

VALLOIS

GALERIE
Georges-Philippe
& Nathalie
Vallois

MARTIN KERSELS

Olympus

36, rue de Seine
75006 Paris-fr
T.+33(0)1 46 34 61 07
F.+33(0)1 43 25 18 80
www.galerie-vallois.com
info@galerie-vallois.com

Pilar Albarracín ^{ES}
Gilles Barbier ^{FR}
Julien Berthier ^{FR}
Julien Bismuth ^{FR}
Mike Bouchet ^{US}
Alain Bublex ^{FR}
Massimo Furlan ^{CH}
Taro Izumi ^{JP}
Richard Jackson ^{US}
Adam Janes ^{US}
Jean-Yves Jouannais ^{FR}
Martin Kersels ^{US}
Paul Kos ^{US}
Paul McCarthy ^{US}
Jeff Mills ^{US}
Joachim Mogarrra ^{FR}
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Jean Tinguely ^{CH}
Keith Tyson ^{GB}
Jacques Villeglé ^{FR}
Olav Westphalen ^{DE}
Winshluss ^{FR}
Virginie Yassef ^{FR}

14 March
—
26 April
2014

OPENING

Thursday
13th March
from 6 p.m.



OFF-SITE

MARTIN KERSELS "In Vivo"

Lecture/Performance

Centre Pompidou
2 April 2014 - 7 p.m.



At the beginning of the 1990s, Martin Kersels experimented with his body. As an active member of the group SHRIMPS (with Pam Casey, Gail Gonzalez, Steven Nagler, Ryan Hill and Weba Garretson), he performed a series of familiar and simple gestures: holding, throwing, falling, kissing, cadencing, rocking; performances that oscillated between radicality and the absurd, both transpiring through the photographs taken during the performance. Simultaneously, he developed a 3-dimensional work guided by movement. Inspired by objects and the body language of daily life, Martin Kersels builds not only staged spaces where body and machine interact, but also animated sculptures producing incongruous actions and sounds. The bizarre dimension of his work is only a facade, his plastic work is in fact underpinned by a conceptual and critical reflexion on our relations to the world and society. The constant discussion between bodies, space, and the object is an integral part of his practice.

For his new exhibition at Galerie Vallois, Martin Kersels questions the myth of the Olympus. Heaven for the gods, protected from men, the Olympus symbolised perfection (both body and spirit), complete happiness, joy of life, the carefree and plentiful. And yet, after reading Homer's *Odysseus*, the artist observed that gods, just as men, are not exempt from vileness, vices and mediocrity. "They looked like gods, but acted like humans. By western standards of aesthetics and ethics, the exterior did not match interior".* A space is created between inside and outside,

the appearance (what we are supposed to represent) and the essence (what we actually are); a dichotomous vision which the artist applies to objects by questioning the relations between a product and its mode of fabrication, between surface and materiality, between form and function. The exhibition in its formal aspect is also an element of disruption: *Olympus* (2014) sets the exhibition space into motion, now mobile and unpredictable. A synergetic dynamic is at work as a removable structure that transforms and regenerates forms; meanwhile the viewer's circulation participates in upsetting the general balance.

At the heart of a surprising scenography are bricolage works, the materials of which come from daily life. Altered, accumulated, associated, they tend towards abstraction. Playing on fake pretences, the sculptures underline the notion of passing, from one state to another, from the familiar to the strange. The loss of control, of bearings and the shift (perceptive, spatial, temporal and corporeal) push the viewer to rethink myths, norms, objects which constitute her/his own environment. By exploring the both pathetic and absurd dimension of society, Martin Kersels creates a critical space where disobedience, joy, incoherence and derision open the way for a possible liberation.



