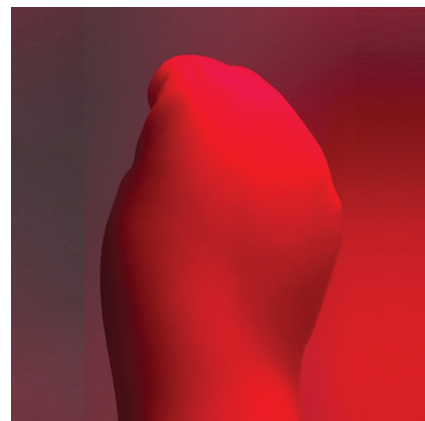


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Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin, *Small Fire*, 2018

This margin will be your vantage point

With works by Julie Becker, Sebastien Jefford, Ndayé Kouagou,
Hanne Lippard, Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin, Alice dos Reis and Magali Reus.

Curated by Giulia Civardi and Taddeo Reinhardt

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*You were annotating the idea of a long elastic present that could include violence and passivity and patience as well as cities, as would a crystal of quartz.
You played every card; you had your reasons.
You were being internally photographed.*

-

Cinema of the Present, Lisa Robertson

To roam the margins is to play with the tension between what is imperceptible and what can be actualised. It can induce a sense of indeterminacy, a paralysis brought about by seeing life's antagonism from multiple perspectives. It is a risky practice to fall out of sync with contemporary impulses for production and performance – one can get stuck and struggle to re-emerge. And yet, it also presents itself as an opportunity for world-building. Moments of latency allow for processes of maintenance, necessary for recovery. Such processes can occur when you wake up in the middle of the night and try to guess if the sky has already changed colour; a speculative potential to see gaps in the shifting grounds of the present.

This margin will be your vantage point looks at liminal states and moments of suspension in everyday language, through works that interlace urban imaginaries and personal spaces. Operating at the meeting point between bodies, psychological states, architectural interiors, and urban realities, the exhibition investigates subtle gestures and brief interruptions that create staging-grounds for the negotiation of daily protocols.

The seven artists in this exhibition offer worldviews that are both familiar and skewed, challenging our perception of the environments we inhabit. Some artworks offer pathways into moments of ecological and personal uncertainty (Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin). Others uncover the constraints imposed by urban socio-economic systems, staging rooms where the body can loosen (Alice dos Reis, Julie Becker). Disembodied feelings and images from virtual spaces morph into architectures to be sensed differently (Hanne Lippard, Sebastian Jefford) while fantastical machines become portals (Magali Reus) and the floor a contact zone for dialogues on otherness (Ndayé Kouagou). As a clear distinction between physical and mental states blurs, different layers of social reality emerge. These artists not only outline the limits imposed by social and economic structures from intimate perspectives; they also engage in a world-making process, offering viewpoints on the complex negotiation of the self within ever-changing landscapes.

The interstitial – that which is situated within but also in a separate segment – could be a temporary refuge, a mode of refusal, or a potential to change perspective and review the parameters that shape bodies and given realities.

Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin's installations act as passageways between shifting worlds. Cantonese characters burn in the sky, spelling the message "too drunk to find the way". Li Qingzhao's poem and the ghostly image of Shenzhen Bridge, which connects Mainland China and Hong Kong and where phone signals fade, flickers inside a music cassette box that hangs like a street sign. Signs of disorientation point to a state of confusion, binding geopolitical landscapes with self-doubt. How to pass? In the gallery, another lighted sign offers a glimmer of hope, re-enchanting the present with possibility.

Capturing the moment that precedes the unveiling of a new luxury-housing complex, **Alice dos Reis's** video stages a blackout in 3D renderings of apartments-to-be. Virtually nothing happens, and yet our perception flips: starry skies and liquid surfaces come to the foreground, while the interiors of the apartments are barely visible. By removing brightness – an essential feature in real estate imagery – the artist performs an atmospheric soft protest, making the houses inaccessible to potential acquirers. With a speculative approach, the video alters the simulation before the latter manifests itself, offering a change of perspective. In complete darkness, the body may adjust itself, if only for a brief moment, to a new reality.

In **Hanne Lippard's** writing, disembodied feelings take the shape of a monumental cul-de-sac. Wordplay, similar syllables and association cause fractures in everyday language blurring the distinction between virtual, physical, and inner spaces. This distinction shrinks further in the presence of a fleshy curtain that both obstructs and connects different areas of the gallery. The curtain's placement, covering passages, refers to Sophokles' description of the nymph Echo as "the girl with no door on her mouth"; its colour and silky material allude to female folds. The text and the theatrical structure invite reflection on the social forces limiting verbal expression and the vanishing of clearly defined bodily boundaries.

