

The exhibition *Compositions of Flow* by Tonka Maleković and Sophia Freidhoff, presented within the Meštrović Pavilion Program in collaboration with the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, continues the artist's long-standing interest in exploring the city as a phenomenon, its mechanisms of functioning, and the invisible structures that shape the everyday lives of its inhabitants.

The project is based on a two-year research of migration movements in the Danube region, carried out in collaboration with scientist Sophia Freidhoff, and through an interdisciplinary approach it intertwines artistic practice with the methodology of social sciences. *Compositions of Flow* investigates the interwoven effects of migration on both social and individual levels, addressing diverse groups affected by migration, and connects symbolic, geographical, cultural, economic, and phenomenological aspects with the aim of encouraging dialogue on an empathetic level and shifting the understanding of this complex phenomenon.

The video installation *Compositions of Flow* (2023) invites viewers to look from Regensburg's historic Stone bridge toward the Danube, where water streams past a massive pier—suggesting motion and change while the pier itself remains firm and stable. This visual metaphor articulates the inner tension and ambivalence many migrants experience when contemplating the decision to leave their homeland – how their lives change, to what extent they improve, and which alternatives remain open. The installation, inherently site-specific, strategically links the historic bridge, a symbol of transition and movement, with Maximilianstraße, the main pedestrian and traffic axis of the contemporary city, underscoring the ways in which migration generates and reshapes the dynamics of urban space. Project participants actively contributed to the installation by donating or lending personal items – suitcases symbolizing transition, travel, and the baggage of life – which were later transposed into the video format.

The project unfolds across three subtly interwoven layers. The first is symbolic and visual, in which the installation and video evoke movement, transition, and ambivalence. The second is statistical, presenting the structural conditions of migration: numbers, education, employment, and economic opportunities, which simultaneously inform and coldly contextualize the phenomenon within systemic frameworks. The third is narrative, based on questionnaires and personal testimonies of migrants, where open-ended responses reveal nuances of their experiences – inner turmoil, challenges of integration, emotional losses, and realized potentials. It is precisely the juxtaposition of these three dimensions – symbolic, bureaucratic, and intimately human – that enables a layered approach to migration and reflection on its complexity.

In this project, Tonka Maleković approaches the city not as a static whole but as a complex system in which migration acts as a fundamental driver of growth and transformation. Migrants, in the artist's concept, become generators of the urban fabric – their mobility, everyday struggles, dilemmas, and adaptations invisibly yet decisively shape the city and its social tissue. By observing both statistics and numbers as well as individual stories, insights, and subjective perceptions linked to building a new life far from home, the phenomenon of migration is transmitted through a multilayered artistic-scientific perspective that questions the limitations of individual disciplines while revealing the potential of their intersections.

The research phase of the project included an independently filled-out online questionnaire, available in eight languages, as well as participatory formats enabling participants to actively insert their own experiences into the artistic installation. The analysis combined quantitative data on participants' education, employment, and economic status with open-ended answers in which migrants articulated the nuances of their life choices, feelings, and challenges. Such a methodological combination reveals the multilayered nature of migration: material improvements often stand in contrast to emotional burdens; the freedom of movement coexists in tension with the necessity of adaptation; and subjective experiences expose the complexity of decisions that statistics alone cannot capture. The title of the work refers to the human right concept of freedom of movement and the ambivalences that arise between the theoretical idea and the lived subjective experiences of migrants.

Maleković's artistic expression combines visual play of perspective and movement with participatory elements, involving participants in the creation of the installation and thus transforming art into a field of social experiment. The video installation simultaneously informs and engages emotionally, allowing for reflection on the contradictions of migration and the necessity of shared coexistence in the urban

environment. The research results, presented through a multilayered installation, confirm that migration is not a simple act but a process involving a range of individual and structural factors: economic, cultural, emotional, and institutional. Examples from the questionnaire show how migrants balance between free choice and necessity, how adaptation to a new country brings both personal achievements and emotional costs, and how each migratory path carries its own unique combination of challenges and possibilities.

Through this layered presentation, *Compositions of Flow* operates on multiple levels: as an artwork, a research project, and a social intervention. Through a site-specific installation in the space of both historic and contemporary Regensburg, the project enables interaction between art, scientific analysis, and public space, opening dialogue on migration, freedom of movement, and the urban dynamics that migrants invisibly shape. The exhibition encourages reflection on migration not as a crisis but as a complex, multilayered phenomenon, recognizing art as a key tool for understanding and humanizing social processes.

Martina Miholić