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# Ghislaine Leung

## 150 : 180 / 133, 2018

Installation, plastic children's house, metal adhesive

Year of acquisition: 2018



Ghislaine Leung, 58 : 96 / 49, 2018. Photo : Maxwell Graham, New York

All partners of the exhibition are required to contribute at least one item for display. (*Violets 3*, 2019); Viewing access to the exhibited works is only available during the artist's studio hours: Thursday from 9am to 4pm, Friday from 9am to 4pm. The exhibition space operates during its normal opening hours. (*Times*, 2022); The budget earmarked for any artist's travel and accommodation is instead donated to a local organisation that supports healthcare staff. The documentation is on display. (*Travel & Accommodation*, 2022); these protocols, or "guidelines," are the essence of Ghislaine Leung's works. With the belief that art emerges from its context – be it architectural, economic, or legal – the British artist anchors her practice in instructions that require active participation from her exhibition's "partners" (such as institutions, galleries, collectors...). By putting this network of invited actors to work, as it is up to them to realise and embody the artworks, the system established by the artist sets up a form of transparent correspondence, a relationship of both force and necessary alliance between the economies of the structures that present and support their work and that of the artist – through a form of co-production.

The organizational framework of the work is thereby made visible and tangible, rather than being implied, opaque, or concealed as is often the case in art venues. It transforms into a subject for textual and experimental exploration in sculpture and installation – a potential "game." This approach underscores the various constraints – technical, financial, legal – and the contexts and actors involved, highlighting what the artist refers to as "dependencies." Just as those of the venues that show her work, Ghislaine Leung uses her own possibilities and limitations, her time, her body, her artist's economy, and her role as a worker and mother – her biography – as the very materials of her art. Thus, *.\_ / \_* (2018) features a metal strip, mounted on the exhibition walls at the minimum ceiling height of the presentation area, and a child's playhouse ("preferably in plastic", as specified by the artist) also acquired locally. The appearance of the work (including the height and the playhouse) as well as the title (which lists, respectively, the artwork's hanging height in the space, the minimum ceiling height, and the dimensions of the child's playhouse) thus vary with each exhibition, demonstrating the constancy amid variation within these different standards.

Ghislaine Leung's work distinctly aligns with conceptual art and institutional critique, yet whereas these historical movements aimed to expose or criticize the limitations of artistic language and art institutions, Leung's practice – which she qualifies as "constitutional critique" – aims to articulate standards and interconnect scales. In this materialist perspective of the exhibition, different scales are also brought into relation, which do not normally meet, and which suddenly generate, in their clash, a new sense: that of the law, of childhood, and of the spatial arrangement of artworks, of urban planning, of the body, of the network that generates artistic value and the material life of Ghislaine Leung.

Yann Chateigné Tytelman, 2024

\* Ghislaine Leung (1980, Sweden)

# Joshua Leon

## *Invitation to Steal, 2020*

Printing in postcard format, paper (unlimited work)

Year of acquisition: 2020

I invite you to steal.  
To perform a fugitive gesture.

The theft I call you to participate in is, whenever you are in any form of public social space, you steal a drinking glass.

Once stolen, write down the location, the person with whom you may have been and the date.

Then send the glass with this information to the address below.

Joshua Leon  
Studio 104, 31 Peckham Road, SE5 8UB, London, UK

© Joshua Leon

*Invitation to Steal* is a remarkably simple protocol that may be summed up in a few lines: Joshua Leon asks us to steal a glass from a public space and send it to him via postal mail. The artist documents and archives the correspondence, intending to store the collected glasses until 2028. In that year, all the glasses collected over the project's seven-year duration will be melted down and transformed into windows. This work is an integral part of Joshua Leon's research into the history and memory of continental Judaism. Named Unfinished History of Glass, his research is expressed through a combination of actions, poetry, and exhibitions.

Indeed, the year 2028 also marks the 90th anniversary of Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass), named after the glass shards that littered the streets following the widespread vandalism and destruction of Jewish shops, synagogues, and homes in Vienna on the night of November 9-10, 1938. On that night, Joshua Leon's grandparents, then children living in Vienna, survived. Through this simple act that he requests of us, the artist delves into profound questions: Who has the right to steal, and what does it mean to possess such a right? How does this act challenge our notions of possession and property? Moreover, how does it prompt us to reflect on the impact of history on our own responsibilities?

The protocol outlines that theft involves "performing a fleeting gesture." Joshua Leon invokes the concept of fugitivity as defined by theorists Stefano Harvey and Fred Moten, framing it as a state of dispossession. More broadly, fugitivity is a way of being in motion that defies logic, organization, reason, and in doing so, fosters community. *Invitation to Steal* adds value to these small, accumulated fugitive gestures, which move glasses and dispossess their owners: "Fugitivity is about not settling in."

In the extended and collective timeline of this procedural artwork, each stolen glass contributes to forging connections: between the artist, the institution, and the participants; between intimate and shared narratives; and, finally, between glasses – those found in cafés today and those from the shop windows of Vienna in 1938. When he melts down the hard, sharp material, Joshua Leon will create bonds and care between the November Pogrom and its 90th anniversary. In this "unfinished history of glass," performing dispossession in the present is thus an act of repairing its past occurrences.

Clélia Barbut, 2023

\* Joshua Leon (1990, United Kingdom)

# Luzie Meyer

## *Pin Up Hang Up, 2020*

Poster, poem in printable PDF file in three fonts: Times New Roman, Arial and Courier New, paper (unlimited work)

Year of acquisition: 2020

### Pin Up Hang Up

I imagine a woman,  
commissioned to produce a commodity,  
an image to be reproduced indefinitely, for sale

—ad nauseam, ad absurdum—

a sale from which  
she is not to benefit directly,  
but indirectly (maybe),  
a sale which might expose her,  
and lead to a significant depletion  
of self-esteem.

She feels a very real  
sort of moral indebtedness—  
fearing that she might not be  
a valuable investment in herself—  
but only outside herself,  
in representation.

Her hang up:  
Show us how art should change the world.  
And authenticate your expertise on the issue  
by representing an image  
of your own idiosyncratic suffering.

Listen,  
if you buy what nobody asked me to make,  
let me tell you  
what you invest in:

- A re-invest-igation  
into the case of the death of the author  
and his missing corpse,  
which is purportedly a feminist pin up.

- My rent for the month of January 2021,  
in case none of my grant applications work out.

- Time to strengthen myself  
so as to find a more internal locus of control.

The quest for truth leads me to a barren plane,  
a depleted sheet of paper,  
a short list of the remains of the day.

The idea of barrenness is archetypal:  
infertility, a source of great sorrow  
for every woman.

How about:  
The strategic representation of barrenness  
to resist exploitation?

I can't imagine the end of commerce,  
there's not enough space on the page.

This page is worthless.

Give me another.  
A bit of water.  
Shelter.  
Food, sleep, safety, love, recognition.

I do this because  
I would not be doing anything else.  
Grant art the basics.  
Another page.  
Shelter.  
Another kind of page give me shelter.

'Art is older than commerce'\*  
How competent do you think the woman is?

Wilke, reiterated, could be:  
Who does she represent and why?  
What do you want her to represent and why?

The artist, if she is worthy,  
should agree to indent herself.  
If both the personal and the political  
are capital,  
it seems obvious what to write about.

This has already been discussed

—ad nauseam, ad absurdum—

and signifies an error in logical argumentation:  
Stating a falsehood over and over again  
expecting it to produce truth.  
A self-sustaining fallacy.

