# BRAV

# T⊥CK

**Information**

**BRAV**

TICK TACK (2019) is a new destination for contemporary art in Antwerp. TICK TACK realises, presents and promotes international exhibitions and video art screenings, complemented with publications and an extensive digital archive.

Housed in the brutalist complex 'De Zonnewijzer', a 1955 key work by architect Léon Stynen, TICK TACK occupies a historic duplex at a vivid city intersection, facing the tram stop and landscape park 'De Harmonie'. The 5-meter-high window functions as an interface between artists and audience and between private and public space.

The TICK TACK program is dual. By day, TICK TACK presents exhibitions, at sunset, the window transforms into a projection screen under the name CINEMA TICK TACK, a new and exclusive platform that brings video and digital art to the public space. Reaching numerous of daily passersby and commuters, CTT serves as a channel, stimulating a connection in its urban setting.

As a result, both day and night, TICK TACK constantly challenges the physical and mental boundaries between inside and out.

Alexandre Bavard (1987, France) is based in Paris, France and is a Alumni of École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Lyon. Alexandre Bavard can be seen as a playwright and performer, all in one. His work expands from fine art sculpture, prints, and paintings into video, music and dance. Bavard creates various worlds influenced by his Georgian roots, science fiction and the need for escapism and discovery.

Bavard is interested in creating a visual language, a form of expression that transcends any specific medium and is fueled by repetition, movement, and flow. His broad range of works are tied by the theme of a post-urban world, meaningful objects of a past utopia that lost their significance and are being repurposed as rarity and artifact. Bavard has titled this series Neo-Archelogia, which refers to his process of casting the shape or transferring the impression of these found artifacts into sculptures and prints.

Text by
Pablo de Pinho

In November 2018, the first demonstrations of the "gilets-jaunes" took place. Initially, this protest movement focused on the rising price of gas, before spreading to numerous topics questioning French society such as buying power, citizen representation or police abuse. This dynamic of struggle has surprisingly unprecedented characteristics. The "gilets-jaunes" had no leader, yet for two years they met every Saturday in multiple cities to demonstrate, while they suffered significant repression from the police force. In Paris, the artist Alexandre Bavard took part in the first series of these protests, and thus began a vast iconographic research on uprisings. In one of the photographs collected, a protester is entirely adorned in a knight's armour. Lost in a contemporary crowd, this anachronistic character became the starting point for this exhibition.

The title of the exhibition plays with the sound of "brave", a supposedly chivalrous value, and "BRAV", the acronym of a particularly brutal motorized police squadron that was resurrected on the occasion of the "gilets-jaunes". The exhibition is therefore an invitation to question the relevance of the use of state violence in our democracies. Which individuals are the most dangerous? Is it a group of citizens aspiring to have a better life while using violence to make themselves heard? Or is it an armed group acting under the orders of political power to protect capitalist institutions? Rather than formulating an answer that would necessarily be manichean, the artist stages the phantasmal figure of the knight and the erroneous figure of the policeman, in order to better question their position and role in their respective societies.

The climax of this reflection can be felt in the exhibition's opening performance. "An Eye For An Eye" is a duel between a knight in armour and a policeman in protective gear, both trying to tear out their opponent's eye. A choreographed tournament that is not only a metaphorical revenge for those many protesters whose eyes have been gouged out by police flashbangs. It is above all about winning the heart of a lady, a singer from another time, an allegory of freedom and forgotten values. "An Eye For An Eye" is a reference to the law of retaliation, a law whose use is generally considered a marker of an archaic society. This reference resonates curiously with the police violence suffered by the "gilets-jaunes": is losing one's eye or one's hand when expressing disagreement a sign that a society is advanced?

The answer to this question may be found somewhere in the exhibition, amidst this explosion of attributes, signs and symbols. Tonfas and handcuffs evoke the world of the police, while articulated gauntlets or an excalibur stuck in a scooter remind us of the medieval period. Alexandre Bavard's research is rooted in a practice of gleaning, retrieving and pilfering bits of the urban environment, and fragments of historical artefacts, in a constellation of ambiguities and tensions. We thus find prints of Burgundian recumbents imploring salvation for the hands lost by the demonstrators. Carpets, distinctive features of the artist's Georgian background, are regularly used in his performances to mark an intimate space. From this temporal shock, from these collisions of values, there is an erasure of all opposition between high and low culture and a cathartic desire to sublimate social tensions.

← *GRENAD*
2022
Resin, cotton, spraypaint, chain
150×150×70 cm

By sacralising the anonymous figure of the rioter freeing himself from his chains, Alexandre Bavard produces a monument to the honour of all those citizens who have paid with their lives for our social rights. He reminds us that the pandemic, not police actions, succeeded in canalizing the "gilets-jaunes" movement. The flame of revolt may have been extinguished, but the embers of discontent are still burning. There is strong evidence that the pension reform or the galloping inflation are the breaths that can rekindle the revolutionary spark. Perhaps this is an opportunity to remember that the difference between a revolt and a revolution is not just a few letters. For a revolt to become a revolution, the rioters must be able to overpower the armed forces. Those few letters are the first of a new chapter, written by the protesters. It is now up to us to write History!

