

THE CHARON CYCLE

Section 3 - The Diary

The Charon Cycle is a video program investigating the essence of the film medium, its capacities to transcend narratives and become the « Carrier » of sensitive and cognitive experiences. This program is divided into 4 sub-sessions represented by 4 symbolic, medium-related objects.

Early experimentations on the video medium from the Avant-Garde artists have been pursuing on the capacities of the film to depict intimate fragments of life. A tool for the observation of scenes that quickly transform into memories, documentation or impressions of a past that quickly gains the status of truth. In this context, the film is conceived as a tool to show the « truth » of life, and investigate the notion of identity: identity of a landscape, of a person, of a community, of a part of time that will inevitably disappear from anywhere except from the medium. They deal with the construction of the vision and identity of a being or of a nation. Jonas Mekas, who mastered the film's ability to capture a moment through time and space, was obsessed with this way to find back a moment « a volonté ». These moments of confidence, of sincerity or self-investigation tend to resonate with a universal experience, a collective conscious and memory that turns stories into history.

The video artworks presented in this session reflects the intimacy, the poetry of an instinctive as well as universal language, made of sound and light.

Artists List and Artworks

- Luo Yang
Girls
- Marie Vic
Rose
Afternoon Sunday at the Park
- Isa Ho
Peony 2017
- Deirdre Sargent
Long Distance Walking
- Zina Saro-Wiwa
Pineapple Suicide

Luo Yang

A true *Jeune, pure et dure* (young, pure and strong), Luo Yang is the complex example of the romantic, spirited, inspired and inspiring artist who is not afraid of handling themes of extreme intimacy as well as the controversy of female identity/freedom in modern Eastern society. Born and raised in China, Luo Yang developed a unique style proposing highly staged portraits and carefully constructed poses, which alternate with a raw, blurred snapshot-aesthetic.

Driven by her personal experiences and borne from an intuitive dialogue with her subjects, Yang's images are bold and honest, intimate and sensitive at the same time. The series GIRLS explores the notion of youth and femininity while challenging traditional beliefs about women in Chinese society. However, her images are not about provocation or rebellion but about the "fragility and braveness inside of us, thanks to which we face the world with our sincerity". They radiate stillness and a sense of calm that resists drama.

Yang works captures a refreshing perspective of these fragments of contemporary Hi-stories carried by young women, who agree to open themselves in the entire beauty and vulnerability of their truth. GIRLS depicts an emerging Chinese subculture that defies imposed expectations and stereotypes – GIRLS are bad-assed and self-aware, yet insecure, vulnerable and torn, with a supreme sense of cool. Underlying tensions and ambivalent emotions animate Yang's images, which, above all, testify to the GIRLS' individuality. They thus reflect a shifting mindset with regard to concepts of femininity and identity in present-day China. The artist photographed girls and women around her – friends, acquaintances, sometimes strangers –, attempting to grasp an understanding of their lives as well as her own. Although different, she felt that they shared the same contradicting emotions, confusions and concerns. It is in that connection that Yang found the strength and delicacy of her subject.

Luo has had exhibitions all over China and took part in major shows in Europe. In 2012, Ai Weiwei designated her one of the "rising stars of Chinese photography" ("Generation Next: A Photo Essay", New Statesman, 22 October 2012). Soon after, she participated in his show "FUCK OFF 2" (2013) at the Groninger Museum, Netherlands, where Ai – in a sequel to his radical FUCK OFF-exhibition (2000) in Shanghai – brought together a handpicked range of up and coming Chinese artists. At the end of last year, Luo was consecrated by the BBC as one of the 100 most influential women in the world.

MarieVic

MarieVic is a French-born artist currently living and working in New York. After graduating from the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture in Paris, she received an MFA from Parsons The New School for Design in New York. MarieVic's work is multidisciplinary, with the use of several medium such as sculpture, photography, video and installation.

Cultivating her own aesthetic vision, MarieVic critiques the fetishised culture of consumption, while scrutinising the allure of luxury, over the crass consequences of a growing throw-away culture. She often employs a decidedly absurdist sense of humor and always aims to explore how the self is performed in different contexts, at the same time individually, globally, and politically.

Her works have been exhibited internationally at Stems Gallery, Brussels, BE; Lishui International Photography Festival, CN; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Nuit Blanche Toronto, CA; Hotel Particulier, New York, US; the Aperture Foundation, New York, US; Hendershot Gallery, New York, US; Artcurial, Auction House, Paris, FR; Eyebeam, New York, US; Reverse Space, New York, US; Red Bull Studios, New York, US and Eigen+Art Gallery, Leipzig, DE. She has recieved the Lishui International Photography Festival Award for Unicloness and FFFMilano Award for her work, Blowing Riccardo.

In « Sunday afternoon at the park », MarieVic sets her camera in Central Park on a sunny Sunday, capturing small scenes of people leisuring in the park. The video is juggling between wide-shots of the park and close-ups on the ordinary people becoming performers without really knowing it, offering small intimate fragments of life. The work plays with broadcast speed to create loops and repetition within the bodies movements. In such a public and open scene as a park, it seems yet that we are the privileged witnesses of selected pieces of intimacies.