If you buy what nobody asked me to make,  
I am telling you  
what you invest in:  
yet another thing  
you did not know you needed or wanted:  
A very good sense of humour.

\*commerce  
{ kom-ers }

noun

1. an interchange of goods or commodities, trade, business.  
2. social relations, the exchange of views, attitudes, etc.  
3. sexual intercourse.  
4. intellectual or spiritual interchange; communion

In 2020, Luzie Meyer was commissioned to produce a poster (a commodity) for a prestigious Swiss art fair that would be "reproduced indefinitely, for sale...a sale from which she is not to benefit directly, but indirectly (maybe)". For this commission, Luzie Meyer turned to language — as she often does in her practice that is composed of a range of media from poetry to music, performance and sculpture — to write a poem in response to the absurdity of such ad nauseam requests. The result: *Pin Up Hang Up* (2020), an A3 format PDF bearing the poem, printed upon sale.

*Pin Up Hang Up* calls out injustices of the art world as well as its absurdity and repercussions. Following at first the artists questioning of visibility and self-worth, and her "hang up" on how artists representing their own individual suffering is valued in the art market, the text then presents a short list of things one would invest in if we were to purchase her artwork, such as the artist's rent, and time for self care. Yet, the list is abruptly interrupted by the idea of barrenness — particularly in relation to women and infertility — and worthlessness that takes over, as she questions what it would mean, perhaps, to make a "strategic representation of barrenness to resist exploitation." The work thus unveils itself as such a representation as the author goes on to state "This page is worthless."

"And because they lend themselves to private [intellectual] property, they fall under an economic universe of their own, and one that overdetermines the way in which the artists who practise them address the most general economic issues."

In *Pin Up Hang Up*, Luzie Meyer addresses the most general economic issue — that of being paid — through poetry, self exposure, and humour. Fully aware of her condition as an artist — and more specifically, as a female artist — Luzie Meyer reminds those interested in acquiring the poem what they truly are investing in: "yet another thing you did not know you needed or wanted: a very good sense of humour," — nothing more. Pushing where it hurts in the complex world of contemporary art, Luzie Meyer reminds that even if "art is older than commerce", it has nonetheless been commodified, and it is the makers that should benefit directly from such sales.

Katia Porro, 2022

\* Luzie Meyer (1990, Germany)

# Sarah Rapson

## *Cathcart Hill, 2000*

Video, black and white, silent, 7'25

Year of acquisition: 2022



© Sarah Rapson, Maxwell Graham Gallery

A woman is running. She is filmed from behind, in black and white, near an industrial building. The frame jumps. The editing brings back similar yet slightly different shots in which the woman turns around at regular intervals, without stopping, as if she were being followed. The Tate Modern is quickly recognized. The woman hastily enters, descends into the vast open space of the Turbine Hall. The viewpoint changes: filmed from a distance, from a walkway, her silhouette, in white trousers and a dark mid-length jacket, is captured as if by a surveillance camera. The scenes repeat again: sometimes she is alone, sometimes carrying a small blonde child in her arms. She keeps turning around, as though chased by some unseen force. In one of the museum's rooms, amidst a diverse crowd, she and the child, this time in a stroller, navigate an exhibition dedicated to minimal art. Pushing the stroller before her, she performs a strange choreography, looping from a work by Robert Morris to a sculpture by Donald Judd, rolling over a floor piece by Carl Andre. Amidst the wandering crowd, the woman and the child intersect the paths of the visitors, but no one seems to notice them. Nor does anyone seem to be looking at the artworks.

This woman is Sarah Rapson. An English artist, educated in London, Paris, and then New York (where she attended the Whitney Program). Her work – encompassing painting, drawing, collages, video, sound – known for its pictorial radicality. It was said that she had a habit of destroying her canvases after exhibiting them; she was associated with "romantic conceptualism", a term promoted by the critic Jörg Heiser. The American poet Eileen Myles celebrated her "negative capability". Echoing a concept from John Keats, Myles depicted the then unfinished and emotionally charged state of her work, characterized by erasures and self-destruction, as indicators of doubt, exploration, or even constructive loss. The artist, who lived in the United States from the mid-1980s to 2004, has since settled in a small town in Dorset, in the South West of England.

In *Cathcart Hill*, a video created in 2000, Rapson is seen running, as if trying to escape. Is she in pursuit of solitude, of clarity, seeking shelter in the museum—a quiet haven away from the chaos of the city? One might initially think so, given how her body language appears to distance her from those around her, as though the artist desires to exit the social realm. Yet rapidly, Rapson reveals how her presence contrasts with the normative environment she navigates: from the unusual speed of her steps to the solitary responsibility of carrying her child, and her unique rhythm as a single mother in a space where all the other artists are men. By juxtaposing her movements, hindered by her stroller, with the serene purity of the sculptures, the artist uncovers another standard that governed the male-dominated narrative of art history. Further investigation reveals that *Cathcart Hill* was, in the 19th century, a military cemetery situated to the north of the city. Is Rapson fleeing the ghosts of history, which she attempts to exorcise through art? Or is she staging, in this work, her confrontation with them, in the museum space, the quintessential place for dialogue with the absent? Or is it she, the "revenant" artist, who, in the video, comes to haunt the institution?

Yann Chateigné Tytelman, 2024

\* Sarah Rapson (1959, United Kingdom)

# Kathleen White

## *Untitled (eyes with glasses), 1991*

Pencil, charcoal, watercolour, collage on paper

Year of acquisition: 2018



© Kathleen White, Sánchez-White archives, Martos Gallery, New York

"Kathleen White was part of that generation watching friends and lovers vanish, paying tribute to their countless interrupted lives. "Decimated by the epidemic, wrecked by grief, broken by fear and melancholy, an entire generation of art historians, as well as a whole generation of practices, not just artistic but critical, were lost." (Elisabeth Lebovici).

*Self Portrait, Spirit* (1995) and *Untitled (eyes with glasses)* (1991) are part of a long series of drawings the artist made on directory pages. Through this medium, the work takes inventory. "Reich - Reilly" and "Fontanelli - Foreman": names not to be forgotten as they could disappear, just as they formally vanish under the scraps of childlike and puppet-like faces with which Kathleen White covers them. In *Untitled (eyes with glasses)* (1991), the page is adorned with about ten blue eyes painted in watercolour and charcoal, and pink stains that smear the columns of phone numbers; in *Self Portrait, Spirit* (1995), it's covered with a face painted in watercolour and charcoal, and strands of hair (from wigs used by the artist's performer friends). Under the watercolour's colourful and innocent aesthetic, the pages bear signs of distress: perforations, incisions, indentations, tears, yellowing, and dog-earing. Through these formal effects, the aim is to create a regime of visibility for the names contained within: one that, in the age of AIDS, functions as "a space where dissolution occurs" and decomposition for bodies that are both suffering and desiring.

Clélia Barbut, 2023

# Mark Cohen

## *Sans titre, 1973-1975*

Black and white photograph, gelatin-silver print

Year of acquisition: 1987



© Mark Cohen

In the spirit of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Robert Frank, the American-born artist Mark Cohen photographs streets and urban places, capturing slices of life and fleeting split seconds. As he walks the city streets in search of a face, a body, a saucy detail or a view, he presents a fragmented world. His world is one of working-class neighbourhoods, particularly in Wilkes Barre, the city where he was born: there is nothing smug or miserabilist in his photos, but rather a hard and yet comic vision which does not try to transcend the corny and the vulgar.