Exhibition text by
Andy Rankin

→ *1981*
2023
Scooter, sword
174×92×47 cm

→ *BRAV Installation*
2023
Carpet, plaster sculptures
240×160 cm (6×)

↑ *GRENAD* (detail)
2022
Resin, cotton, spraypaint,
chain
150×150×70 cm

→ *GRENAD*
2022
Resin, cotton, spraypaint,
chain
150×150×70 cm

↑ *GRENAD* (detail)
← 2022
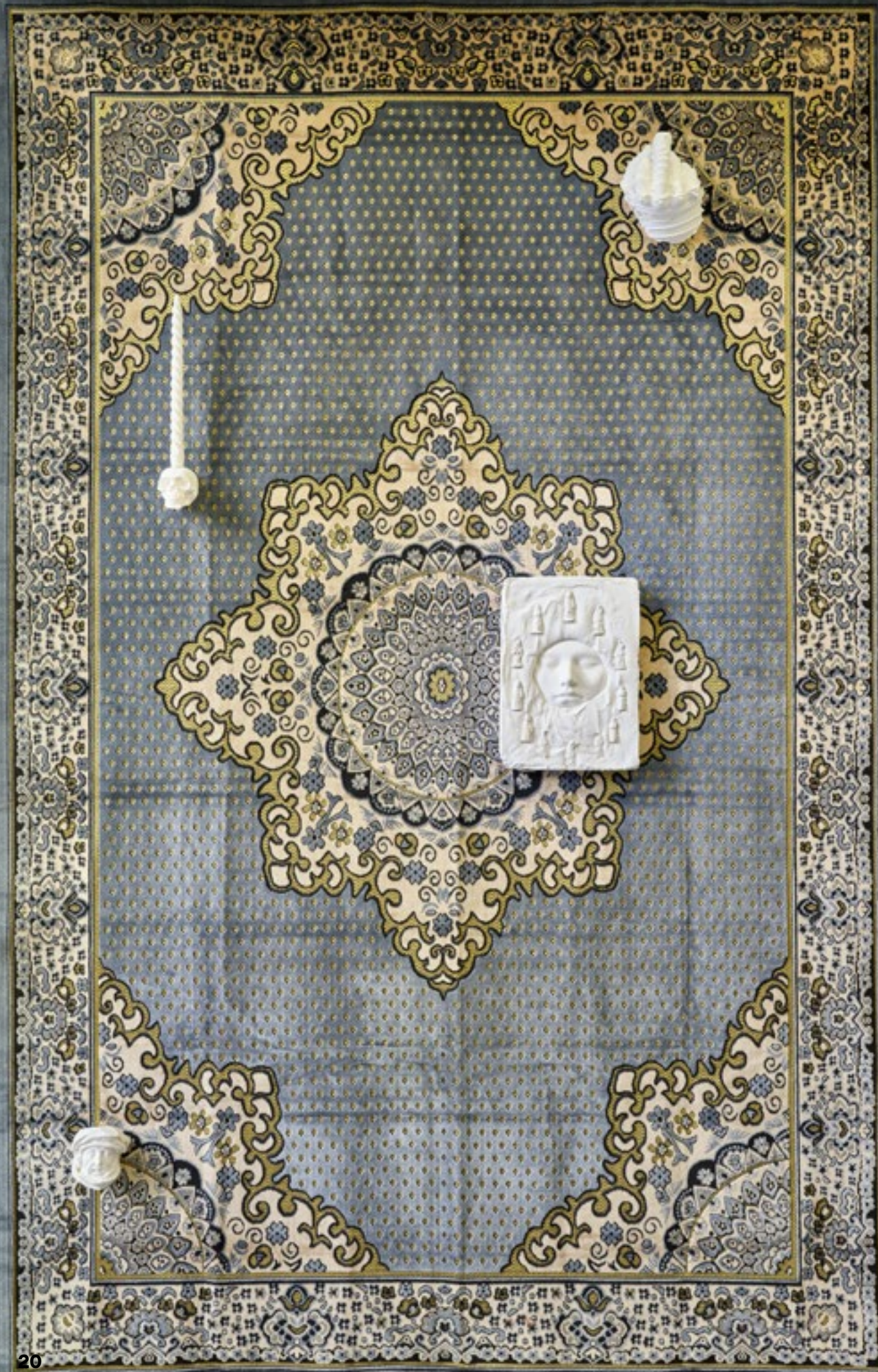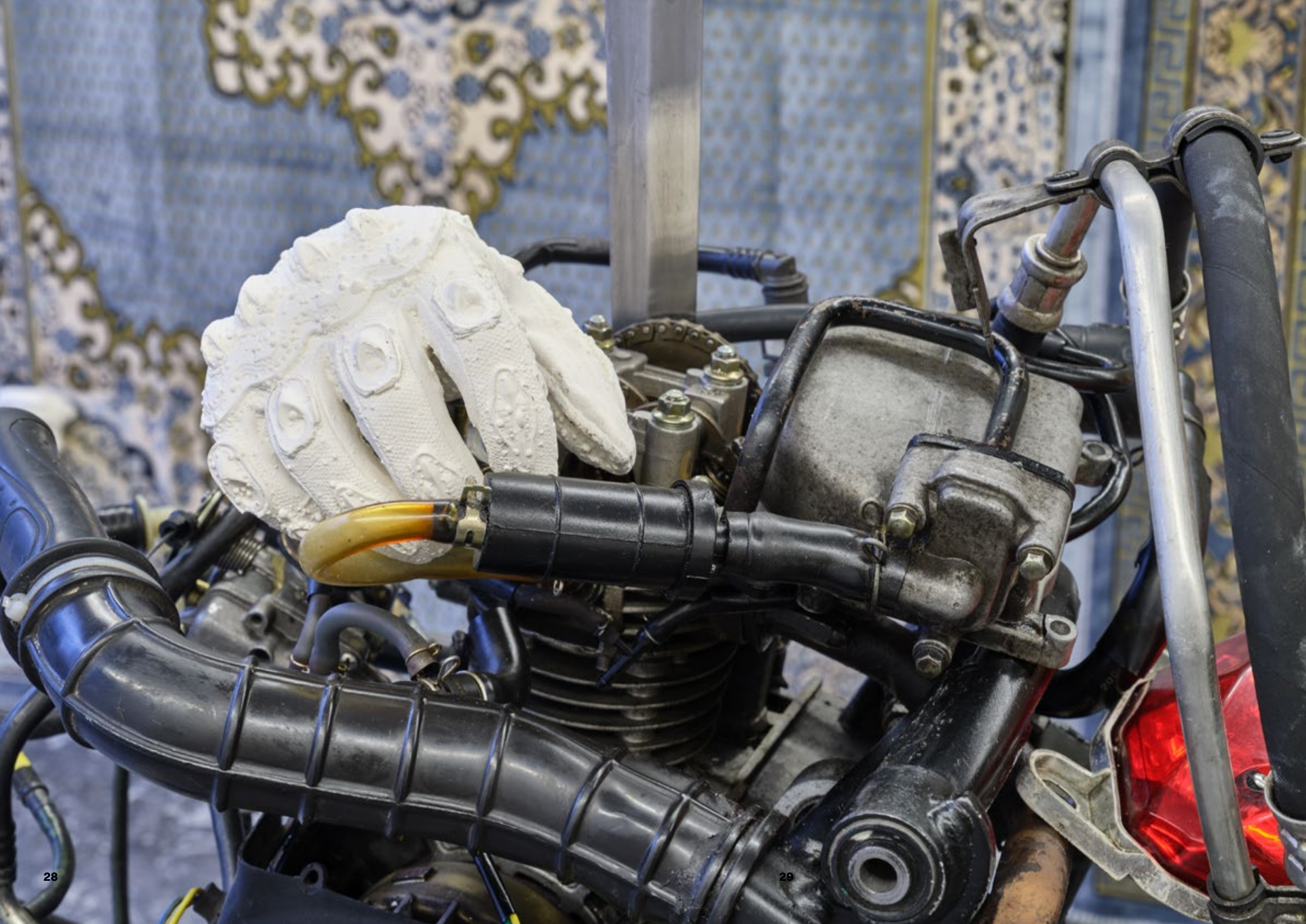  Resin, cotton, spraypaint,
  chain
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Carpet, plaster
sculptures
240×160 cm (6×)

