

VALLOIS

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Georges-Philippe
& Nathalie
Vallois

JULIEN BISMUTH *Perroquet*

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Paul Kos *USA*,
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Jean Tinguely *CH*,
Keith Tyson *GB*,
Jacques Villeglé *FR*,
Olav Westphalen *D*,
Winshluss *FR*,
Virginie Yassef *FR*

17
May
—
15
June
2013

OPENING

Thursday 16 May
from 6 p.m.

/

OFF-SITE JULIEN BISMUTH

“Le signe singe”

With Virginie
Yassef

La Ferme du
Buisson, Noisiel

21 April -
27 October 2013



Born in 1973, Julien Bismuth lives and works in New York. He navigates between different realms and modes of communication, from the linguistic to the visual, from objects and images to performances and videos. For his current exhibition at the Galerie Georges-Philippe and Natalie Vallois, he has produced a series of works that flirt with the viewer's urge to interpret and classify them, predominantly by means of a renewed engagement with images, both still and moving.

The show shares its title with the video *Perroquet* (Parrot), in which an actress is filmed watching a film. She reacts in a manner both nuanced and expressive to the movie that only she is able to see, while her face reflects its vivid colors. Like the videos currently on view at the Ferme du Buisson, this piece progresses by means of a continuous variation, marked by incremental shifts of color and facial expression.

The series titled *Untitled (Spuma)* is the continuation of Julien Bismuth's previous series of works on paper. Like them, this series is the result of a deliberately confined experimentation (in this case, overpainting a series of images from the same book with white paint). The individual pieces each encapsulate a singular interplay between the congealed gestures of the artist and the frozen figures of the underlying image.

A second series of works consists of ten silkscreens and their prints of

clouds, smoke, and haze; all of whom share the same ten-word long title (*I cannot see what I do not want to know*). The images they contain are citations or fragments of found images that have been cropped and reprinted. To cite is to isolate a fragment, and to hold the fragment up to the light of its isolation. By abstracting these images from their context and signification, they are transformed into enigmatic scenes, open to interpretation, like the clouds contained within their frames. Each work consists of a screen that can be used to print the image it contains on a wall, though only once at any given time.

The other works in the show (*Pli* (Ply), *Repli* (Reply), *Wall-off*, *Recoin*, *Schema*) are intended to be enigmatic and unexplained with regards to their meaning, cause, or origin. Each object reads solely against its title, its dimensions, and its materials. They are objects for rather than objects of interpretation, signification, metaphor, association. These pieces will be accompanied this coming September by a publication, containing a series of texts that are being written for them, as well as for a related set of sculptural works also on view at the Ferme du Buisson. These texts are not designed to explain or interpret the objects. They are intended instead to act as their translation into the space of language, as well as to accompany them from a distance, like an echo or a rumor.

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MIKE COOTER Set Theory

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« We, colonisers of the world, want all things to be talking to us, animals, the dead, statues. These statues are mute and do not speak. They have eyes but do not see. »

Les statues meurent aussi, a film by Alain Resnais & Chris Marker, 1953

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Mike Cooter, born in 1978 in Epsom, England, lives and works in London. Inspired by cinema and literature his work leads him to question the role of the artist in society through installations that incorporate sculpture, text, video and photography. Having previously exhibited in the group show *The Big Society* in 2011 curated by Alice Motard, Cooter presents the installation *Set Theory* in the Project Room inspired by Alfred Hitchcock's film *Rope*, released in 1948, adapted from the 1929 play by Patrick Hamilton.

Set Theory, a branch of mathematics rationalised by Georg Cantor at the end of the 19th Century, studies sets as ordering systems for collections of objects. Mike Cooter, in a work typical of his meticulous practice, applies elements of this theory to the décor of *Rope*. Confined to a single bourgeois New York apartment, the film tells the story of two young men who attempt to commit the perfect crime for intellectual satisfaction. Convinced by their solipsistic understanding of Nietzsche, the two characters, who have invited the victim's family and their former philosophy professor for dinner, try to rationalise their moral right to have murdered their colleague. Filmed in continuous takes and in 'real time', the narrative tension and pervading unease are exacerbated by night falling and the increasing visual influence of flashing coloured light from a large neon sign attached to an adjacent building. The incorporation of this lighting prop continues Cooter's interest in the

adaptation of the stylistic traits of European Expressionist cinema into the American "hyper-realism" of *film noir*.

Mike Cooter's installation enacts a pathology of this constructed environment with particular attention to the ethnographic sculptures (Pre-Columbian, African and Oceanic), that pervade the production design alongside their 'modern' interpretations. *Mise-en-scène* acts as a bounding reference for the objects and furnishings. The lighting prop makes transparent the subliminal associations between the collected ethnographic objects, early 20th Century interpretations and the morally degenerate bourgeois aesthetic lifestyle implied by the décor that performs their context.

The light from the letter 'R', white, green, white then red, at once both binds and de-stabilises this relationship. It is, like all the other collected elements, a surviving fragment, an artefact. The rest of the sign is made of wood, a museological reconstitution of an archaeological fragment, a substitution that strives to maintain an overall coherence.

Through this installation, Mike Cooter attempts to decode the ability of popular culture to impose a narrative, highlighting the way objects are instrumentalised to incarnate and ratify specific subjects. The validity of these associations, and the capacity of objects to resist, are at the heart of *Set Theory*.

With the support of Cove Park Residency and with the kind collaboration of Galerie Le Minotaure, Galerie Ratton and Galerie Vallois

