California – Berkeley) and today lives primarily "on the road." He is the author of three poetry collections in Bulgarian and two collections of literary journalism, "Dictators, Tractors, and Other Adventures" and "The Bulgarian Trail". His English-language writing has been published in The New Yorker, The Economist, Esquire, The Nation, The Atlantic, Foreign Policy, The New York Times, The Virginia Quarterly Review, and other publications. His work has been featured three times in the anthology The Best American Travel Writing and twice noted as "notable" in The Best American Non-Required Reading. He is a member of PEN America and the Association of European Journalists – Bulgaria.



Photo by SCAG

Reneta Georgieva (assistant curator) is an art historian, cultural manager, and curator in the field of contemporary art. Over the last 15 years she has been actively engaged in cultural management and coordination of cultural projects and events, with extensive practical experience in organizing forums, exhibitions, festivals, and events in public space. Among the projects she has participated in are international initiatives from the Plovdiv – European Capital of Culture program, FLUCA – Austrian Cultural Pavilion, Credo Bonum Foundation, ICA-Sofia, KO-OP, and others. She is currently part of the team at Sofia City Art Gallery as curator at the Vaska Emanuilova Gallery, where she works on issues related to archival materials, the representation of women and marginalized communities in Bulgarian contemporary art, and social change through artistic expression.