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150×150×70 cm

24

25

↑ *BRAV Installation*
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Carpet, plaster
sculptures
240×160 cm (6×)

→ *1981*
2023
Scooter, sword
174×92×47 cm

←   *1981*
2023
Scooter, sword
174×92×47 cm

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2023
Carpet, plaster
sculptures
240×160 cm (6×)

34

35

←    *MOSA*
2023
Carpet, frame
240×330 cm

↑    *Euro Flashball*
2023
Spraypaint on cotton
196×131 cm

↑ *Fuck the Police*
2023
Spraypaint on cotton
147×114,5 cm
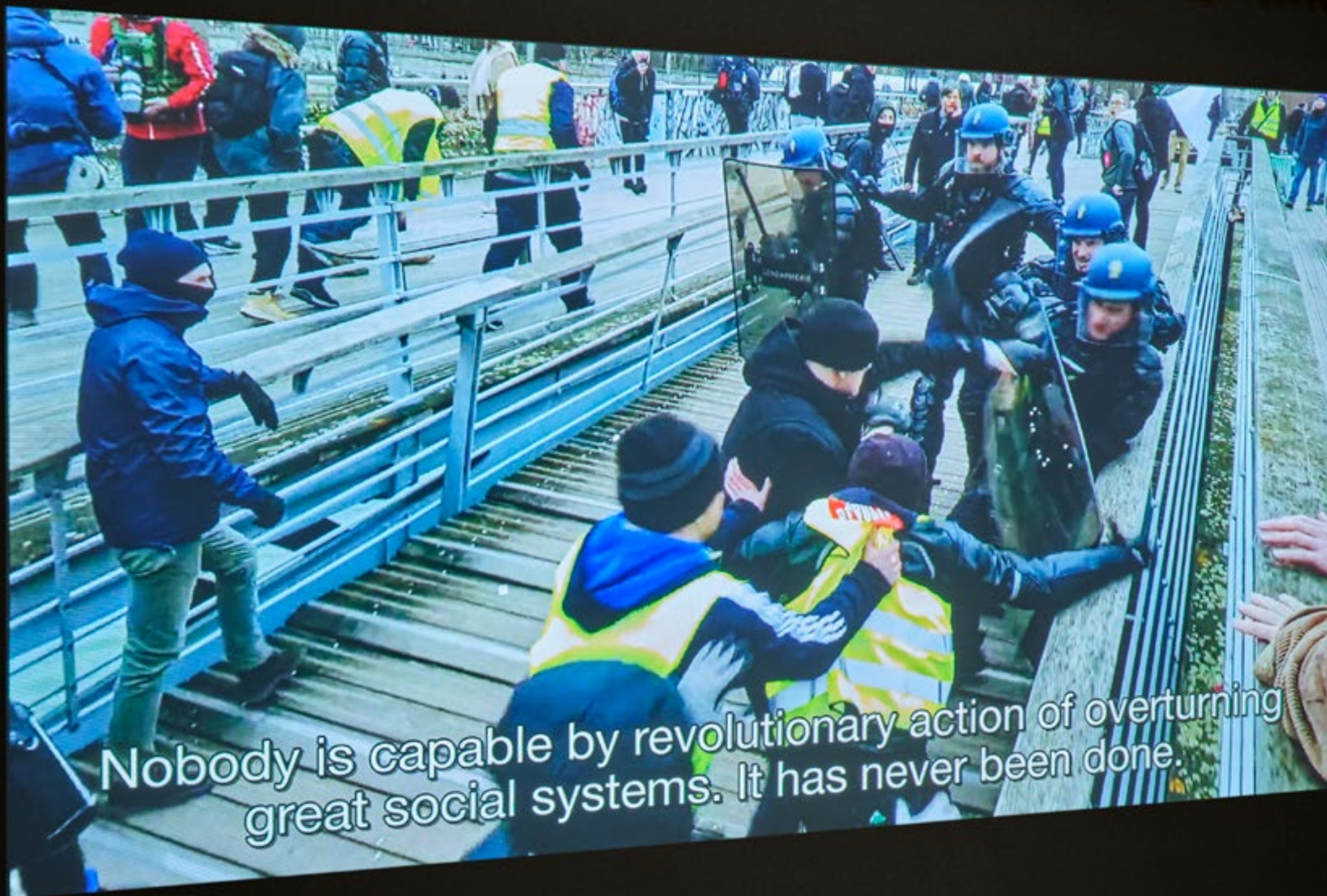
↑   *Flash*
    2023
    Spraypaint on cotton
    117×44 cm