Mark Cohen has nevertheless reinvented the street photo genre by using, at the moment the photo is taken, the dazzle of the stroboscope. The intuitively taken photos have a very short exposure time. The patch of light that surges forth captures the space or the person by surrounding it or him with a raw and violent halo, fixing the subject like an insect or animal being pursued by a cone of light.

The grating world into which he invites us – distorted perspectives, bodies truncated and rendered monumental by their appearance in the foreground, off-screen faces – is at once harshly beautiful and disquieting. The space is not neutral but made raw and highly sexualized by the partial presence of these faceless limbs and these shameless, made-up faces, not showing the slightest reaction to this photographic 'onslaught'.

Hélène Guenin

# Lili Dujourie

## *Spiegel, 1976*

Video, black and white, silent, 7'30 s

## *Sonnet, 1974*

Video, black and white, silent, 7'20 s

Year of acquisition: 2003



© Lili Dujourie

This collection of restored video films republished by Argos in Brussels encompasses the early works of the Belgian artist Lili Dujourie, a body of work subsequently developed mainly in the form of collages and sculptures. Between 1970 and 1980, her relationship with the new video medium laid down the conditions of a praxis rather than a form. The artist experimented with various types of live recording, with no cuts or scenes, in which she showed herself at some length in simple frames, apparently styleless.

The presence of this slowly moving body refers to certain dance and performance practices, but it is rather from a cinematic tradition, capturing things in real time, that the whole work seems to stem. Otherwise put: using video as an objective and neutral instrument for measuring time and space, in the tradition of artists like Andy Warhol or Bruce Nauman. Video. Surveillance. But these pose periods sometimes freeze and crystallize in a fleeting way as romantic pictorial compositions (in *Sonnet* and *Passion de l'été pour l'hiver* in particular), not to say like certain icons of modernity (Courbet's *L'Origine du monde*, in *Hommage à...*). This indifference on the part of the act of displaying, which is both apathetic and shameless, combined with a sterilization and stripping of the frame, refers the viewer in the end of the day to the responsibility of his own way of looking at things, between fascination for the suspended split second and disenchanted voyeurism.

Guillaume Désanges

\* Lili Dujourie (1949, Belgium)

# Dorothy Iannone

## *In the East My Pleasure Lies, 2013*

Printed in color on Rives Tradition paper

Year of acquisition: 2016



Dorothy Iannone, Courtesy Air de Paris © Hans-Georg Gaul

Drawing her whole speech from her own experience, Dorothy Iannone graduated in English Literature and started painting in the late 1950s, soon after she married James Upham who was also an artist. Initially, her style was close to Abstract Expressionism, but very soon shifted towards a unique form of Figurative art that she finds better suited to creating her narratives. From then on, she decided that her compositions would combine writing with certain degree of visual fullness replete with references to comic books, Greek and Roman classical art and also non-Western influences reminiscent of Panamanian molas or Indian miniatures.

Also, from 1963, she decided that she would always include the genitals of the characters she portrays, even when they are dressed. This visual “signature”, together with the explicit sexual scenes in most of her paintings, would see her works banned on many occasions. In 1967, after her decisive meeting with German artist Dieter Roth, who she considered her muse and who was her romantic partner for seven years, she left her first husband and settled permanently in Europe. Without necessarily claiming to be feminist, her work, like her life, conveys images of strong, emancipated women who experience their sexuality to the full.

The artwork *In The East My Pleasure Lies* is a multiple work printed on paper and produced in 2013 from an original 1965 artwork. The latter was originally conceived to be the poster for a personal exhibition of the artist’s paintings at the Stryke Gallery in New-York. In this new version of her work, Dorothy Iannone has replaced the information relating to the exhibition with an excerpt from the play *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare, from which the poster had already taken inspiration. In the centre of the black and white composition, as an unusual use of photography in her work, the artist presents a superimposed double portrait, displaying in each perspective both her face and profile. Around it, framed in stylized battlements reminiscent of a medieval fortress, various scenes from the daily life of the mythical lovers are interconnected and intertwined with plant and animal motifs and with decorative items. This artwork foreshadows the autobiographical graphic novels that would follow – such as *The Story of Bern* (1970) or *L’Adorable Trixie* (1975) – and reveals the kind of historical appropriation that makes Dorothy Iannone’s works so characteristic.

Franck Balland, 2020

# Josephine Pryde

## *Thumb, Pad (Pink Filter)*, 2014-2020

Print on resin and tinted Plexiglas

Year of acquisition: 2020



© Josephine Pryde, Galerie Neu, Berlin

The photographs *Einen Scheiss Muss ich (I don't care)* and *Thumb, Pad (Pink Filter)* by the British artist Josephine Pryde are respectively chest-height framed and tight on the thumb. They are part of the series *Hands "Für Mich"* [Hands for me], which consists of some twenty similar shots. These pictures show female hands touching or grabbing various objects and surfaces, such as a breast, a mobile phone screen, an iPad, a pen or a touch-sensitive table lamp. Using a macro lens, Josephine Pryde documents this haptic moment between the human body and the objects with which it interacts. All anonymous, these portraits have relegated their owners out of frame.

Josephine Pryde, who primarily uses photography as her medium, reflects on the making of images and the economies that underlie their circulation and consumption. The artist has become a figure in the reclamation of the medium as a critical discipline, developing a unique style that uses methods and ideas from advertising, fashion and portrait photography, among others. These two images are a case in point, as the perfectly manicured hands seem straight out of a fashion magazine. One would almost suspect that they are fetish magazine cut-outs. This may be the source of the artist's particular ambivalence in her approach to reality, cultivating a certain distance from familiar and common things through her work.

While many scientific studies are focusing on the digital revolution and its impact on the brain, the brain has already begun to adapt. This is the "Little Thumb" generation as described by the philosopher and science historian Michel Serres in his eponymous book published in 2012. The "Little Thumb" generation is characterised by its ability to send messages with a thumb click, but that is not its only quality. Far from being judgmental, the philosopher is enthusiastic about this change and the possibilities it opens up in terms of knowledge, learning and exchange. A world where everything remains to be done, where the "gentle age" is within reach for those who wish to seize it.

However, what interests the artist here is not what the hands say, but what they know. Seized at this precise moment of the gesture of touching, when fingers and palms leave their imprints on the surface of things, Josephine Pryde's hands are hands of today. Their gestures open onto limitless worlds, endless sequences of images and texts that the click and scroll display. Because if of all the body parts, hands have the most varied movements, the artist has specifically focused on their relationship to the tactile technologies of our daily lives, in particular these screens through which our horizons unfold, but which seem to reduce our bodies to a hypnotic sedentary posture.

Elena Lespes Munoz, 2022

\* Josephine Pryde (1967, United Kingdom)

# Diana Blok & Marlo Broekmans

## *Horses*, 1979

Black and white photography, print on paper

Year of acquisition: 1987



© Diana Blok & Marlo Broekmans

Diana Blok and Marlo Broekmans form a duo of photographic artists who collaborated from 1979 to 1981 before continuing their careers independently.

In the late 1970s, while still engaging in photography as amateurs, Diana and Marlo met through their shared passion: coincidentally in 1977 - initially in Arles - and on the fringes of the First Photographic Meetings, and then at their home in Amsterdam, during a party in 1979 where they truly got to know each other. At that time, they were only 26 and 25 years old, respectively. Becoming a couple in their personal life, their collaboration was marked by an intense period of creativity and experimentation with photography – *Horses* (1979) from the *Invisible Forces* series stands as a testament to this phase.