Isa Ho

Isa Ho is a Taiwanese artist, born in 1977. She has grown up in a Taiwan very different from that of her grandmothers, and the seismic changes in women's lives and roles are a central theme of her work. Today women are free to work, live independently, and marry whomever they choose. Yet they remain under pressure to uphold the Confucian idea that a good woman stays demurely at home under the care of her father or husband. "Modern women are given more opportunities to express themselves and their abilities," the artist says, "but the roles women take on in today's society also create conflicts between traditional values and new ones."

Isa Ho explores those topics with several medium, focusing on photography and video. Her works have been exhibited and collected in the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Gwangju Museum of Art (Korea), Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Les Rencontres d'Arles, etc. She has been awarded with the Arte Laguna Special prize in Venice in 2018.

In her single channel video *Peony*, Isa Ho explores the similarities of two very different forms of dances : Kun opera on one side and K-pop dance on the other. *Peony* is an adaptation of the song "HATE" by the girl group 4-Minute. The K-Pop dancer performs the choreography used in "HATE", but slowed down. The Kun Opera dancer uses traditional Kun Opera choreography to mirror the movements. By linking past and present to draw the image of the woman condition through ages, Isa Ho offers a poetic and touching work about intimacy and the heritage of time and History in our contemporary world.

Deidre Sargent

Based on the observation of social, cultural and spiritual realities, Deirdre Sargent's work consists in a conceptual expression of self introspection and group interactions: the omni and individual. Sargent's work encompasses videos, sculptures, and other mixed media installations in a multiform approach, where the irony, humor and wit mix to confuse the viewers and challenge his resistance, questioning his thoughts as well as daily acts. The text is an important part of her pieces, often highlighting deep introspective reflections behind what seems to be absurd or humoristic day-to-day speculations.

In her videos, Sargent appears to face the spectator in her personal intimate space, dragging him into her own, irregular and unpredictable ideas that go from existential subject: the exphrasis of one's body, the meaning of our origins, gender, religion etc. to more superficial concerns about social duties.

For the artist, these reflections keep us away from the beauty and spiritual energy of our planet, disconnecting us by imposing material and social power, often represented in her videos by the symbol of money. The existence we live under these type of social and individual constraints is seen by Sargent as a fake presence, such as o's work follow the line of e observed on a stage. We are the audience of our own life. In this sense, Sargent's work follows the line of the antique Roman Art, so poetically illustrated in Pompei. An art that considered our lives only as plays in which everyone wears a mask to perform on stage.

Deirdre Sargent (b. 1985, Boston, MA) lives and works in New York. She graduated from Pratt with a BFA in 2008 and from Yale with an MFA in 2013. Her work has been exhibited in various shows in New York, Miami and Providence. Recent exhibitions are Island Girl at Gordilloscudder, Island Girl on Video at AC Institute and USAMLKPDA, The Sculpture Center in Cleveland, and Peninsula Art Space.

Zina Saro-Wiwa

Zina Saro-Wiwa, born in Nigeria, is an artist working primarily with video but also photography, sculpture and mixed media installations. Her work is deeply attuned to the notion of emotional landscape, exploring personal experiences, carefully recording their choreography, making tangible the space between internal experience and outward performance as well as bringing cross-cultural and environmental/geographic considerations to bear on these articulations. The artist examines catharsis, grieving, praying and mourning rituals as well as highly personal explorations of cultural notions of love.

When Saro-Wiwa returned to her Nativia Ogoniland, after a few years abroad, she undertook a highly personal work, spending two years immersing herself in the 'emotional, social and spiritual ecosystems' of the Niger Delta region, drawing attention to the human experience of environment within a landscape undergoing trauma, and always driven by the intention to inject indigenous cosmologies. With a recurrent focus on food and the act of eating, Zina Saro-Wiwa delivers reflections about the relationship of people and their land/culture, seen as a 'ritual act of ingesting and incorporating a West African worldview on a cellular level'. Many of her videos place the viewer in front of the performer, face to face, in an intimate situation. This entrance into someone's space could be brutal in our society where individuality is so strong and relationships to others imprinted with a polite distance. However, the viewer quickly understands that this personal moment transforms into a universal perspective.

In "Pineapple Suicide" (2016) the artist explores the semiotics of this iconic fruit. We find a video that charges any space it occupies. Simple and direct, the pineapple is obliterated by a machete. You never see the arm of the perpetrator rather the focus is the pineapple's disintegrating form and the concrete beneath it. Saro-Wiwa insists that it is not about destruction but something ultimately far more generous and generative. "I am not sure where this piece came from" she states, "but after I had made the film and performed this action, the pineapple occupied a more prominent place in my mind and psyche. This is about life after death."

Zina Saro-Wiwa was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for Art in 2017, and in December 2016, Zina Saro-Wiwa was recognised as one of 2016's Global Thinkers by Foreign Policy Magazine. Her recent exhibitions include: Southampton Art Centre, UK (2018), Museum of World Cultures (2018), Walther Collection Project Space, NY (2016); solo exhibitions at Krannert Museum (2016-2017), IL and Blaffer Museum, TX (2015-2016); Bozar, Brussels (2016); Arles Photo-Festival (2016); Brooklyn Museum, NY (2016); UCLA Fowler Museum (2016); Guggenheim, Bilbao (2015); Saro-Wiwa is the founder and curator for the Port Harcourt contemporary art gallery Boys' Quarters Project Space. Her work can be found in museums and private collections around the world.