→   *SAEYO*
←   2023
    Carpet, frame
    210×420 cm
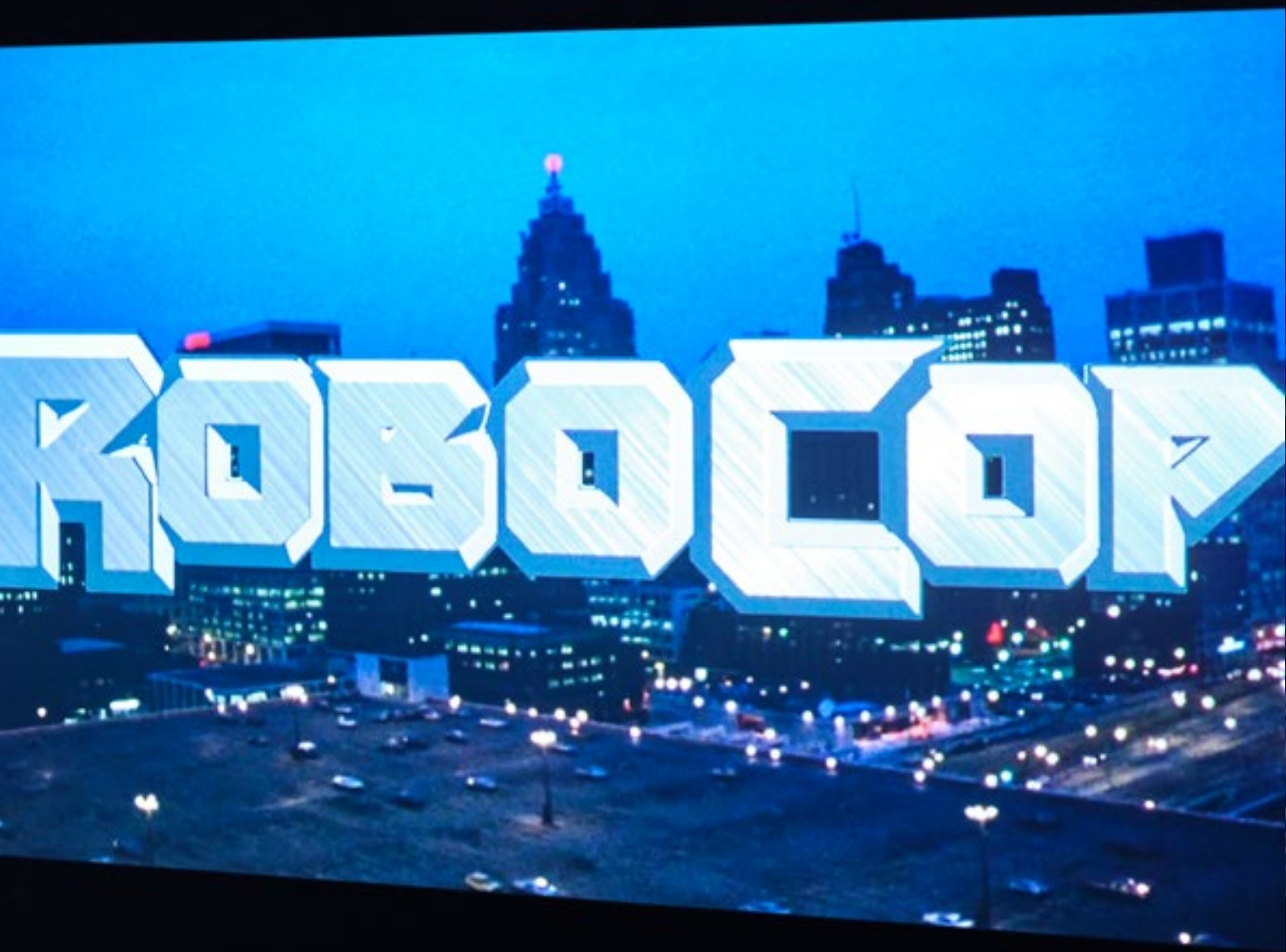
*KINO MOMO*
In situ basement video installation
*Robocop* (1987, Paul Verhoeven),
*Excalibur* (1981, John Boorman),
*The Monopoly of Violence* (2020,
Dave Dufresne)
Variable Dimensions
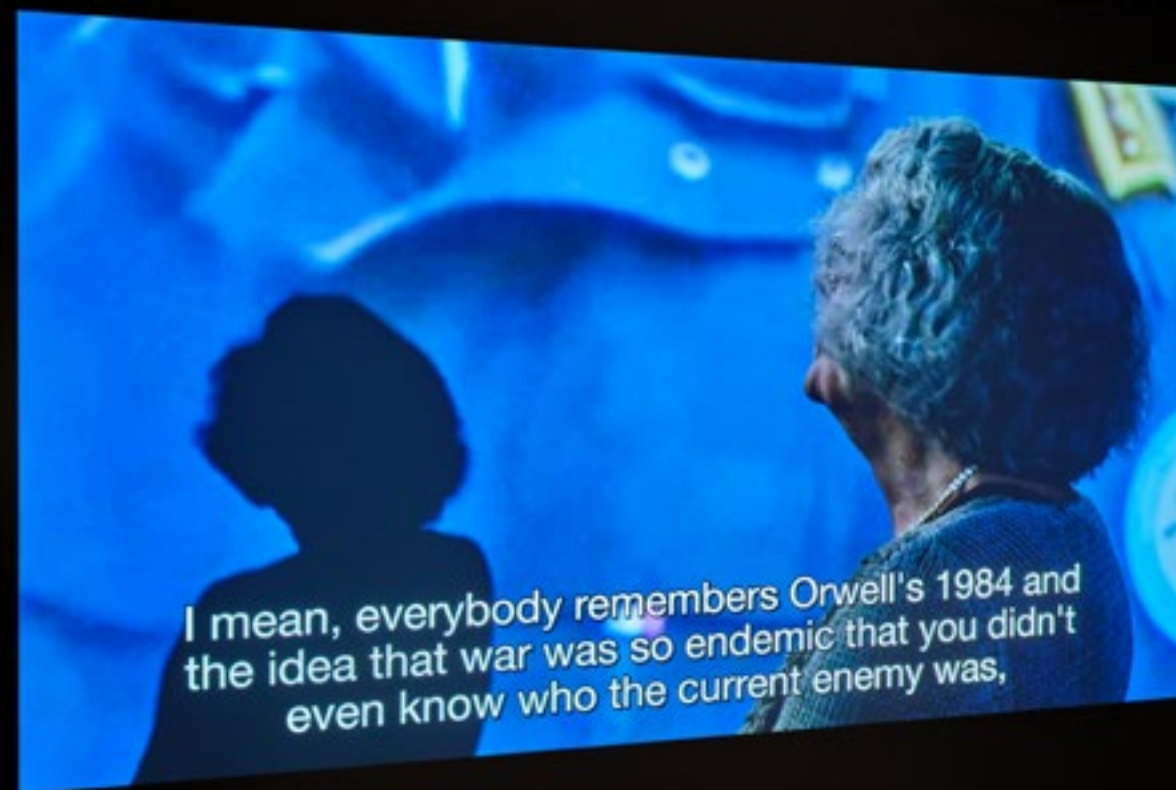
The quote within the image reads: "Nobody is capable by revolutionary action of overturning great social systems. It has never been done."