Diana Blok and Marlo Broekmans both learned photography through practice. After spending the early part of her life in various Latin American countries, Diana Blok moved to the Netherlands in the 1970s, the homeland of her father from whom she received her nationality. Amidst the political tensions in Latin America, she came to Amsterdam to pursue scientific studies. Although accepted into the Rietveld Academy, she chose to learn through work instead. Marlo Broekmans pursued studies in pedagogy and psychology and began photography in the late 1970s. Her first significant images were made in collaboration with Diana Blok. Together, they moved beyond amateurism and embarked on a professional journey that continues to this day.

The photograph *Horses* is a black and white print showing the bare torso of a woman seated, clinging with one arm to the waist of another female torso. Though appearing almost reclined, the bodies seem to be in motion. The profile of the woman in the centre features hair raised (as if upside-down), her eyes covered with a thin white cloth like a rope, while an other one binds the two bodies together. These connections extend off-frame, as in several other images from the *Invisible Forces* series, serving as motifs that symbolise attachment and suggest its ambivalence: between love and confinement. Created with a camera that allows for long exposures, the dynamic of the scene is captured in the shot. With the help of their friend Bernadien Sternheim, the intimate space of their apartment transformed into a site of performative and visual experimentation. The young couple produced over 68 photographs that would comprise *Invisible Forces*.

Addressing themes of nudity and portraiture, they also reflect on their numerous travels to India, Greece, and Italy. Often associated with lesbian eroticism by the press of the time, the two photographers saw it as an affirmation of their own perspective, far from heteronormativity.

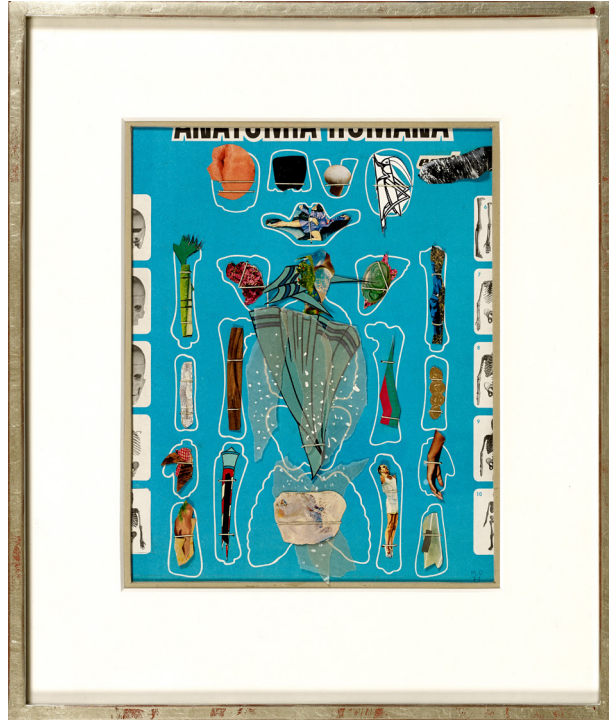
Estelle Nabeyrat, 2024

# Meret Oppenheim

## *Jeu*, 1971

Mixed and printed papers, strings, paint, cardboard and plastic assembled

Year of acquisition: 2001



© Adagp, Paris, photo Studio Rémi Villaggi

Born from a family of middle-class intellectuals, Meret Oppenheim spent the war years in the Jura region of Switzerland with her mother. Once the conflict was over, her family settled in Steinen, in the south of Germany, before relocating to Basel in 1935. From a very young age, she showed interest in psychoanalysis, a frequent household topic – her father regularly attended Jung’s seminars – and wrote about her dreams. Her mother and grand-mother, suffragettes and feminists, supported her need for independence. The young woman didn’t complete her studies and spent most of her time in the company of local artists. In 1932, she visited Paris with Irène Zurkinden (1909-1987), and attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, but preferred writing and drawing in the cafes of Montparnasse, where she met Giacometti, Hans Rudolf Schiess, Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889-1943) as well as Hans Arp and Max Ernst. From 1933 to 1936, her art was shown alongside the surrealists in Paris, Copenhagen, London, and New York. Her artwork not only included drawings, but paintings, collage, assemblage, dream transcriptions, and anthropomorphic objects as well.

In 1933-1934 she posed for Man Ray in a series of erotic photographs published in *Minotaure* magazine. In 1936, the Marguerite Schulthess gallery in Basel presented her first solo exhibition, featuring such important works as *Ma Gouvernante*, a piece that plays with the ambiguity of objects and the fetishizing of femininity: two upended women's high-heel shoes are tied up and made to look like a roast on a platter. The artist loved undermining the importance of the creative act. While showing her friends Dora Maar and Picasso one of her creations for Schiaparelli, a bracelet with the inside face covered in fur, Picasso humorously suggested she cover it in fur entirely. This gave her the inspiration for *Déjeuner en fourrure* (1936), a dining set made of fur, which became one of the flagship works of surrealism, unique and originally poetic. Through a reinterpretation of Duchamp's ground-breaking work, she challenged conventional notions of artist, artwork and ordinary objects.

In 1937, sensing the imminent arrival of war, she restricted her appearances in Paris to an exhibit at the Drouin-Leo Castelli gallery, presenting *Traccia*, her "Table with Bird's Feet" with a table top marked by footprints, as well as two other objects. On July 13, 1939, she exiled herself to Switzerland, which inspired her works such as in *Le Paradis est dans la terre* (1940) an upside-down tree dipping into a blue sky at the bottom of a well. She then slowly gave up her work, only to take it up again in 1954. She also questioned her position as both a woman and artist. Feminist, independent, and free, her time in Paris made her understand that she needed to work alone, at the fringe of the macho universe of the surrealists, who treated her like a women-child.

In 1949 she married Wolfgang La Roche, a non-conformist business man. In 1950, she reunited with her old friends in Paris. In 1956, she created costumes and masks for a play inspired by one of Picasso's paintings, *Le Désir attrapé par la queue*. For the occasion, she exhibited a piece in the *Anti-Kunst* (anti-art) show in the theatre's lobby, called *Le Couple*, consisting of two lace up women's ankle boots joined together at the toe. In 1959, she organized a banquet in Bern to celebrate the arrival of Spring, symbol of fertility, where food was served on a naked woman's body.

André Breton invited her to repeat the event in Paris in December 1959 at the Cordier gallery. While initially critiquing the objectification of the female form, the artist shifted her practice to creating sculptures from wood and stone, exhibiting her work internationally. In 1967, museums and galleries started organizing large-scale retrospectives of her work.

Catherine Gonnard, extract from *Dictionnaire universel des créatrices*  
© Éditions des femmes – Antoinette Fouque, 2013

\* Meret Oppenheim (1913, Germany – 1985, Switzerland)

# Jean-Luc Tartarin

## *Sans titre*, 1981

Black and white photographs, gelatin-silver prints

Year of acquisition: 1989



© Jean-Luc Tartarin

Jean-Luc Tartarin's photographic praxis strives to capture and define the essence of things – their nub – be the subject a human being, or a simple aspect of our everyday life, or even a landscape transfigured by a special light. These various 'portraits' are large-format works which thus lend the image an autonomy akin to that of the picture (the image is enclosed, it is self-justifying, and seems devoid of anything off-screen). But these recent works derive their sources from the black-and-white experiments conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, several significant examples of which are in the collection.

