

## Soundtrack for a Troubled Time

The exhibition *Soundtrack for a Troubled Time* was compiled by guest curators, and the artistic directors of Tlön Projects, Chris Bestebreurtje and Petra Kuipers and derives its name from Cally Spooner's two-channel sound installation. Works by **Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc, Katinka Bock, Charbel-joseph H. Boutros & Stéphanie Saadé, Edith Dekyndt, Angela Detanico & Rafael Lain, Roni Horn** and **Cally Spooner** will be displayed in two complementary exhibition spaces which differ in dimensions.

*Soundtrack for a Troubled Time* centres on the realm of collective unease and the individual desire to escape the latter, whilst balancing between fiction and reality, searching for a comfortable position. It encourages deeper attentiveness to the unseen interplay of the natural forces that surround us. The artists suggest an antidote on the basis of a new perspective on the world or humanity, they re-write (colonial) history in a more poetic narrative in which humanism, art, poetry and beauty provide relief.

### Room 1

#### **Cally Spooner**

*Soundtrack for a Troubled Time*, 2017

Two-channel sound installation

6 min. 15 sec. loop

A key work in this exhibition is the eponymous *Soundtrack for a Troubled Time*, the two-channel sound installation by Cally Spooner (1983, United Kingdom). The channel on the right features a man counting to 20 in Spanish whilst breathing heavily. His counting, which he keeps repeating, is regularly interrupted by water being poured over him and the distinct thwack of a golf club that can be heard on the left-hand channel. The man gasps for breath, the counting devolves into repetitive mumbling, language loses its meaning and numbers their logic. Like a suburban idyl beside a swimming pool or on the golf course ending badly. Spooner's enigmatic installation creates an unreal atmosphere that not only functions as a soundtrack for this exhibition, but also, perhaps more so, for these confusing times.

## **Katinka Bock**

*Population I*, 2015

Ceramics, metal bar

approx. 38 x 20 x 15 cm, 200 cm

*Radio*, 2014 – 2015

Ceramics, leather ball, bronze, metal, wood, fabric

45 x 93 x 61 cm

*Recording Paper (Frankfurt)*, 2014

Paper

28 x 20,5 cm, framed 41 x 31,5 x cm

The sober works of Katinka Bock (1976, Germany) occupy a unique place amid this restless aural landscape. Bock conspicuously limits her choice of raw materials thereby querying the medium of sculpture, as is the case with *Population* and *Radio*. The latter is a composition in which wire mesh separates a football from two, amorphous ceramic lumps. The football was used to shape the ceramics i.e. this enables the artist to exhibit the creation process and result simultaneously. *Recording Paper (Frankfurt)* is part of a series for which the artist stuck a sheet of paper to a window in various towns for a single day and night. The papers record an imprint and memory of the place it was made, like a sort of visual *field recording*.

## **Angela Detanico & Rafael Lain**

*L'Horizon disparu*, 2017

19 prints on paper,

Each 19 x 12,5 cm

On another section of the wall, sheets of paper hang at various heights. Each page bears a sentence at the same level, thereby creating a word horizon. The sentences are from *La disparition (1969)*, George Perec's famous novel which never uses the letter 'e'. Angela Detanico & Rafael Lain (1974/1973, Brazil) only used sentences from the former containing the word 'horizon', the rest of the text was omitted. Aligning sentences creates, incongruous writing, bordering on the abstraction of concrete poetry. Detanico & Lain's work literally provides a new horizon.

## Charbel-joseph H. Boutros & Stéphanie Saadé

*When Two Artists Meet*, 2015

Hair of the artist Stéphanie Saadé, hair of the artist Charbel-joseph H. Boutros

Approx. 12 x 15 cm

Charbel-joseph H. Boutros & Stéphanie Saadé (1981/1983, Lebanon) each have their own artistic practice which they subtly incorporate quotidian experiences and memories into. Their works are personal, yet universal stories that viewers can decipher and recombine. In 2015, the artists concluded a pact with the work *When Two Artists Meet*. This consists of a hair from each of them, that has been knotted together with the other. A symbol of solidarity and cooperation between two artists.

## Room 2

### Roni Horn

*Key and Cue, No. 689*, 1994

Aluminium and solid cast plastic

181,6 x 5 x 5 cm

In this room *Key and Cue, No. 689* by Roni Horn (1955, United States of America) seems to provide a counterpoint to Gally Spooner's sound installation. Since the 1980s, Horn has become known for conceptual, minimalist textual works in which she appropriates the visual language of advertising for snippets of text that often provide apocalyptic, critical commentary on our (consumer) culture. *Key and Cue, No. 689* is part of a series of text-based sculptures she started in the 1990s. The work consists of a clean-lined, aluminium bar leaning against a wall. From the side, the succession of black lines looks like a barcode. However, standing in front of the work, it reads: "The Zeroes — Taught Us — Phosphorus". This is the opening line of the eponymous poem by Emily Dickinson that refers to life lessons often resulting from life's hardship. Dickinson, together with Walt Whitman, is viewed as one of America's foremost poets. Both were societal outsiders who proved to be visionaries. Horn's sculpture makes Dickinson's words ominous utilising a new, distant visual language.

# Huidenclub. † † † † †

## Edith Dekyndt

*Ombre Indigène, Part 2, Île de Martinique, 2014*

HD-video, colour, silent, aspect ratio 16:9

34 min.17 sec. loop

Edith Dekyndt's (1960, Belgium) work proposes a new narrative, inspired by Martiniquian thinker and poet Édouard Glissant. He exchanged classic power relations and narrow minded nationalism for *Creolisation* or the mixing of various cultural influences. He thereby used the archipelago metaphor; a place with no centre where influences constantly influence one another in every direction. This disrupts the traditional dichotomy between centre and periphery or subject and object. The video *Ombre Indigène, Part 2, Île de Martinique* developed from examining Glissant's texts as well as the life and history of Martinique. Dekyndt planted a human-hair flag on the rocks of Diamond Beach, woven together as in the work of Boutros & Saadé. At precisely this point, an illegal slave ship carrying around 100 African prisoners ran aground on the night of 8 on 9 April 1830. The flag was filmed flapping in the wind and serves as an homage to the deceased. It is a memorial that simultaneously expresses hope for a new, better life.

## Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc

*Forever Weak and Ungrateful (5) and (12), 2015*

Heliogravure

Each 47,4 x 30,7 cm, framed 50 x 33,3 cm

Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc (1977, French Guyana) also dreams of a new world by exorcising the ghosts of the past, re-writing the discourse and correcting mistakes from the past. Here he does so using two photographic engravings that depict fragments of a monumental sculpture of Victor Schœlcher in French Guyana. It portrays Schœlcher – a French colonial civil servant and member of parliament who opposed slavery – as a heroic slave liberator. It has Schœlcher showing a recently unchained slave the way to freedom with a grand, paternalistic gesture. Abonnenc's unusual framing emphasises the scene's ambiguity: the slave is dressed solely in a loincloth, while his liberator is fully dressed. This is how he wishes to re-write the past, longing for a different future.

Curated by: **Chris Bestebreurtje en Petra Kuipers** - [www.tlonprojects.org](http://www.tlonprojects.org)

Translation: **Titus Verheyen**

The works comprising *Soundtrack for a Troubled Time* originate from the following collections: **Laurent Fiévet (France), Frédéric de Goldschmidt (Belgium), Joseph Kouli (France)** along with other collections that wish to remain anonymous.

Thanks to:

**Galerie Martine Aboucaya, Galerie Marcelle Alix, GB Agency, Galerie Anne Barrault, Greta Meert Gallery, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff.**