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*Robocop* (1987, Paul Verhoeven),
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that they killed more people than they…

*KINO MOMO*
In situ basement video installation
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Variable Dimensions

In Antwerp town, where streets are grand,
A knight did ride, with sword in hand.

The people cheered, as he passed by,
A valiant hero, 'gainst the tyrant's eye.

But soon, the peace was broken wild,
A riot broke out, the streets defiled.

The knight, he fought, with all his might,
For freedom's cause, and what was right.

The riot police, they came in force,
With shields and batons, to enforce.

The tyrant's will, and quell the fight,
But the knight, he stood, with all his might.

An eye for an eye, the knight did cry,
As he charged the line, and did defy.

The riot police, with sword in hand,
For freedom's cause, he took a stand.

But though he fought, with all his might,
The knight was outnumbered, and took flight.

He rode away, into the night,
But in the hearts of the people, he'll always be a knight.

And though he's gone, his legend lives on,
An eye for an eye, the people will sing,

For the valiant knight, who stood for right,
And fought against the tyrant's might.
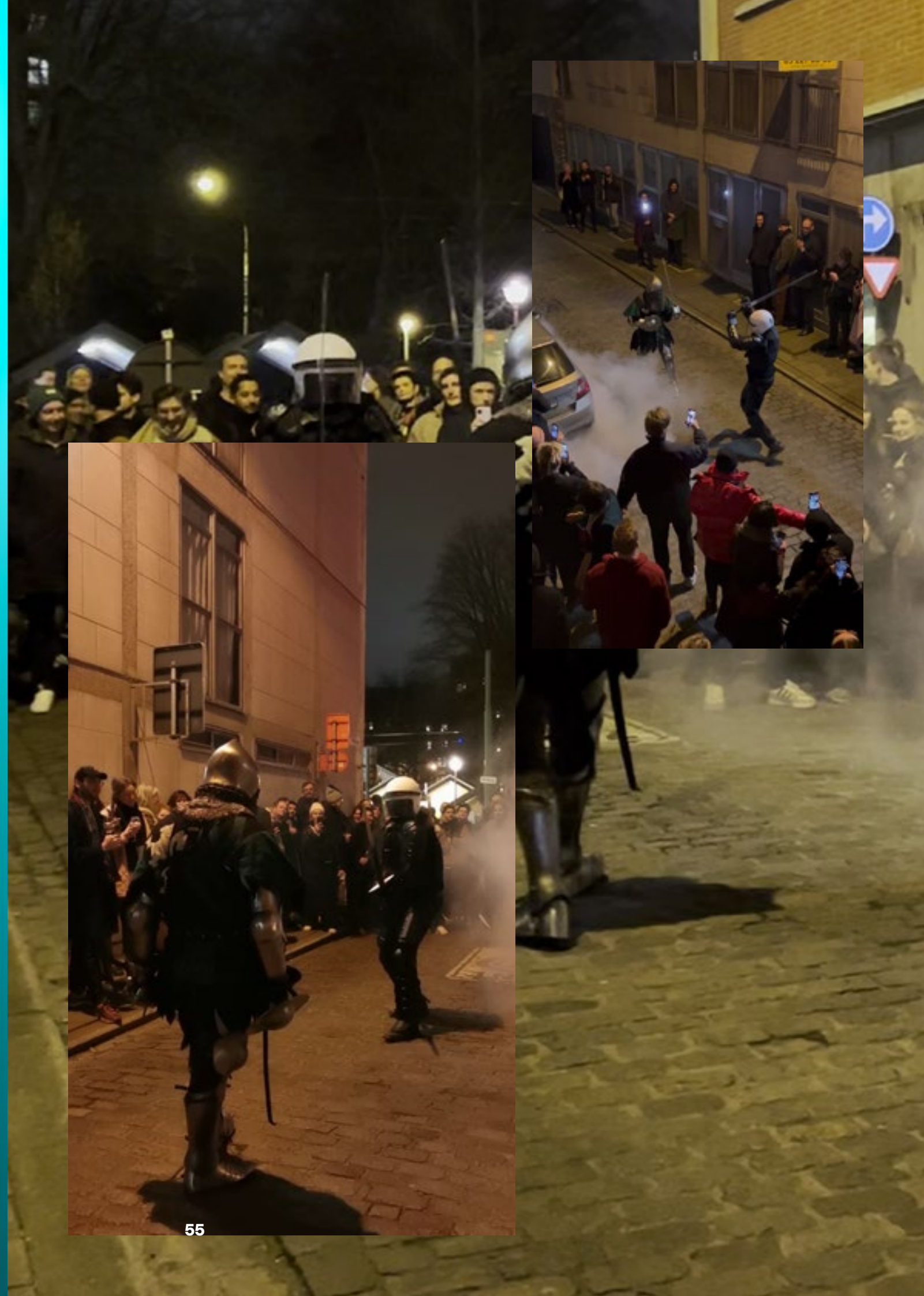
Film of Alexandre Bavard's performance, 'An Eye for an Eye', on the occasion of his soloshow BRAV at TICK TACK. During the opening night, a professional fight between a Riot Cop and a Knight took place. Written by Bavard as a choreography of protest and revolt, the piece was inspired by media footage of the recent yellow jackets protests in France.