Thus the forest photographs which he took in the late 1980s or thereabouts attest to a determination not to give in to picturesqueness, but on the contrary to reinstate the whole symbolic charge of this particular place. The forest, in history and the western imagination, remains the place of pagan deities and myths, the mysterious place, vaguely disconcerting, where certain of the most primitive and (fundamental) beliefs of our imagination are still rooted. This is what is suggested in these images by the interweave of branches from which a shrewdly and cannily worked light emerges. Likewise, older portraits play with this tension between the real and the imaginary, but, this time around, faced with the impossibility of delimiting the inner reality of the subject. Since then, Jean-Luc Tartarin has opened his work up to colour and objectivity.

Damien Sausset

# Carol-Marc Lavrillier

## *Sans titre*, 1988

Photography

Year of acquisition: 1988



© Carol-Marc Lavrillier

Carol-Marc Lavrillier was a French photographer, the son of a sculptor mother, who was a disciple of Bourdelle, and an engraver father. Following in his family's footsteps, he began studies in sculpture and medal engraving at the Paris National School of Fine Arts in 1950 before deciding to dedicate himself to black & white analogue photography, as was the practice at the time.

His work quickly focused on the creations of other artists, as evidenced by his first photographic journey exploring the work of Bourdelle (1955-1957), followed by Auguste Rodin's *La Porte de l'Enfer*, which took him twenty years to get published. From 1958, he worked as an independent photographer, capturing several shots in the realms of art, architecture, and design. His photographic style became more refined and professional, focusing his lens on the interiors of artists' studios, museums, or photo studios, striving to highlight objects and subjects through strong chiaroscuro contrast. During these years, he continued to dedicate his photography to the works of other artists and photographed famous individuals, such as in 1960, when he took a portrait of Marcel Duchamp in his house in Neuilly-sur-Seine. That same year, he became the official photographer for the art review *L'Œil*.

Alongside commissioned work, he continued to develop his own photographic projects, consistently capturing the work of great artists with a sense of wonder. In 1963, he published the book *Les Peintures Murales de Delacroix*, accompanied by texts from the art historian Maurice Serullaz. In 1968, he turned to filmmaking for the first time, creating his debut film on one of his preferred themes: the work of Bourdelle. Two more 35mm films on the same subject followed: in 1977 *The Monumental Sculpture* (25 min) and in 1979 *Leda* (9 min). After a significant photographic study (1970-1975) entitled *50 Designers 1950-1975*, he photographed objects of his time for posterity, experimenting with studio photography techniques like double exposure and other film editing techniques to reveal all facets of an object, as seen in *Valentine Typewriter*, Ettore Sottsass, 1969, acquired by the Centre Pompidou.

Continuing to collaborate with the press, such as *Vogue* magazine, he eventually decided to open his own photo gallery in 1980: Studio 666 and the 666 editions, through which he unveiled new talents. For ten years, he exhibited and supported artists while continuing his work as a photographer.

The work *Sans titre* 1988, acquired by the Frac, is a still life of a free and abstract style, in which one can discern two stone pieces the size of logs placed vertically. The black & white print makes the texture of the objects difficult to identify, reflecting a form of plastic experimentation while remaining committed to the classicism of the black and white image. That same year, he finally published his work Rodin, *Le Porte de l'Enfer* from his 1957 photos and received the French Academy's award for Best Publication of 1988.

Estelle Nabeyrat, 2024

# Hélène Fauquet

## *Phenomena*, 2020

Chromogenic print on Fujifilm paper (unlimited edition)

Year of acquisition: 2020



Courtesy Hélène Fauquet © Adagp, Paris

The photograph depicts a metallic surface on which several surrounding objects are reflected. Whether it is through bubble mirrors from the 1960s, UV prints or water glass, Hélène Fauquet's work is part of an investigation of optics. The reflective surfaces are a means of exploring the nature of photography and what the artist calls “an ecstatic consciousness” provoked by the decomposition of the image. They are also – as is the case with *Phenomena* – an open window on a computer screen, which we keep waiting to finish loading.

The use of ultra-low definition – the photo is deliberately blurred, if not unreadable – places us in the absurd position of waiting for the raw information to be processed. Directly induced by our daily use of screens, this reaction reflects how the rapid circulation of images has considerably modified our behaviour. *Phenomena* – whose title hints at this macro-phenomenon of the new uses of images – thus questions the porous border between the real and the virtual, and more broadly between art and media. The question is thus posed: in a world saturated by images, is there anything left to depict? The traditional question of the reproducibility of the photographic image is now replaced by that of its storage, its mutations and the flows it follows.

Peter Szendy employs the term “supermarket of the visible” to designate the economy of images, their circulation and their commodification. With *Phenomena*, H  l  ne Fauquet shows that the image is a sum of information similar to data flow. She touches on the liquidity of the images we are fed, and mocks this system of hyperproduction and waste of digital data. Whether it is a barely concealed indictment of the overconsumption of images or an ode to mass visual culture, the work succeeds in showing how images direct our thoughts. As a nod to the digital productions consumed on the internet, the work is also infinitely producible - the description of the work states this under the discreet mention “unlimited edition”.

Sophie Bernal, 2022

# Margaret Harrison

## *Olympia Model Role (Obama-Monroe), Olympia Model Role (Lopez-Dietrich), 2010*

Drawing, watercolor on paper

Year of acquisition: 2019



© Margaret Harrison, photo Fred Dott

In this series of watercolors, Margaret Harrison denounces racism and discrimination against women in the history of art. She revisits, by subverting it, Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863), which represents a naked white woman gazing provocatively in the foreground and a racialized companion observing her from the background. The representation of a nude in a domestic space, along with the uncertainty about the social origin of the model (she might be demi-monde), created a scandal.

Today, the painting is recognized as a work of art; it is regarded in a new light, and its links with Titian's work have come to the fore, while the moral issues have slipped into the category of history's faux pas. Harrison points to another aspect of the painting, namely the ability of powerful historical images to reinforce social norms. She has several celebrities, living and dead, exchange racially defined roles: white women (Vivien Leigh, Marilyn Monroe, and Marlene Dietrich) appear in the background as the servant, while women of color (Michelle Obama, Hattie McDaniel, and Jennifer Lopez) figure in the foreground, exposed to the public.

As a result, the artist operates a radical shift and draws our attention to issues of ethnicity and class and their influence on compositional decisions, developing an approach that, until recently, had been ignored in art history.

Fanny Gonella, 2019

# Katinka Bock \_o\_o\_o\_ (Cameron), 2017

Sculpture, ceramic, PVC pipe

Year of acquisition: 2018



© Katinka Bock, photo Yuula Benivolski

It bends, it folds, it collapses. We don't really know how, but in the work of the artist Katinka Bock, everything holds together, despite everything. Shapes, weights, and materials are often anchored, suspended, tied, and placed in an unresolved balance. It is as if what the artist was looking for was precisely this moment of abandonment, when the sculptor's tired gesture leaves it to the material to continue on its own. Accepting the terms of an exchange left to chance, precariousness becomes a matter of decision, of gravity (in the sense of weight) and energy (in the sense of movement).

\_o\_o\_o\_ (*Cameron*), some clay pack hanging like a thick fabric on a clothesline, is a case in point. The piece simply shows the movement that gave birth to it: there is a hint of the heavy sliding of the material on both sides of the rope until it finally hangs and bends carelessly - before being fired as is. Letting the material to find its place, therefore, by omission, withdrawal, or rest, like the missing letters in the title of the work.

\_o\_o\_o\_ is the lipogram for the city of Toronto, where the piece was produced and first shown at the Mercer Union Contemporary Art Centre in an exhibition of the same name. "I think the most interesting part of spaces, for me, is the edge. Because it's always that part that communicates with what's behind it", the very thing that cannot be seen but that may be guessed. Sculpture is indeed a matter of edges, as giving shape is primarily giving edge to something, playing with the interruptions of the material, with its cuts as well as its folds. These discreet gestures that Katinka Bock imbues into the materials are returned to her with a certain indolence, as if to better reveal the story of their shaping and the context in which they were born.