Concerned with fictions rooted in the everyday and the potential for misinterpretation, **Sebastian Jefford's** porous architectures conjure a sense of both blockage and openness. Partially barred windows frame symbols and familiar objects: animals, cells, and body parts. Stripped of context, these symbols offer clues as to the construction of different scenarios. Embracing a manual-making process, Jefford reanimates images and fragments of speech into full-bodied signs. These fragments merge into a malleable corpus which encloses mundane gestures, narratives and the layers of time that make up reality.

Turning to the pieces of equipment that inhabit our living environments, **Magali Reus** transforms safety devices into hybrid machines. The sculpture becomes an enigmatic container for a type of activity that eludes translation: it seems devoid of function and yet completely plausible in its manufacturing features. A keyhole suggests a new aperture; an embroidered fire-extinguisher tape connecting different structures evokes gestures of support and care, while pointing to an absent body. The apparatus allows us to see objects differently, their essential function, material composition and making-processes, raising questions relating to productivity, functionality and value.

Capturing the social and cultural imaginaries of Los Angeles in the 1990s, **Julie Becker** intertwines residential housing and mental space in a series of photographs. In these carefully composed images, distinctions between real and staged places vanish. Inside empty apartments, haunted by the lives of former inhabitants, fantasies are deeply entangled with economic and corporeal fragility. The artist's struggles with depression are filtered through a poetic recreation of interior spaces, which become the connective tissue between individuals, their environment and socio-economic systems. Partially illuminated corners recall film sets or vacated apartments, places in which to stage other worlds, and where to find rest in moments of precarious living.

Ndayé Kouagou's gestures demarcate territory. By drawing a shape on the gallery floor with tape, he opens a zone of contact – a symbolic space to redefine the conditions of what is viewed as other. With an intimate approach to identity politics, the artist performs an operation at the margin, staking a claim on the parameters that define freedom and legitimacy, and questioning different modes of coexistence.

BIOGRAPHIES

Julie Becker (USA, 1972 – 2016) lived and worked in Los Angeles, USA. Solo and two-person exhibitions include *I must create a Master Piece to pay the Rent*, MoMA PS1, New York (2019) and Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2018); *Greene Naftali*, New York (2016, 2002); *Sightings*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2003); *In Sync: Cinema and Sound in the work of Julie Becker and Christian Marclay*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2000); and *Kunsthalle*, Zürich (1997). Becker has taken part in group exhibitions including *Stills: Emerging Photography in the 1990s*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1997); the *Seville Biennial* (2006); *The Shapes of Space*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2007); and *Nine Lives*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2009). In 1996, she was the youngest participant in the 23rd São Paulo Biennial. Her work is in the collections of the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; Denver Art Museum, Denver; Marieluise Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; among others.

Sebastian Jefford (UK, 1990) lives and works in London. Recent exhibitions include *Gubbinal*, Project Native Informant, London (2019); *Jeune Création Internationale - Biennale de Lyon 2019*, Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne; *Procrustean Flatulence*, Gianni Manhattan, Vienna (2018); *Citadel*, Open Forum, Berlin (2018); *Doors of Pacific*, Union Pacific, London (2018); *The Sleeping Procession*, Cass Sculpture Foundation, UK (2017); *Lived In*, Galleri Opdahl, Stavanger, Norway (2017); *Bloomberg New Contemporaries*, The Bluecoat, Liverpool and Institute of Contemporary Art, London, UK (2016).

Ndayé Kouagou (France, 1992) lives and works in Paris, France. Recent exhibitions and performances include *Will you feel comfortable in my corner?* at Ariel Feminisms, Copenhagen (2020); *A simple and easy talk about love*, Les Urbaines, Lausanne (2019); *Sensational and antigenerative successions*, Nir Altman, Munich (2019); *Different Alibis*, Auto Italia South East, London (2019); *I don't want any of this to be part of any of that*, Centrale Fies, Dro, Italy (2019); *Young Black Romantics* Lafayette Anticipation, Paris (2018). Upcoming exhibitions and performances will take place at Nir Altman, Munich (September and November 2020); Festival Move, Centre Pompidou, Paris (October 2020); Athens Biennale (2021); openspace, Nancy (July, 2021).

