

Warnings cannot be effective unless people react

[WARNING] *These audio recordings may make you feel uneasy, anxious, stressed, panicked, or even enraged. Please listen with caution.*

13'30"

audio recording, stereo, duration 54:23

In 2020, every 13 and a half minutes, one person was either forcibly pushed-back from Croatia, denied entry, or ordered to leave the country and the EU. In recent years, Croatian police became notorious for their brutality towards people on the move, regularly returning harassed, beaten, and robbed refugees to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

7'30"

audio recording, stereo, duration 01:00:23

In 2020, the EU deported one person every 7 and a half minutes. According to [Eurostat](#), EU member states deported 70,200 people to non-member countries. These were predominantly citizens of Albania, Algeria, Colombia, Georgia, Iraq, Moldova, Morocco, North Macedonia, Pakistan, and Serbia, which were deported mainly from Germany, Greece, Italy, France, and Spain. Further 137,840 people were denied entry into the European Union, with the vast majority being stopped at one of the EU's external land borders, namely Hungary, Poland, Croatia, and Romania.

3'00"

audio recording, stereo, duration 01:00:23

In 2020, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deported one person every 3 minutes. According to the agency's annual [report](#), ICE deported 185,884 people from the United States, predominantly to El Salvador,

Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. The number of deportations did hit a 15-year low, largely as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

13'30", 7'30" and 3'00" are scores for the silence and sound of a civil defense siren also known as the air-raid siren. The sound of a siren in each composition indicates a moment of deportation, push-back, denial of entry, or an order to leave as it is happening - in Croatia, the EU, and the US respectively. These compositions serve as a reminder of the systemic violence that occurs daily at world borders. Deportations and push-backs, or rather the involuntary displacement of people across borders via land, air, or sea, are violent, state sponsored practices that need to be stopped.

As an artist, I am aware that we also take part in the misleading representation of the world - whether it's through creating an impression of mobility in times of austerity and militarized borders, or of prosperity and globalized society in times of strong class division and a deeply segregated world. To some extent, the sound of the sirens marked my childhood as well. Even today, twenty-five years after the war in Yugoslavia, I feel agitated every first Saturday of the month, when the public warning system is tested in my hometown. Yet, through these compositions, I call for defiance, redirecting the observer's gaze from digital screens, museum walls, or theater stages, towards the *invisible* people affected by the current border regimes.

If you can, please play these recordings during your meetings, conferences and public debates, dance rehearsals and theater performances, gallery exhibitions and museum visits, film screenings and music festivals. Play them on your art blogs and social media pages, in cultural institutes and art universities, in public spaces and your neighborhoods. Play them to revolt and rise, to empower and to heal, in solidarity with our sisters and brothers on the move, awaiting asylum, in hiding, captivity, deported, and those who are no longer with us.

Credits

Score and text: selma banich

Sound: 2-tone air-raid siren by iainmccurdy at freesound.org

Sound editing: Adam Semijalac

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