Elena Lespes Munoz, 2022

# David Lamelas

## *Pared Doblada*, 1994-2013

Folded paper

Year of acquisition: 2014



© David Lamelas

Over the past forty years, David Lamelas's oeuvre has continued to oscillate between sculpture, performance, and film. *Pared Doblada* follows that very trajectory. Astoundingly simple in both its form and gesture, the work consists of a large sheet of white paper, unfolded and skillfully pinned to the gallery wall. It is literally a collapsible wall that can be unfolded and refolded ad infinitum, and is designed to fit into a small suitcase. First created in 1994 on the occasion of an exhibition in Buenos Aires, the work was envisioned by the artist as a replica of one of the walls in his Manhattan studio and produced by a Japanese craftsman using washi paper. The version of *Pared Doblada* that belongs to FRAC Lorraine is, however, a duplicate of another wall: namely, the wall of the Kayne Griffin Corcoran Gallery in Los Angeles. Manufactured ten years later, this second version — unlike the first one, which was made using a single large sheet of paper — consists of two sheets of paper taped together. This is an original accomplishment, which turns the work into a single piece that cannot be fully replicated.

A number of concerns recurrent in the work of David Lamelas intersect in *Pared Doblada*, whether relating to sculpture, the concepts of volume and space, or the abstract phenomenon of projection. Not without bearing on his work as filmmaker, this piece may perhaps be seen as a screen wherein the viewer may contemplate the architecture of the place they're in or elsewhere. In addition to being a simple replica of the wall, this sheet of paper is an imprint of a space and its atmosphere, which are here reduced to a minimum. This is also an extract of the time of the exhibition, the materialization of an instant that is deployed and that unfolds: a portable sculpture of time and space. It must be said that David Lamelas is a keen traveler. From Buenos Aires to London, to Brussels, Paris, and New York, the artist has lived and worked in different countries, and each of these destinations has had a specific influence on his work. It is his experience of displacement and his constant effort at adaptation to new surroundings that have made David Lamelas's work so consistently unclassifiable according to the traditional art-historical criteria, and so enduringly universal in its message.

Louise Chignac, 2016

\* David Lamelas (1946, Argentina)

# Bruno Pélassy

## *Sans titre, Series Bestioles, 2001*

Sculpture, feathers from a pink boa, toy mechanism

Sculpture, snake skin, feathers and toy mechanism

Year of acquisition: 2019



© Bruno Pélassy,  
photo AAA Production /  
Michel Coen,  
courtesy Air de Paris,  
Romainville



Bruno Pélassy's work oriented towards animals and flows: the *Créatures*, for example, as well as the *Bestioles* [critters] series, or small mobile and sound sculptures mounted on cheap toy mechanisms cleverly dressed by the artist. These works are fragile and require constant care and attention in their display and conservation. They often have to be parked in order not to lose them in the exhibition rooms. The first critters are rather sinister, crawling wigs. They were realised after a long stint at the hospital. They opened the way towards his creation of more and more refined objects, at times funny, often grotesque and nothing short of the aesthetics of body horror.

Dressed in red mink or ermine, the works wear gold chains, jewels, crystals and stones. Certain shimmy; others rub against, hit and hurtle into the walls; and dance with a bejeweled erection. They squeak, laugh and whimper. Their mechanic and synthetic sounds, as well as the repetition that animates their syncopated motions make them technically and physically janky objects. The two *Bestioles* in the Frac Lorraine's collection were created in 2001, a truly fruitful year for the artist before his untimely death. The first critter adorns a tuft of pink boa feathers. She sits atop a group of 3 mechanic animals attached together. The second one, unfinished, sits atop the body of a plastic bird and covered in long feathers and a snakeskin that trails behind its tail like a train. The first one endures strange movements — it hits the floor as if suffering from a compulsive disorder. The second one is inactive.

Marie Canet, 2022

# Yuu Takamizawa

## *Welded Steel Metal Grating, 2022*

Sculpture, resin casting, Tamiya painting

Year of acquisition: 2022



© Yuu Takamizawa

Yuu Takamizawa is a Japanese artist based in Tokyo. He is also a curator and co-director of the independent exhibition space 4649 in Tokyo, which he opened in 2017, a year after earning his Bachelor's degree from TAMA Art University in Tokyo. Focusing mainly on photography, video, sculpture, and installation, his work questions the status of the copy and the ready-made as art. Takamizawa is interested in what he calls the "originality of the artwork" and the value attached to it. Through his work, he explores the pre-existence and permanence of the "concept" (especially since the creation of Ready-mades by M. Duchamp) in relation to the originality of the artwork. He examines the possibilities and impossibilities of originality in art and challenges the distinction between objects called "artworks" and those that are merely objects, while trying to understand how an object is perceived as "art".

*Welded Steel Metal Grating* is the title of a sculpture created in 2022, inspired by the artist's acquisition of an object that was found online during an auction. The title is derived from the original listing of the object by its seller. It factually describes the photographed object as it appeared at the time of sale: a welded steel grating. It also indicates the intended use envisioned by the manufacturer and the seller. The original object has utility due to the solidity and stability of its metallic material.

The artist produced a replica of this object in melted and lacquered resin with Tamiya aerosol paint (a fine paint with high covering power). Crafted using Japanese techniques and materials, it is an identical reproduction in appearance, but obviously does not possess the same properties. The replica is lighter, more fragile, and cheaper. It is diverted from its original use.

After photographing the original object, Yuu Takamizawa created this replica. This photograph is a first derivative work of the original object, and *Welded Steel Metal Grating* was produced based on this image. It replicates some standards of the object, but its second-hand reproduction negates its existence outside the art realm. It is a futile gesture through which the artist questions modes of production and capitalization: the replica and its image can potentially acquire greater value once recognized as works. For Takamizawa, it is the act of copying, of reproducing that matters, and through this act, the transition from a form and a register of usual value to a register that operates on added value and speculation.

Yuu Takamizawa has exhibited his work in Japan, the United States, Great Britain, and Germany. His latest exhibition in Europe took place in 2022 at the Kunstverein in Bonn.

Estelle Nabeyrat, 2024

# Charlotte Posenenske

## *Vierkantrohre Series D, 1967-2020*

Subtitles : *CP-D-Kubusrohr-065, CP-D-Kubusrohr-066, CP-D-Verzweigung-074, CP-D-Verzweigung-116, CP-D-Verzweigung-117*

Sculpture, 5 modules, galvanized steel, metal screws

Year of acquisition: 2019



© Charlotte Posenenske, courtesy Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin, photo Fred Dott

Charlotte Posenenske is an artist associated with the minimalist movement. Her life was profoundly impacted by her father's suicide in 1940, a Jewish pharmacist persecuted by the Nazis. Her mother, who was 23 years younger than her father, originated from a working-class background. Posenenske did not identify with any social class and was deeply affected by anti-Semitism. She studied at the Stuttgart Academy of Fine Arts, where Willi Baumeister's courses introduced her to the principles of committed art developed by Piet Mondrian and where she discovered Russian Constructivism, the Bauhaus, as well as Paul Cézanne's analytical studies of nature. Between 1952 and 1955, she studied experimental theatre in Lübeck and Darmstadt. When she became a stage and costume designer, that collaborative effort endowed her with a keen understanding of how to use (scenic) space. In 1955, she married Paul Posenenske. She began exhibiting her work in 1959, impacted by the Frankfurt School, where Theodor Adorno argued that art must resist through its own means and play a socio-political role. During a trip to New York in 1965, she discovered the early American minimalists, including Anne Truitt, Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and Sol LeWitt. She also visited the exhibitions of the Zero group in Germany, and became part of the context of German minimalism.