*interview with Martin Kersels, January 2014

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MATÍAS DUVILLE

life in an instant

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UPCOMING

JACQUES VILLEGLE
Graffiti
politiques

Project Room
BRASSAI
Graffiti

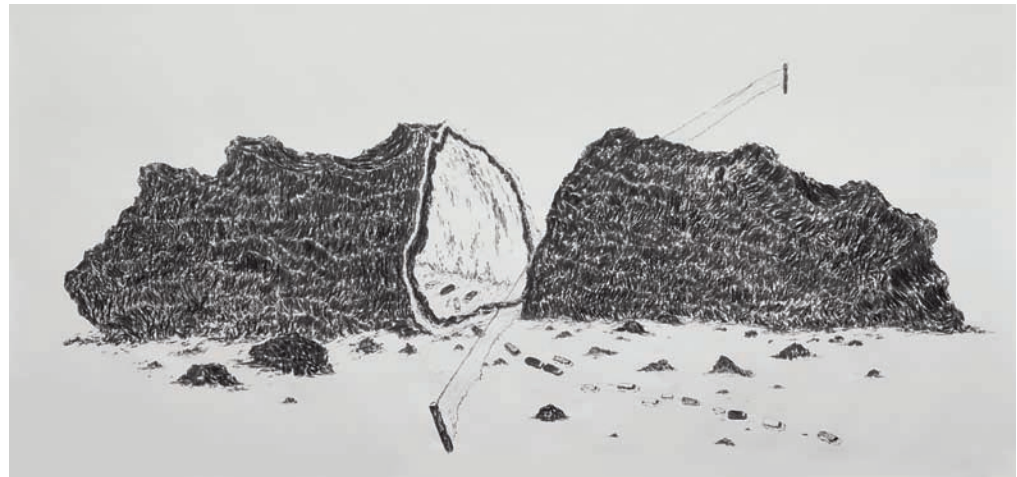
7 June -
30 July 2014

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ART FAIR

ART BRUSSELS

25-27 April 2014



Matias Duville grew up between ocean and forest. He observes, carries out experiments and fantasies about two territories invoking simultaneously the sublime, fear and danger. Feelings that are not contradictory, but complimentary, and which penetrate his work. His monochromatic charcoal drawings present a tormented and threatening nature. The *ante-* and *post-*apocalyptic landscapes surrounded by steep and improbable edges forecast a sudden mutation. They are marked by cracks, craters, abysses, extrusions, trails and devastating waves. In-between empty spaces and loaded formations, light and darkness, presence and absence, reality and fiction, the artist immerses us at the heart of an enigmatic world. Ours? The answer is not simple. Man's footprints are rare, traces of civilisation stubbornly remain at the bottom of a *décor* where nature has reasserted itself. A catastrophe has taken place, or is about to: a tornado, a tsunami, an eruption, a brutal climate change. Everything that is familiar to us is suddenly swept away by sprawling and ruthless phenomena. The world we are accustomed to is on the verge of disappearing. The *uncanny* theorised by Freud takes on its full meaning here. The drawings made of sharp, abrupt and

incisive strokes translate a desire to sculpt the landscape: to dig, to roam and tear the earth, to intertwine roots, to shape arches, to carve rocks, to hang the sea, to split the sky. A dialogue is then established with his 3-dimensional work. A charred wooden fireplace (*Fireplace - 2011*), a table presenting a salt landscape, hooks and broken glass (under realisation) constitute what remains after the impact. Domestic elements represent ruins of a suddenly fleeing humanity. Fire and water have swept away everything. Only traces have resisted this violent and irreversible wave. With these unidentified spaces, Matias Duville brings back Nature's forces in all its extremes. Unease and fascination are combined. It allows him to shape the notion of thresholds (delimiting dream from nightmare) and limits (temporal and spatial) by exploring an inhospitable world where bearings are turned upside down. Immersed in chaos, we are driven by the convulsive imagination of the artist who is both author and translator of an angry nature.

Julie Crenn



Born in Argentina in 1974, Matias Duville lives and works in Buenos Aires. He graduated from the School of Visual Arts in Mar del Plata and continued his training with Jorge Macchi and at the CC ROJA UBA/KUITCA. He has participated in many residencies and exhibitions in Latin America, in the US and in Europe. In 2013, he was a finalist of the Canson Prize (exhibition at the Petit Palais, Paris) and was invited by the SAM Art Projects to present the same year the solo show *Discard Geography* at the Chapelle des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He has also participated in *La distance juste* (curated by Albertine de Galbert) at Galerie Vallois.