

Ahmet Öğüt

***From Freedom Square to Freedom Square (2025)***  
**Intervention**

As a programmatic signpost for steirischer herbst '25, Graz's Freiheitsplatz (Freedom Square) is renamed in an artistic intervention by internationally renowned artist Ahmet Öğüt on Thursday, June 26 at 11:30 am.

The ceremonial renaming of Freiheitsplatz to Freiheitsplatz will take place with legal supervision provided by lawyer Dr. Rahim Rastegar, who earned his doctorate at the University of Graz and completed an advanced Master of Laws (LL.M.) at Harvard Law School. steirischer herbst director and chief curator Ekaterina Degot will also be present.

Freiheitsplatz, formerly Franzensplatz (Francis Square), was already renamed Freiheitsplatz twice before: in 1918 and in 1938. This raises the question: Are we still living with the same concept of freedom as in 1938?

With his intervention, Ahmet Öğüt invites to reflect on how the idea of freedom has been co-opted, and how it might be redefined in solidarity with those still fighting for freedom today. Informational signage will inform passersby about the renaming until the end of the festival.

*„Throughout history, the far right has often taken words like freedom, once used for justice, equality, and liberation and twisted them for their own purposes. This is why reclaiming Freedom today is not just a symbolic act. It's something urgent and necessary.“*

Ahmet Öğüt

*„In times when terms become ideologically charged and instrumentalized more and more, I am committed to accompany this project in a legal capacity. Freedom is a grand word—this act opens it up to a contemporary interpretation.“*

Dr. Rahim Rastegar

*„Just as truth has often been misused—and continues to be—so too has freedom been claimed by many: here at Freiheitsplatz, most recently by the Nazis. Today, we will liberate freedom from this occupation.“*

Ekaterina Degot

**Ahmet Öğüt** (1981, Diyarbakır, Turkey) is a conceptual artist who works with various media including video, photography, installation, drawing, and print. His art combines humor with subtle gestures to reflect on social and political issues. Öğüt frequently collaborates with people outside the art world to challenge societal perceptions. He has participated in countless group exhibitions and has taught at international art academies. In 2009, he represented Turkey together with Banu Cennetoğlu at the 53rd Venice Biennale. Öğüt first took part in steirischer herbst in 2020 with a newly commissioned work, the essayistic documentary film *Artworks Made at Home*. For steirischer herbst '25, he will also present a new installation in the exhibition at BAU.