

OLIVER RESSLER



Not Sinking, Swarming

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A film by Oliver Ressler

37 min., 4K, AT 2021

This film originated in a four-hour assembly in Madrid in October 2019, where delegates from various environmental groups gathered to prepare an act of civil disobedience. The groups – Ecologistas en Acción, Alternativa Antimilitarista MOC, Legal Sol, Extinction Rebellion, Climacció, Fridays for Future and Greenpeace – are part of the platform *By 2020 We Rise up*, which is active throughout Europe and seeks to foster climate rebellion.



"Not Sinking, Swarming". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, 2021. Photo: Boris Berc



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Through the assembly discussion we learn how the network is structured around multiple commissions (working groups), each of which takes on a particular responsibility: communication, training, food, logistics, design of the action, strategy, legal support, interaction with police, demands, care and finance.



"Not Sinking, Swarming". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Tallinn Art Hall, 2022. Photo: Paul Kuimet

Because the state could consider assembly participants to be organizers of an unlawful or unapproved demonstration, the faces of all people present are pixelated to conceal their identity. Their anonymity is preserved as a precaution against repression. The use of pixelation gives the film its unique visual appearance.

"Not Sinking, Swarming" includes footage from the civil disobedience of October 7, 2019, the most significant action planned at the assembly. Hundreds of activists used a boat to block a busy highway overpass near the Madrid Nuevos Ministerios, in an occupation constituting one part of an international week of rebellion for climate justice.



"Not Sinking, Swarming". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Camera Austria, Graz, 2021.
Photo: Markus Krottendorfer

This film is one of a very small number of existing documents that offer a real insight into the processes of climate movements' self-organization.



"Not Sinking, Swarming". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, 2022. Photo: Jens Ziehe



"Not Sinking, Swarming". Installation view: "Barricading the Ice Sheets" (solo show), Camera Austria, Graz, 2021. Photo: Markus Krottendorfer

Director and producer: Oliver Ressler

Cinematography: Daniel Gómez, Jose S. Gutiérrez, Oliver Ressler

Location sound: Pablo Estrella

Editing: Lisbeth Kovačič, Oliver Ressler

Sound editing, color correction: Rudolf Gottsberger

Sound design and music: Vinzenz Schwab

Visual effects: Lisbeth Kovačič

Title design: Nils Olger

Text: Oliver Ressler, Matthew Hyland

Translation: Silvia Martínez Rocher

Copy editing: Joe Keady

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