

PERPETUAL TRAVELLERS

ARTISTS

Juan Duque, Assaf Gruber, Ištvan Išt Huzjan,
Meggy Rustamova, Pascale Marthine Tayou,
Philippe Van Wolputte

CURATOR

Pieter Vermeulen

OPENING

28th Sept. 2013, 7pm

EXHIBITION

29th Sept. – 24th Oct. 2013

ART DIRECTORS

Dr. Bonaventure S.B. Ndikung, Dr. Elena Agudio

LOCATION

SAVVY Contemporary
Richardstraße 20
12043 Berlin-Neukölln



Juan Duque "From Europe to Asia" (2013)

*We are all indefinite human beings, perpetual travellers, tourists of infinity, intellects of the unknown.
One can stay in his room or studio, and still travel a lot.*

Pascale Marthine Tayou¹

Presenting a constellation of contemporary artists as temporary travelling companions, this exhibition thematizes the state of constant displacement. Detached from their geographical roots, the artists (or their virtual surrogates) appear as perpetual travellers, as residents of incessantly alternating places. Both their personal life and professional quest are mostly situation-based, delicately combining precarity and autonomy. The works they create along the way are thus dependent on variable, location-specific factors.

The physical studio is no longer necessarily a privileged site for artistic production. The very idea of 'physical studio' tends to be abandoned in favour of the so-called 'mental atelier' or, in Daniel Buren's terms, 'studio in the head.'² Now, the artist intervenes in or "comes in between" pre-given specific conditions—be it the public realm, the exhibition or the studio—and these are the circumstances in which the artwork is shaped and created. This 'post-studio condition' can be related to the 'post-medium condition', in which artistic activity is no longer necessarily connected to one specific medium, but rather takes shape within "an expanded but finite set of related positions for a given artist to occupy and explore."³

Travelling should be understood not merely as physical act, but also—or even foremost—as mental act. It sets up a distance between the self and the other, the movement from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Instead of falling back on the notion of home or authentic belonging, the perpetual traveller embraces the trajectory itself, coming to terms with instability and provisionality.

¹ Interview with Pieter Vermeulen, exhibition catalogue 'My Little Paradise', Middelheim Museum, Antwerp, 2013

² Daniel Buren, 'Das Atelier im Kopf. Ein Interview mit Daniel Buren von Isabelle Graw', *Texte zur Kunst*, 13, 49 (2003), pp. 58-65

³ Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October*, no. 8 (Spring 1979): pp. 42-44



Juan Duque (°1974, Colombia)

Juan Duque's work documents his private experience as both artist and traveller: his interaction with various places and ambients, and the exploration of (re-)discovered surfaces and dimensions. Duque's site-specific installations revive memories of his infinite journeys. Putting together tangible materials and leaving room for poetic abstraction, he recreates the textures and images of landscapes he experienced on his way:

“As a nomadic artist, I am constantly confronting my previous memories with the places I live in or pass by. By working mainly on ‘site-specific’ installations, I question how the condition of constant displacement allows me to inhabit multiple worlds and places, multiple borders and temporalities simultaneously. Through my work I confront experiences and question creativity under conditions of mobility, displacement and uncertainty.”

www.betweencorners.eu



Assaf Gruber (° 1980, Israel)

Winner of 'Les amis des Beaux-arts' Prize 2008 and Laureate of the HISK (Higher Institute of Fine Arts of Ghent), Assaf Gruber has exhibited widely throughout Europe, and his works are included in numerous collections on the old continent. In 2012 he was a resident at Künstlerhaus Bethanien. This year Gruber is back in town with a fellowship from the Academy of Arts in Berlin.