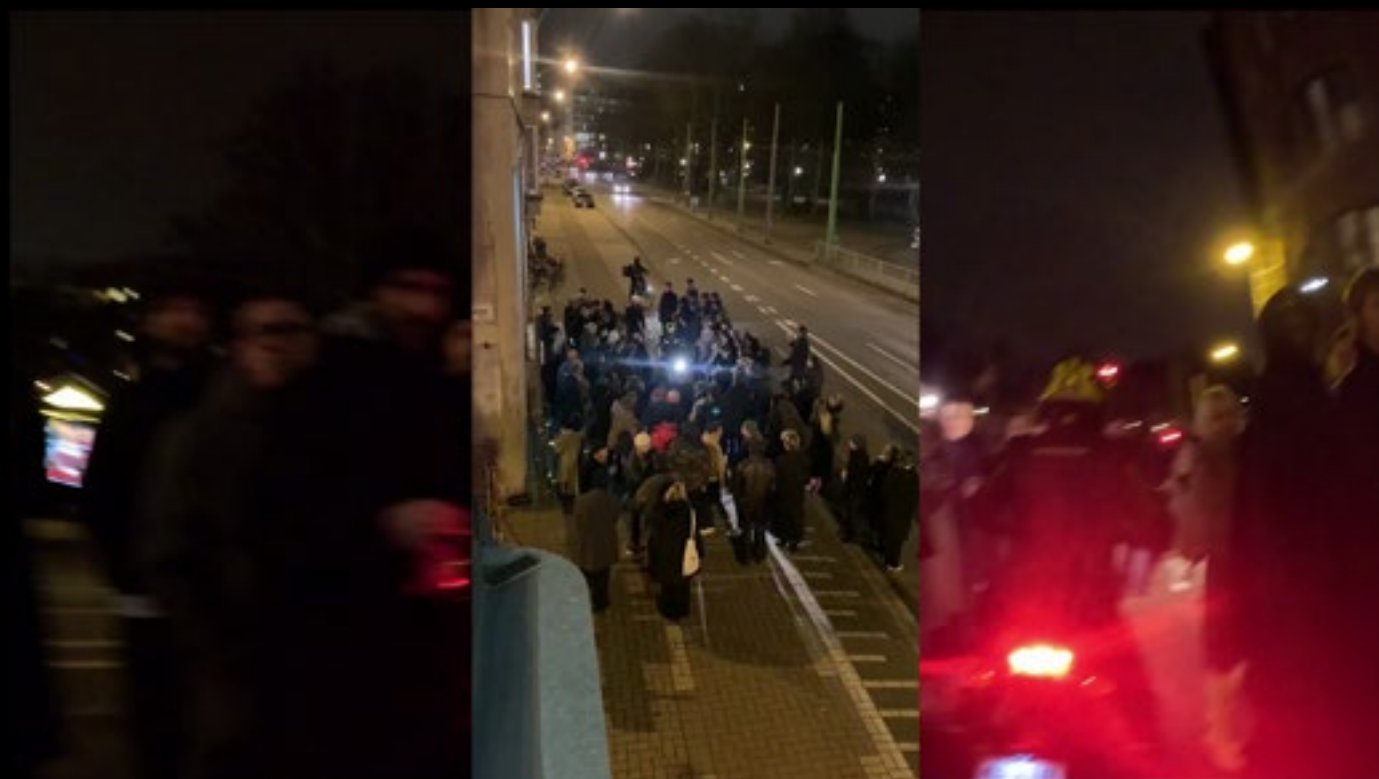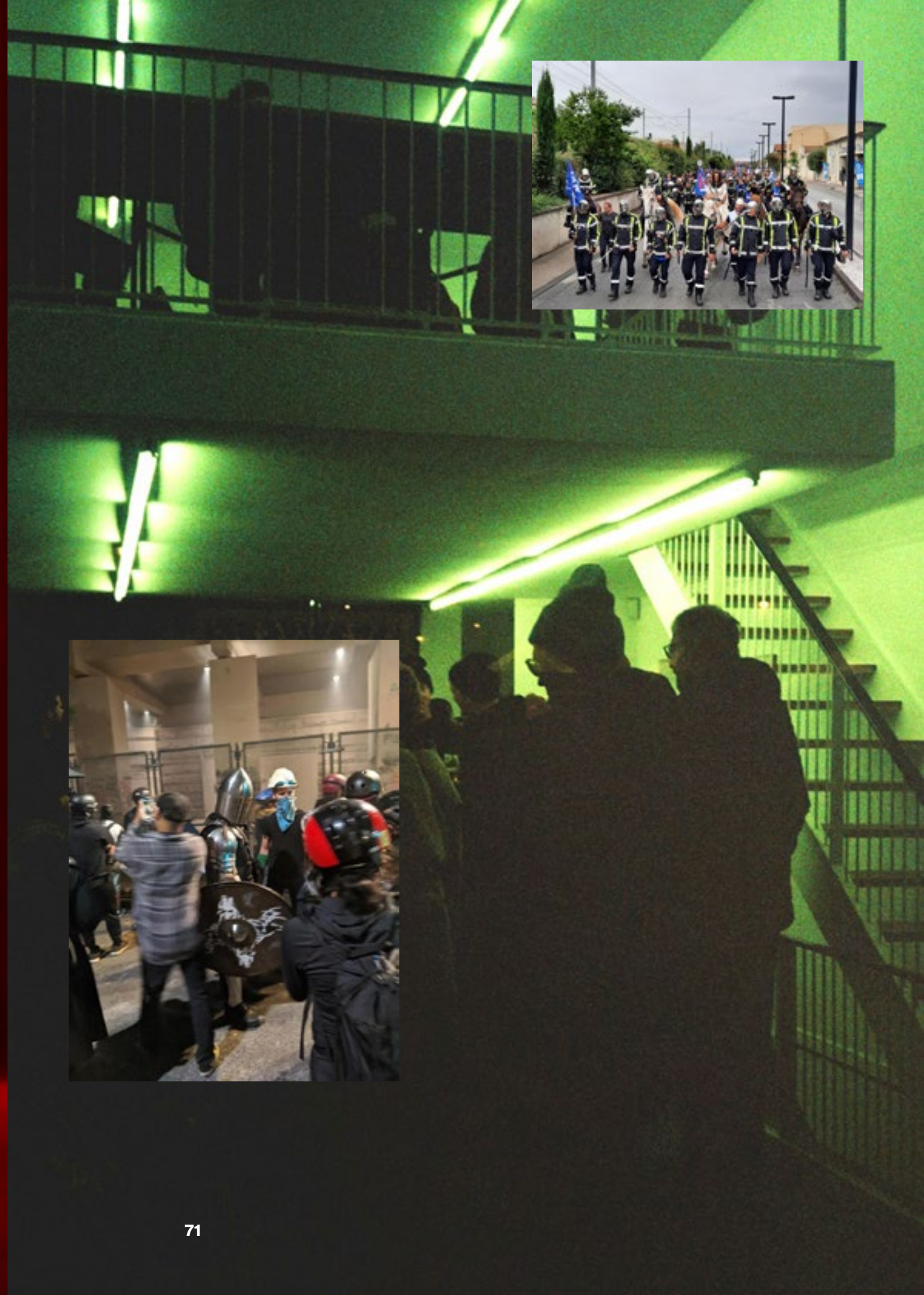


*An Eye for an Eye*
2023
Performance video
Footage shot by bystanders
08'15"

*An Eye for an Eye*
2023
Performance video
Footage shot by bystanders
08'15"

Limited Edition BRAV T-Shirt
Edition of 50
Graphic design: Christophe Clarijs
Silkscreen print: Wildbarz

# T⁺CK

**Two-monthly catalogue**

*BRAV*
Alexandre Bavard
27.01–25.03.2023

## TICK TACK

Opening hours:
THU–SAT, 13:00–19:00

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## CINEMA TICK TACK

Opening hours:
MON–SUN, sunset–01:00


Follow us on social media:
@ticktack.be
#ticktacktime

cover images: Alexandre Bavard, *An Eye for an Eye*, 2023, photos based on the performance during the opening of BRAV