Linked with American minimalism due to seriality, the delegation of manufactured piece production, and modular reduction, her work incorporates a participatory and social dimension that sets it apart. The elements, which can be arranged freely, encourage public cooperation, and, in resonance with European social movements, she realized a more activist form of minimal art. Her rejection of the artistic economy reflects her anti-hierarchical vision of a democratic society based on social justice. Her concept of mimetic minimalism, which imitates reality, governed her creation, aiming to raise awareness of formal and political norms. In May 1968, she published a text in *Art International* magazine, announcing her cessation of creation, having lost the illusion that art could change behaviours or influence social inequalities. Subsequently, she embarked on a career as a sociologist, spending two decades analysing mass production. Exhibitions showcasing her work were regular between 1965 and 1968, then resumed posthumously, and her participation in *documenta 12* (Kassel, 2007) cemented her recognition.

In 1967, *Series D Vierkantrohre* and *Series DW Vierkantrohre* explored how sculpture is linked to performance (and later to architecture with *Drehfügel*, 1967-1968). These abstract series, with unlimited editions, investigated normative structures stemming from industrialization and included the cooperation of individuals installing her pieces. The galvanized steel modules of the D series and the cardboard of the DW series were inspired by the design of ventilation ducts. Manufactured in factories, they were then assembled in public spaces such as airports, stations, banks, markets, factories, or streets. "I work in series because I do not wish to create individual pieces for individuals", she explained. The series of square tubes consists of six elements in galvanized sheet metal: a square tube, a rectangular tube, a cubic tube, an angle piece, a transition piece, and a T-shaped pipe. They can be combined according to the wishes of the curator or collector and the public, as the artist delegates part of the creative act.

Fabienne Dumont, 2024

\* Charlotte Posenenske (1930 – 1985, Germany)

# Gianni Pettena

## *Monument Valley 01, Series About Non-conscious Architecture, 1972-1973*

Set of 48 black and white photographs, print on paper

Year of acquisition: 2015



© Gianni Pettena

Gianni Pettena is an Italian architect whose practice is experimental, theoretical, and poetic. His projects are deeply rooted in language, nature, and context. In the mid-1960s, in Florence, he was one of the key figures, alongside groups like Archizoom, Superstudio, and UFO, in the young architects and designers movement known as "Radical Architecture". In the early 1970s, shortly after graduating, he was invited to the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Within the vicinity of visual arts – from Land Art to Conceptual Art – he developed a unique, critical, situated, and anti-functionalist language. Pettena was influenced by the thoughts of architect and critic James Wines, a central figure in linking architecture and ecology. He was also close to the explorations of Alan Sonfist, for his reflections on territory, experimental theatre, and Gordon Matta-Clark. Like Matta-Clark, an architect by training, Pettena practiced an art that speaks of architecture without constructing it and defined himself, similarly to Matta-Clark, as an "anarchitect". By discussing the principles and limitations of architecture through the means of art, his work is a powerful and still relevant critique of its economy and sustainability, its ideology, and its place in the environment.

Between 1971 and 1972, Pettena created *Clay House*, one of his most iconic works: with his students from the University of Utah, he envisioned a performance where they entirely coated a pavilion by hand with clay. The house, entirely sealed under a layer of dried material, trapped its inhabitants inside for several weeks. For Pettena, this act transformed the house into a landscape and "re-naturalised" the construction. In 1972, in the same vein, Pettena produced *Ice House*, another action this time conceived with his students in Minneapolis. In the suburbs, they entirely surrounded a house with blocks of ice. The house, a production in series like the bricks they moulded themselves, vanished into the frozen landscape.

*About Non-conscious Architecture* was produced during the same years: this series of photographs, taken by Pettena during his travels across the United States, documents the sites he observed, from Utah, the mining region of the Great Salt Lake with its vast open-pit excavations, to Monument Valley in Arizona with its desert expanses and monumental concretions, landscapes that appear ancestral and seemingly untouched – connected by all "those roads that come from nowhere and go nowhere, just from one point to another". These images constitute what Pettena calls "a catalogue of architectures not made by architects", that is, an inventory of what he escaped by distancing himself from Europe, a continent overloaded with histories and traditions, a culture saturated with conventions, monuments, and remnants. Pettena's photographs, which were used for a film shown at the Milan Triennale in 1973, also exist as a "portable architecture" folder. They also exist as landscape photographs, a way of noting these unbuilt entities, these "geological temples," these natural sites that Pettena sees as antidotes to modernity, capitalism, history. These models present numerous ways to envision alternative lifestyles — quieter, more seamless, and more sustainable. They also offer various opportunities for making architecture disappear into the landscape.

Yann Chateigné Tytelman, 2024

# Georgia Sagri *Deep Cut*, 2018

Laser print on vinyl adhesive

Year of acquisition: 2020



© Georgia Sagri and Lars Friedrich

*Fresh Bruise and Deep Cut* are two prints destined to mark the immaculate walls of the exhibition space. One is a huge bruise that turns from red to green, the other is a deep, bleeding, glistening cut from which five drops gush out. Traces of a recent gesture, they seem to be the result of the confrontation of two bodies, the insertion of a blunt element in the flesh of the white cube. However the white cube dedicated to contemporary art was "constructed along laws as rigorous as those for building a medieval church", Irish American artist and critique Brian O'Doherty noted. It seems hermetic to the outside world; everything that is presented in it takes on the status of an artwork, but can lose it when it leaves the space. Art seems to be unable to leave it. With the work of Sagri, the exhibition space suffers: it presents itself as beaten, violated.

These two artworks are part of a larger series entitled *Household* that Sagri developed for an exhibition at the Lars Friedrich gallery in Berlin in 2018. The walls were covered with blatantly obvious cardboard partitions as a means of displaying their facticity. On the floor, papier-mâché sculptures— imprints of a sink, a drainpipe, a sidewalk, a staircase — rested on rigid structures covered with newspaper. Each element was the result of an intaglio print: the artist knelt on a cracked sidewalk, she crouched at the base of a column, she took the imprint, physically, filled in the imperfections by pressing the wet paper. The sculptures absorbed each impurity, formed by contact between the damaged surface and the pulp.

One thinks then of the gestures of cleaning: bending over, scrubbing sinks, steps. Sagri thus settles in the liminal spaces, neither interior nor exterior, neither totally public nor private. The home is reversed, on stand-by: it denounces itself as the place of male and classist domination and summons us to perceive the private as political. This “assembly of assemblages”, as she calls it, composes a common body where the outside of the gallery invites itself inside by contact. As for the white cube, they bleed because of their incapacity to open.