"Assaf Gruber's artistic practice, which encompasses and simultaneously deconstructs a variety of media, is both gestural and performative. It is a form of speech—a poetic manifestation of intimacy, the confession of a Beckettian author. Gruber's simultaneously metaphorical and allegorical configurations in space are landscapes of thought, oscillating between anxiety and the unfulfilled desire to conquer the sculptural confines and decipher the unconscious grammar of human behaviour through a collection of "sculptural gestures". By investigating interstitial and liminal areas, the artist sets out on a quest for identity, driven by the nostalgia for narratives of lost paradises and the unadulterated joys of childhood. Gruber's masterfully orchestrated work relies on a dramaturgy which encompasses all aspects which are so crucial to his sensitivity—instability and balance, fragility and vulnerability, precariousness and disequilibrium. Its provocative stance may in turn be attributed to the fact that it is, ultimately, a portrait of a troublesome and disquieting "awkwardness", which unexpectedly yet deliberately reveals itself as the artist's favourite agent of transgression." (Adam Budak)

www.assafgruber.com

Ištvan Išt Huzjan (° 1981, Slovenia)

Ištvan Išt Huzjan holds a degree in painting from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia. He collaborates with two international galleries: Galerie Mirko Mayer in Cologne, Germany, and Galerija Ganes Pratt in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

In 2005 Išt Huzjan established his own book-publishing house 21st Century Books. In 2009 he participated in the artist-in-residency programme at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten Amsterdam. One year later, together with artists Igor Ševčuk, Taf Hassam, Byungjun Kwon, Mounira Al Solh, Rumiko Hagiwara, Ben Pointeker, Aukje Koks and Hee-Seung Choi, Išt Huzjan co-founded the art collective Goleb in Amsterdam.

www.istvanisthuzjan.com



Meggy Rustamova (° 1985, Georgia)

Meggy Rustamova is a visual artist at the HISK in Ghent, Belgium. Her academic background includes studies at the Academy of Arts in Berlin and a master degree in visual arts from the KASK in Ghent. In 2013 Rustamova was invited by Kaaithheater to create a performance and shoot a video for Performatik, the performance art biennial in Brussels. Consequently, her video (dis)Location was shown at WIELS and Beursschouwburg in Brussels. Rustamova regularly participates in group exhibitions, such as the Arts Festival Watou (2012) and Coming People at SMAK, Ghent (2011-12). In Fall 2013 Rustamova will exhibit at Coup de Ville in Sint-Niklaas (Belgium), curated by Stef Van Bellingen.

www.meggyrustamova.com





Plastic bags, 2001,
installation
plastic bags,
variable dimensions
Associazione Arte Continua, San Gimignano, Italy
Photo by: Attilio Maranzano

Pascale Marthine Tayou (° 1967, Cameroon)

It was in the mid 1990s that Jean Apollinaire Tayou changed the gender form of his name to Pascal(e) Marthin(e) Tayou. This marked the beginning of his unceasing artistic, geographic and cultural nomadic quest, which made Tayou a prominent figure on the contemporary art scene.

Same as his name, Tayou's works are deliberately fluid and elude pre-established schemes. Gripping, profound and expected, they connote the idea of moving around and encountering 'the other'. For Tayou, being a traveller is not solely a physical condition, but also a psychological one, i.e. capable of subverting social relations as well as political, economic and symbolic predispositions.

Tayou's artwork operates in situ—in the context of here and now. Every exhibition or project is viewed by the artist as a celebration of life and a relational experience of interaction with the place, its history and culture; people, materials and objects existant in that world. "A mix between salt and sugar" is the way Tayou defines his showcases. "This is life. We are happy then sad, and vice versa, and so it goes on. This is harmony: a little light, a little darkness. When I create a show I always try to play with this condition of the human being."

www.pascalemarthinetayou.com

Philippe Van Wolputte (° 1982, Belgium)

After graduating from Open Atelier at Sint Lucas in Antwerp, Philippe Van Wolputte completed a residency program at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. Recently, he got the ING Prize of the Young Belgian Art Prize at BOZAR, Brussels. Van Wolputte is a regular participant in group exhibitions, such as The kids are all right at Kunsthal Rotterdam, Performing Politics at Raumexperimente Berlin, and Fragmental Museum at Elaine Levy Projects in New York. His works are on show in the permanent collection at Elaine Levy Gallery in Brussels.

In his installations, interventions, photos, collages and videos, Van Wolputte depicts derelict, neglected and uncanny locations that shape the memory and the social landscape of a city, and appear to be beautiful in their own, peculiar way. Van Wolputte often plays with fetishes of art documentation and makes the borderline between fiction and reality uncomfortably vague and instable.

www.vanwolputteprogress.eu



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