Hanne Lippard (UK/Norway, 1984) lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include *foul soul* at LambdaLambdalambda, Prishtina (2019); *Ulyd*, Stavanger Kunsthall, Stavanger (2018); *Numb Limb* at David Dale Gallery and Studios, Glasgow; **ahem** at FUTURA, Prague and *Flesh* at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (all 2017). She has also been part of numerous group exhibitions including *And Suddenly it All Blossoms*, Riga Biennale, Riga (upcoming, 2020); *La pleine lune dort la nuit*, Musée d'Art Contemporain de la Haute-Vienne - Château de Rochechouart, Rochechouart (2020); *This is my body - My body is your body - My body is the body of the word*, Maison de la Culture, Namur/Belgium (2019); *Histories of our time. On Collective and Personal Narratives*, KUNSTHAUSBASELSTADT, Basel (2019); *Antarctica. An Exhibition about Alienation*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2018); *DOING THINGS WITH WORDS*, Kunstverein Braunschweig (2018).

Xiaoshi Vivian Vivian Qin (China, 1989) lives and works in Guangzhou, China. Selected solo and group exhibitions include *Next Act*, Asia Society, Hong Kong (2020); *How do We Begin?*, X Museum, Beijing (2020); *The Deficit Faction*, Long March Project, Beijing (2019); *The Racing Will Continue, The Dancing Will Stay*, Times Museum, Guangdong, China (2019); *Café do Brasil* and *In Search of Miss Ruthless*, Para Site Art Center, Hong Kong (2019 and 2017); *Ecologies of Darkness*, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin (2019); *Preparation Park*, Artista x Artista, Havana, Cuba (2019); *ThingstoCome*, Weekend, Seoul (2017); *Lv Hua Dai*, Salt Projects, Beijing (2018); *In Response: Other Primary Structures*, The Jewish Museum, New York (2014). She has recently taken part in the 'New Sites' program for emerging artists at UCCA, Beijing (2019). She is the editor-in-chief of *Ruthless Lantern*.

Alice dos Reis (Portugal, 1995), lives and works between Amsterdam and Lisbon. Recent solo exhibitions include *Malva Field, Submerged*, Lehmann + Silva, Porto (2020); *Sub Corrente* (Novo Banco Revelation Prize), Serralves Museum for Contemporary Art, Porto (2019); *Mood Keep*, Seventh Gallery, Melbourne (2019); *Pálpembrana*, Galeria da Boavista, Galerias Municipais-EGEAC, Lisbon (2018). She has taken part in numerous group exhibitions internationally and her films have been screened at EYE Filmmuseum in Amsterdam and DocLisboa International Film Festival. Upcoming exhibitions include a solo show at Trixie Galerie, The Hague, and Istanbul Design Biennial (both in 2020).

Magali Reus (The Netherlands, 1981) lives and works in London. Solo exhibitions include *Sightings: Magali Reus*, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, USA (upcoming, 2021); *Private Road*, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York (2019); *As mist, description*, South London Gallery, London (2018); *Hot Cottons*, Bergen Kunsthall (2017); *Night Plants*, Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, St. Gallen (2017); *Mustard*, The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2016); *Quarters*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2016); *Spring for a Ground*, SculptureCenter, New York (2015); *Particle of Inch*, The Hepworth Wakefield, UK (2015); *Halted Paves*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (2015). Reus has been included in group exhibitions at CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson;

Kunsthalle Bern; Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover; LUMA Westbau, Zürich; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; Rubell Family Collection, Miami; Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporanea, Lisbon; David Roberts Art Foundation, London.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Giulia Civardi is a writer and curator based in London, UK. Recent exhibitions and public programmes include *Ambiente X* at Kunstraum London (2019), *Conducting Bodies* at Exo Exo, Paris (2019), *The Insider Outside* at Rupert, Vilnius (2018) and *Grey Cube 113* at Tate Modern (2017). In 2016, she founded the research-driven space Grey Cube 113 to experiment with traditional display formats and create temporary spaces of shared knowledge production. Currently, she is Assistant Curator at Fiorucci Art Trust and works independently on different research and exhibition projects. In 2020, she was one of the selected participants for the Barbican Emerging Film Curators Lab and ran Garp Sessions 2020, a summer programme in Babakale, Turkey. She regularly contributes critical essays and reviews to catalogues and international publications such as Flash Art and this is tomorrow.

Taddeo Reinhardt is a curator based between Paris and London, working at the intersection of contemporary art and cinema. Prior to joining Galerie In Situ as Associate Researcher, he worked in curatorial departments at MOCO - Montpellier Contemporain, on the exhibition *Permafrost - Forms of Disaster* (2019), and at Palais de Tokyo on solo exhibitions of Theaster Gates and Angelica Mesiti (2018). Previously, he worked in the public department at la maison rouge, Paris. He was one of the selected participants for the Barbican Emerging Film Curators Lab (London, 2020) and the Workshop for Emerging Arts Professionals at Para Site (Hong Kong, 2018).