Sophie Lapalu, 2023

# Nina Könnemann

## *Lithic Reductions, 2015-2018*

Installation, 24 porcelain elements, metal shelf

Year of acquisition: 2019



© Nina Könnemann and LAYR Vienna, photo Caleb Adams

Nina Könnemann is a German artist with a background in fine arts from the Hamburg Academy of Fine Arts. Currently based in Berlin, she has consistently showcased her work in exhibitions since the early 2000s, exploring both video and sculpture. Her work predominantly consists of videos that delve into the exploration of festive communal rituals. Her 2012 installation, *Blackpool Illuminations 1991-2005*, ingeniously blends footage from the town's illumination festival alongside promotional clips of the festival and scenes from diverse events, such as a medieval role-playing game in a forest and a ritual in an African village. This melding of leisure, work, and ritual creates a distinctive collective aesthetic, reminiscent of fleeting carnivalesque utopias. Könnemann's portfolio further includes video works that nails the transition between the end of celebrations and the sobering return to normalcy amidst apocalyptic undertones and frenetic excitement, where the constructs of time and space unravel (*M.U.D.*, 2000; *Unrise*, 2002; *The Confirmation Candidate*, 2004; *Basketball Towel*, 2009). Through these works, she presents ritualized, collective experiences from an innovative angle, disrupting their conventional trajectories and challenging their inherent meanings. Rooted in a critique of modernity's obsession with novelty, superficiality, and a detachment from tangible reality, her art invites deep reflection on what it means to be truly free.

Könnemann's exploration of leisure and subsistence activities extends into *Lithic Reductions* (2015–2018), a conceptual piece featuring a metallic shelf adorned with 24 porcelain objects in shades of cream and light brown, presented in groups or as individual pieces. The layout, spanning over three meters, aligns with Könnemann's strict guidelines, as is common in conceptual art that delegates its form. From 2015 to 2018, six installation concepts were brought to life. In 2015, the installation in Zurich showcased more easily identifiable items, including shapes reminiscent of a sink and bidet. Prior to this, Könnemann's use of ceramics was limited to the creation of a spittoon (*Spittoon*, 2012), paired with a video, highlighting an item whose utility has since faded from memory. These works delve into the lesser-known aspects of leisure and subsistence. In 2018, Mexico City hosted an exhibition featuring *Que Onda* (2018), which superimposed images of attendees from her Los Angeles exhibition over a static view of a public restroom facility on a beach, frequented not only by tourists and surfers but predominantly by marginalized individuals, such as homeless people seeking showers, in a city with the United States' second-largest homeless population.

The ceramic pieces are replicas of prehistoric tools or Könnemann's own creations. They all stem from the porcelain of a pedestal sink, whose base forms a significant column on the ground. These creations hint at prehistoric flints and shards detached from the large piece, which would seem to come from archaeological excavations, bridging ancient human craftsmanship with modern amateurs' efforts to recreate Neolithic artifacts amid visions of apocalyptic survival. Inexpensive porcelain has supplanted stone, requiring artisans to proceed with great care to preserve the integrity of this fragile material, echoing the fragile balance of survival in a scenario reminiscent of the aftermath of an apocalypse. Stone carving, thus, emerges as a hobby intertwined with the primordial need for subsistence, often associated with the mastery of hunting, fire-making, and the construction of rudimentary shelters. This intersection of fantasy and apprehension strengthens the belief that these skills would become essential in the wake of a global catastrophe prompting a return to a more primitive or precarious existence – a notion that underpins the queries posed by this theory. Additionally, Könnemann finds inspiration in a 1991 text by Joan Margaret Gero, a pioneering feminist American archaeologist, who challenged the gendered assumptions about prehistoric tool production, revealing that women crafted a diverse array of tools from various lithic materials.

Fabienne Dumont, 2024

\* Nina Könnemann (1971, Germany)

# Margaret Honda

## *Brown Puppy IV, 2007-2014*

Cotton, polyester, linen, silk and wool

Year of acquisition: 2019



© Margaret Honda, photo Marcus Meyer

Margaret Honda is an American visual artist and filmmaker based in Los Angeles, United States. She began her career in the 1980s, developing a body of sculptural work inspired by her studies in “Material Culture” at the University of Delaware. Her early creations emerged from examining objects and their conventional purposes. However, she has a keen interest in what she describes as "unintentional" outcomes, as well as “unexplored” situations and potentials. Her work, deeply rooted in both historical context and the specifics of material conditions, frequently incorporates autobiographical details. Sometimes highlighting her personal connection to certain objects, these pieces may result from either the deliberate or accidental conditions of production she encounters.

In 2014, Margaret Honda's artistic career reached a pivotal moment with the creation of her first film, *Spectrum Reverse Spectrum*, composed from 70 mm film strips. Starting from the material aspect of film with its celluloid structure, she developed a body of non-narrative and structural works (sculptures, installations, films). That same year, the sculpture *Brown Puppy IV* marked the beginning of this new chapter.

Composed from various patterns of fabric for a stuffed toy, *Brown Puppy IV* is the fourth iteration of the same stuffed puppy. It is a twelve-fold enlargement of the original soft toy made by the artist's mother and given to her in the early '60s when she was still a child. Displayed without stuffing, the dimensions of the empty stuffed toy were dictated by a piece of identical fabric. This piece, discovered by Honda years earlier, matches the fabric of the original plush toy's ears and tail. The timeline in the artwork's title reflects the period from when Honda conceived the idea (2007) to when the prospect of an exhibition motivated its creation (2014, exhibition *5th Footnote* at PØST, Los Angeles). Presenting assembled fabrics that are hard to identify, it harks back to one of Margaret Honda's earliest manufacturing practices: sewing. While seemingly contrasting with the film works that would follow, it equally prefigures them: Honda creates camera-less films composed of assembled synchronization tapes.

Estelle Nabeyrat, 2024

# Ian Wilson

## *Ian Wilson, 1969*

Intervention in a list of artists

Year of acquisition: 2016

Ian Wilson's work does not avoid radicalism; it challenges every value of the aesthetic consciousness and attempts to subvert the idea that art finds form in the completion of the object. Moreover, Ian Wilson's artistic object is limited to the immaterial, to the "dematerialized," to "oral communication as an art form": it is discussion.

"If we refute the idea that art is a sub-category of objects – a myth perpetuated by its function as merchandise – in favor of the view that it is a sub-category of information," wrote Victor Burgin, "it becomes clear that the context of art is a complex of information in which the generative and transformative aspects of real-time experience must be taken into account." It is precisely this dynamic of the work which constitutes the heart of Ian Wilson's artistic project.

In the early 1960s, Ian Wilson was initially a painter, only to move on to experiments with minimal formal language which, by 1966, would result in monochromatic work. He also conducted research that combined painting and sculpture, achieving greater and greater austerity. Wilson gradually abandoned all materiality in order to focus on the concept. Beginning in 1968, alongside such artists as Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, Douglas Huebler, and Robert Barry, Wilson took part in the principal conceptual exhibitions, namely those organized by Seth Siegelaub.

Unlike Weiner's, Ian Wilson's work breaks free from enunciations in order to transform the act of discussion into the sole artistic form. Wilson's intention is to put behind all relation to object or representation in order to bring out the materiality of language alone, which he now approaches as a subject to be sculpted: "I'm certainly not a poet, I'm a very bad writer; probably that's why I'm talking about oral communication as a sculpture." For Ian Wilson, the idea dominates over the object's physical presence, and word can supersede materiality and absorb the essential traits of an object. In this sense, Wilson's work presents itself as an organization of ideal forms. Starting from this assumption, the artist decided to create nothing else but the conditions of speech.

Guillaume Mansart

At the end of his life, Ian Wilson's practice focused on a format he called conversations, aimed at an audience gathered for that purpose. His presence and the exchanges he initiated constituted the heart of the proposed experience, and therefore of the work. His name in a list of artists participating in an exhibition functions as a reminder of the role of his presence in his work. The poetry of chance dictates that this was his last work sold by his Belgian gallery to an institution before his death.

Fanny Gonella